

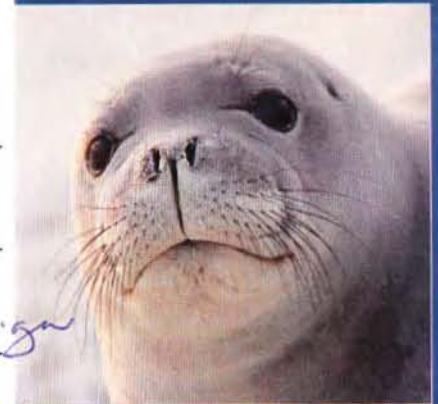
Appendix F
Agency Scoping Meeting
Information

Agency Sign-In Sheet

October 20, 2010

NMFS PIRO

Name	Title	Agency	Email
Amy Klein	Biologist - Regulatory	US Army Corps of Engineers	Amy.S.Klein @usace.army.mil
P DALZER	senior w/ specialist	WRITMC	paul.dalzell@noaa.gov
Paul Wong	Ops Coordinator	NOAA H/HW/NMFS	paul.b.wong@noaa.gov
Amy Sloan	Permit Biologist	NOAA-NMFS-OPR	Amy.Sloan@noaa.gov
ERIC ROBERTS	MPS Manager	U.S. COAST GUARD	Eric.T.Roberts@ USCG.mil
TOPHER HOLMES	NMFS NEPA	NOAA/NMFS	CHRISTOPHER.HOLMES@noaa.gov
PAULA HARTZELL	Acting Permit Mgr	FWS/PMNM	Paula.Hartzell@fws.gov
Darcy Hu	Ecologist	NPS	darcy_hu@nps.gov
Watson Okubo	EHS V	DOH - EWB	watsonokubo@doh.hawaii.gov
MYRON HONDA	EHS IV	DOH - CWB	MYRON.HONDA@DOH.HAWAII.GOV



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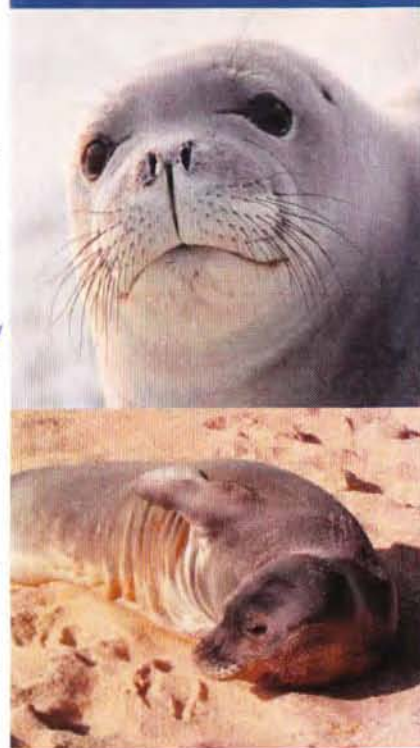


Agency Sign-In Sheet

October 20, 2010

NMFS PIRO

Name	Title	Agency	Email
Hoku Johnson	Policy Coordinator	NOAA/NMFS/ONMS Papaahānaumokuākea	hoku.johnson@noaa.gov
Lydia Munger-Little	Fishery Policy Analyst	NOAