



Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument

Ka Palapala Ho‘omaopopo: Papahānaumokuākea

The Informative Letter: Papahānaumokuākea – September 2007

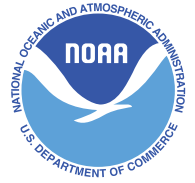


Coral reefs at Lisianski Island. Photo ©James Watt

Aloha kākou!

Welcome to Ka Palapala Ho‘omaopopo, the first Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument update! Over the next several months, we will be periodically sending these updates to keep you informed and involved as we develop a Monument Management Plan. We’ll also include some newsworthy tidbits about the Monument and its resources so you can learn more about this remarkable place.

As the Co-Trustees for the Monument—the Department of Commerce through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Department of the Interior through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the State of Hawai‘i—we hope you will take the time to stay involved in the Monument management planning process, for your participation will make this a better plan. We assembled our mailing list from a variety of sources within our agencies. If you no longer wish to receive these updates, please take the time to let us know. Also, if you have friends who would like to be added to the mailing list, we’ll be happy to take their contact information.



Thank you for your interest in Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. These lands, reefs, and waters form one of the world’s most spectacular natural and cultural wonders; may we all work together to protect these resources for our keiki and na mo‘opuna!

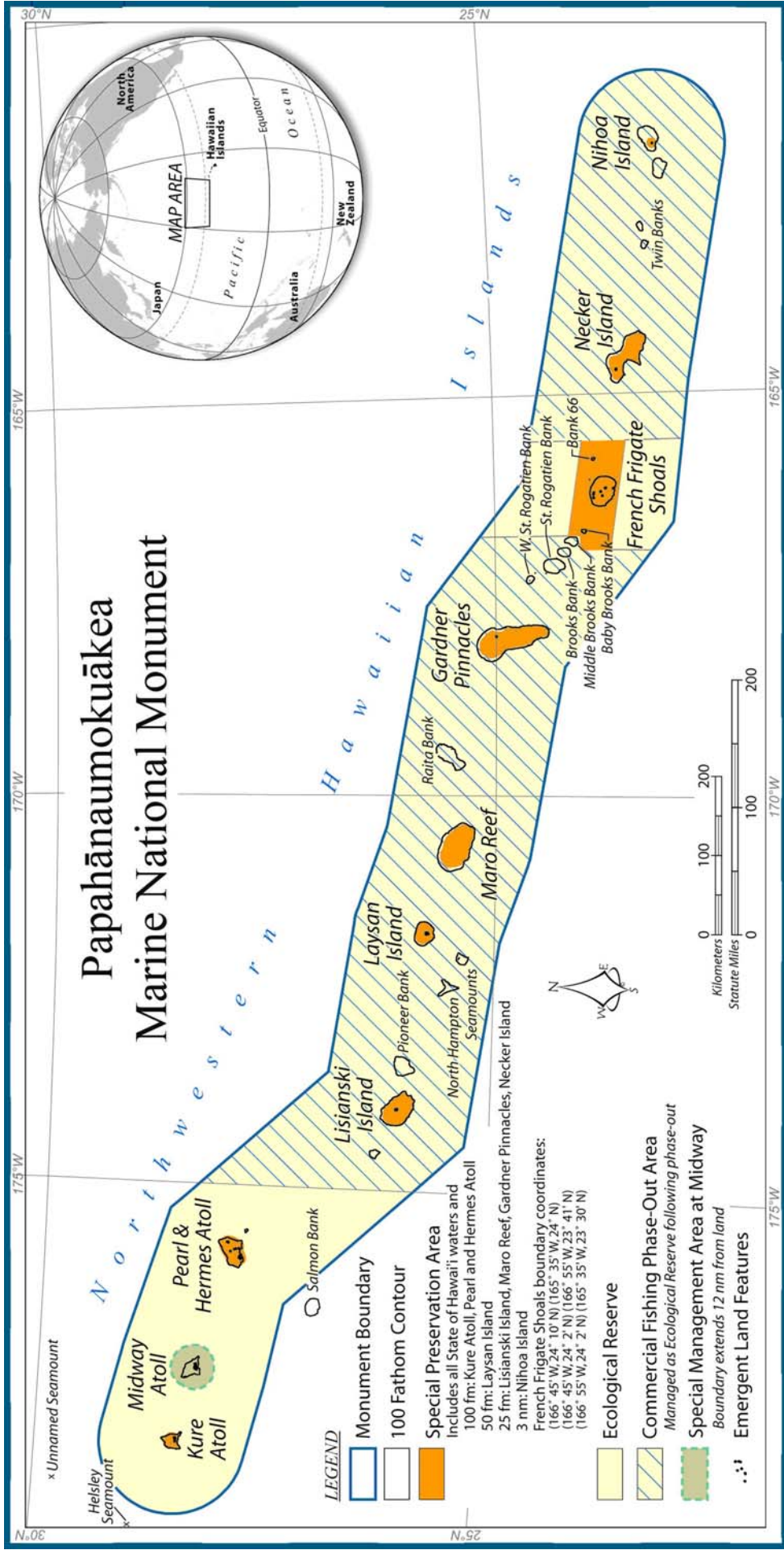
“Our duty is to use the land and seas wisely, or sometimes not use them at all.”

President George W. Bush
June 15, 2006

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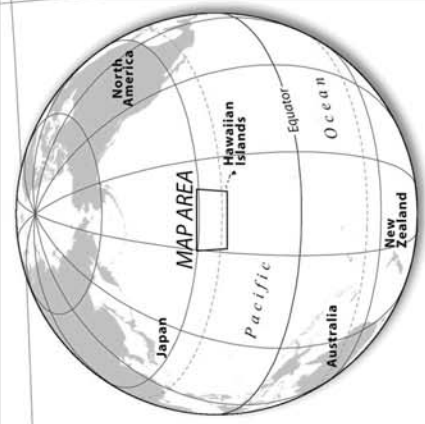
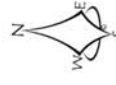
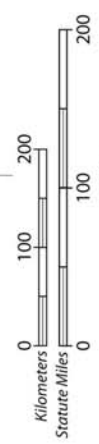
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Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument



LEGEND

- Monument Boundary
- 100 Fathom Contour
- Special Preservation Area
Includes all State of Hawaii waters and
100 fm: Kure Atoll, Pearl and Hermes Atoll
50 fm: Laysan Island
25 fm: Lisianski Island, Maro Reef, Gardner Pinnacles, Necker Island
3 nm: Nihoa Island
French Frigate Shoals boundary coordinates:
(166° 45' W, 24° 10' N) (165° 35' W, 24° N)
(166° 45' W, 24° 2' N) (166° 55' W, 23° 41' N)
(166° 55' W, 24° 2' N) (165° 35' W, 23° 30' N)
- Ecological Reserve
- Commercial Fishing Phase-Out Area
Managed as Ecological Reserve following phase-out
- Special Management Area at Midway
Boundary extends 12 nm from land
- Emergent Land Features



30°N 25°N 175°W 170°W 165°W 160°W

Northwest Hawaiian Islands
Midway Atoll
Kure Atoll
Pearl & Hermes Atoll
Laysan Island
Lisianski Island
Pioneer Bank
North Hampton Seamounts
Maro Reef
Gardner Pinnacles
Raita Bank
Brooks Bank
Middle Brooks Bank
Baby Brooks Bank
W. St. Rogatien Bank
St. Rogatien Bank
Bank 66
French Frigate Shoals
Necker Island
Twin Banks
Nihoa Island

175°W 170°W 165°W

30°N 25°N

The Monument Planning Process

The three government agencies responsible for managing the Monument are developing a unified Monument Management Plan in accordance with Presidential Proclamation 8031, which established the Monument. A draft plan and associated environmental assessment will be available for public review and comment early in 2008.

The interagency document will modify the draft management plan for the proposed national marine sanctuary that was developed for most of the marine portions of the area prior to the Monument's designation. It will incorporate both the requirements for comprehensive conservation planning for the two National Wildlife Refuges within Monument boundaries and the State of Hawai'i planning needs.

Under the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended, the Fish and Wildlife Service is required to develop a comprehensive conservation plan for each National Wildlife Refuge. These plans provide a 15-year strategy for achieving refuge purposes and contributing toward the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, consistent with sound principles of fish and wildlife management, conservation, legal mandates, and FWS policies. Incorporating these requirements into the Monument plan will ensure each agency's needs

are considered during the planning process.

A notice informing the public of the Monument management planning effort was published in the Federal Register on April 4, 2007. The public was invited to identify new issues to be considered in the Monument Management Plan. In addition to these new issues, those raised during the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands sanctuary designation planning process that are relevant to decisions to be made in the Monument plan are being considered during this planning process. Comments submitted on another plan, the draft interim visitor services plan for Midway Atoll, have been reviewed as well.

The issues raised during the comment periods for the documents described above have been summarized in the tables on the following pages.



Brown boobies. Photo ©James Watt

A scoping report discussing these issues is available at <http://www.fws.gov/pacificislands/monument.html>.

We appreciate the views and concerns so many of you took time to express to us. We will do our best to address these issues as we move forward in the Monument management planning process.

Thank you for your input!



French Frigate Shoals coral reef. Photo ©James Watt

Public Scoping

What were your concerns for the Monument?

Summarized below are the views and concerns raised during multiple public comment periods regarding the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. These issues are to be addressed in the Monument Management Plan.

Topic	Issue	Response
Access and Permitted Activities	<i>What decisions will be made in the Monument Management Plan (MMP) regarding Monument access and permitted activities?</i>	The types of activities allowed and requirements for access are regulated through a permitting process detailed in 50 CFR 404. The MMP's Permitting Action Plan will identify strategies to develop a streamlined and effective permit approval and issuance process and describe how data obtained from permits will be used to assess cumulative impacts and improve long-term monitoring and protection of Monument resources. Other action plans will identify strategies and activities related to human access, types of activities allowed, limits, and controls.
	<i>Will commercial fishing be permitted?</i>	Commercial bottomfishing is being permitted by NOAA Fisheries for the eight active vessels grandfathered until June 15, 2011, through Presidential Proclamation 8031. The Proclamation also includes regulations that restrict fishing in Ecological Reserves and Special Preservation Areas, set an annual catch limit, and require the fishing vessels to comply with the same rules as other Monument permit holders.
Management Capacity and Operations	<i>What facilities, vessels, and levels of staffing and funding are needed to effectively operate and protect the resources of the Monument?</i>	Each action plan will identify the specific needs required to accomplish the goals and objectives of that plan. The MMP will also identify areas where needs overlap and resources can be shared while still accomplishing the goals of each action plan. In these cases, references will be made to other action plans, providing a more accurate overall needs assessment.
	<i>What decisions will be made in the MMP regarding how the Co-Trustee agencies will operate as a management body and how they will coordinate with other agencies and the public?</i>	The coordinated management regime outlined in a Memorandum of Agreement signed by the Co-Trustees in December 2006 will be the basis for further defining roles and responsibilities in carrying-out the operational and management activities of the MMP. Several mechanisms for future coordination with other agencies, community organizations, and the public will also be identified in the plan.
	<i>How will law enforcement needs for Monument management be addressed?</i>	The enforcement action plan will outline the shared and coordinated responsibilities among the Co-Trustee enforcement agencies and the U.S. Coast Guard, and identify barriers to and opportunities for effective law enforcement. It will also address improving permittee compliance through effective outreach and education.
	<i>How will military activities be managed in the MMP?</i>	Activities of the Armed Forces that could occur within the Monument are beyond the scope of Co-Trustee management activities.
Research and Monitoring	<i>What type of research programs will be established and how will they be coordinated and directed to ensure we gather information that will help protect and manage Monument resources while minimizing damage to the ecosystem?</i>	The MMP will have action plans as well as a separate Monument research plan that requires research to be management-driven, by furthering an ecosystem-level understanding of the Monument or improving detection of and response to human-created threats and restoration of damaged ecosystems. Scientists must comply with the findings outlined in the Proclamation in designing their projects, while the MMP will establish a process to identify criteria and assess impacts for evaluating all proposed research and monitoring activities in the Monument.

Topic	Issue	Response
Outreach, Education, and Visitation	<i>How will the MMP address public use, interpretation, and environmental education opportunities for the Monument?</i>	Midway Atoll, with its existing infrastructure and history of human activity, will serve as the on-site “window to the Monument,” and visitation opportunities will be described in the Midway Visitor Services Plan of the MMP. The Mokupāpapa: Discovery Center in Hilo, the National Marine Sanctuaries office in Honolulu, and lectures and other types of outreach from Co-Trustee staff and trained volunteers will provide opportunities to “bring the place to the people rather than the people to the place” and will be discussed in the Ecosystem Literacy Action Plan.
Public Involvement	<i>How can the public be involved in managing and conserving the Monument?</i>	The Constituency Building and Outreach Action Plan will present strategies for involving the public in promoting protection and awareness of Monument resources, which could include public meetings, workshops, establishing citizen advisory groups, friends groups, volunteering opportunities, and other possibilities.
Habitat and Ecosystem Impacts	<i>How will terrestrial and marine habitats, fish, and wildlife be managed in the Monument?</i>	The MMP will identify a range of proposed strategies and activities to address local threats (e.g., spread of alien species, contaminant spills) as well as global threats (e.g., sea level, temperature, and chemistry changes) to understand and protect Monument resources. Management actions will be aimed at maintaining biological integrity, diversity, and ecosystem health and will be performed in a manner that does not cause any significant impacts to Monument natural and cultural resources.
	<i>What type of information and direction will be provided in the MMP regarding global climate change and sea level rise?</i>	Development of a Monument research plan will address the threat of global climate change, including new research models to help predict sea level rise and the possible impacts to Monument species and habitats, and will consider options for monitoring climate change and sea level rise as a part of a global network of information.
	<i>How will the MMP address threats to the Monument’s ecosystem?</i>	The MMP will identify known threats to the ecosystems of the Monument, such as marine debris, environmental contaminants, and invasive species, and propose actions and activities that can reduce or potentially eliminate damage to marine and terrestrial resources.
	<i>How will the Co-Trustees prevent the discharge of contaminants into the Monument and respond to unforeseen incidents?</i>	The Presidential Proclamation established strict standards to prevent pollution from vessels while operating in the Monument. The MMP will establish procedures for coordinated emergency response in event of an accidental or negligent pollution event and will identify a process to assess natural resource damages and implement compensatory restoration projects.
	<i>What will the Co-Trustees do to cleanup contamination caused by past human activities in the Monument?</i>	Contamination hazards exist across the Monument, with particular issues at Midway that are known to impact the health of the Laysan Albatross. The Restoration Action Plan will identify and assess known hazards, and provide cleanup strategies and funding requirements, and detail other relevant factors to remediate hazards at the most critical of these sites.

Topic	Issue	Response
Native Hawaiian Culture	<i>How will the Co-Trustees take care of Native Hawaiian cultural resources?</i>	The MMP will outline a range of strategies and activities for cultural resource protection, identification, documentation, preservation, traditional use, interpretation, and education that will implement Native Hawaiian cultural and historic resource preservation, protection, and perpetuation methods. Through the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Native Hawaiian Working Group, and action plans specific to Native Hawaiian interests, the Co-Trustees will incorporate Native Hawaiian resource management skills and knowledge across all programs.
Historic Preservation Issues	<i>How will the Monument manage post-contact (historic period) cultural resources?</i>	The MMP will outline a range of strategies and activities to identify, document, preserve, reuse, and interpret post-contact historic resources 1) from Midway Atoll, 2) submerged under the ocean, and 3) from exploration, commerce, war, and conservation throughout the Monument. Many of these activities, particularly for structures and buildings at Midway and sunken ships, are currently ongoing.
Midway Atoll NWR – Access and Permitting	<i>What is the appropriate total number of people (to visit, work, and volunteer) that Midway Atoll can support?</i>	The Midway Atoll Interim Visitor Services Plan identified up to 40 overnight visitors at one time and at least 300 visitors per year as appropriate given the current staffing and infrastructure. The proposed Co-Trustee operational hub at Midway Atoll NWR, including new programs and staff, would further strain the island’s infrastructure and potentially increase wildlife disturbance. The MMP will propose establishing a carrying capacity and maximum number of people on Midway, a site plan for the allocation of land uses, and facilities needed to balance people and wildlife.
Midway Atoll NWR – Management Capacity and Operations	<i>How will the management needs of Co-Trustees be incorporated into Midway operations without negative consequences to the natural and historic resources?</i>	The MMP presents strategies and activities in a Site and Operations Action Plan that address facility and operational needs throughout the Monument, including at Midway. Conserving natural resources, preserving historic resources, and incorporating cultural considerations are all components of the action plan.
Midway Atoll NWR – Interpretation	<i>How will visitors be provided information to introduce and sensitize them to the fragile Midway Atoll ecosystem and history? To what extent should new interpretive and educational exhibits be placed at Midway?</i>	The Midway Visitor Service Plan offers several opportunities to interpret the natural and cultural features of the Monument, including guided tours, self-guided interpretive walks, guided boat trips, interpretive exhibits and signs, and programs and presentations focusing on wildlife, historic structures, artifacts, memorials, and key sites. The MMP will address expanding the current visitor program to represent the entire Monument.
	<i>To what extent should historic structures be preserved and restored for interpretation on Midway?</i>	Decisions to preserve, restore, reuse, or demolish buildings will be made on a case by case basis, as the state of each building, its relative historic importance, interpretive opportunities, and the cost to restore and maintain vary widely. An appropriate balance of on-island and off-island interpretation is needed and will be further addressed in the MMP.

Drafting Our Future

Draft Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles, and Goals

The Co-Trustees have developed the following draft vision, mission, guiding principles, and goals to guide them as they develop the Monument Management Plan. Comments on these statements are welcome at any time.

Vision:

That the health, diversity, and resources of the vast NWHI ecosystems and the wildlife they support – unique in the world – be protected forever.

Mission:

To carry out integrated management to achieve strong, long-term protection and perpetuation of NWHI ecosystems, Native Hawaiian cultural practices, and heritage resources for current and future generations.

Guiding Principles:

The Monument shall be managed in a manner that:

- is consistent with the Vision and Mission;
- recognizes that the resources of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands are held as a public trust by the Co-Trustees;
- affirms that the NWHI and its wildlife are important, unique, and irreplaceable;
- honors the significance of the NWHI for Native Hawaiians;
- honors the historic importance of the NWHI;
- incorporates best practices, scientific principles, traditional knowledge, and an adaptive management approach;
- errs on the side of resource protection when there is uncertainty regarding impacts of an activity;
- enhances public appreciation of the unique character and environments of the NWHI;
- authorizes only uses consistent with Presidential Proclamation 8031, and other applicable laws;

- coordinates with federal, state, and local governments, Native Hawaiians, and relevant organizations; and
- carries out effective surveillance, enforcement, and outreach to promote compliance.

Goals:

- Protect, preserve, maintain, and where appropriate restore the natural biological communities and their associated biodiversity, habitats, populations, native species, and ecological processes.
- Support, promote, and coordinate research, inventory, and monitoring that increases understanding of the NWHI and improves management decisionmaking.
- Manage human activities to maintain ecosystem integrity and prevent or minimize negative impacts.

- Provide for cooperative conservation, including community involvement, that achieves effective Monument operations and ecosystem-based management.
- Enhance public understanding and appreciation and support for protection of the Monument's natural, cultural and historic resources.
- Support Native Hawaiian practices consistent with long-term conservation and protection.
- Identify, interpret, and protect Monument historic and cultural resources.
- Offer visitor opportunities at Midway Atoll to discover and appreciate the wildlife and beauty of the NWHI, enhance conservation, and honor its unique human history.



Red-footed booby. Photo ©James Watt

Turning the Tide of Extinction

This is the first in a series of “good news!” stories to be included in each issue of Ka Palapala Ho‘omaopopo.

On an isolated atoll in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, heroic American soldiers fought in 1942 to protect the lives of many. Their efforts collectively known as the Battle of Midway are often referred to as the “turning point” of World War II in the Pacific. Some 65 years later, Midway again is serving as the “turning point” in another battle, one to save the endangered Laysan duck (*Anas laysanensis*) from extinction.

The Laysan duck has earned the dubious title of the “Nation’s most endangered waterfowl species” because it has one of the most isolated and restricted ranges of any duck species in the world. Once believed to be endemic (found nowhere else in the world) to Laysan Island, recent subfossil evidence indicates that the species was probably found throughout the Hawaiian archipelago.

The Laysan duck was driven to near extinction in the 19th century and early 1900s by bird poachers, guano miners, and introduced rabbits that devastated the flora and fauna of Laysan Island. The Laysan duck reached the brink of extinction with a population as low as 6 to 12 birds in 1911.

For years scientists have researched and discussed various options for saving the Laysan duck from extinction. In October 2004, they took a significant step forward in the process by creating a second “insurance” population on Midway Atoll. Midway was chosen as a reintroduction site because it lies within the presumed prehistoric range of the species, is free of rats



Laysan ducklings. Photo Jimmy Breeden/USGS

and other predators, and provides the logistical feasibility for post-release monitoring of translocated ducks and for habitat restoration.

Twenty young healthy ducks were moved from their home on Laysan Island to Midway Atoll. Another 22 ducks were translocated to Midway in October 2005.

Since their arrival on the atoll, the young ducks have flourished at their new home. In their first year, the new arrivals began to successfully breed, surprising everyone involved with the project. Biologists estimate that at least 90 percent of the 42 birds originally translocated still survive and are successfully breeding. During the first 2 years, 72 ducklings successfully fledged and 63 survive today. So far in 2007, more than 250 ducklings have hatched and at least 50-80 have already fledged.

Many hours of hard work went into preparing Midway for the ducks’ arrival and continued success. Since 2004, volunteers have spent almost 20,000 hours removing nonnative ironwood trees and golden crown-beard plants, followed by excavating 12 shallow freshwater seeps. In addition, two separate aviaries were constructed (Sand and Eastern Islands) and about 37,000 native bunchgrass and sedges have been planted to cover nesting habitat.

The project is a joint effort with the U.S. Geological Survey’s Pacific Island Ecosystem Research Center and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Additional cooperators include the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust from the United Kingdom, the State of Hawai‘i Division of Forestry and Wildlife, and numerous volunteers from both the public and private sectors, including the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Planning Schedule

We will be addressing your issues during development of the draft Monument Management Plan. Projected dates for your future involvement follow:

Release of public review draft	February-March 2008
Public review and comment	March-April 2008
Public workshops	March-April 2008
Final Monument Management Plan released	July 2008

Dates are tentative and subject to change as the planning process progresses.



Green sea turtle. Photo ©James Watt

If you would like to be added to or removed from the Monument Management Plan mailing list, or if you prefer to receive future updates via electronic mail or hard copy, please contact FWS at (808) 792-9530 with your full name and address.

For more information about the Monument management planning process, please feel free to contact us:

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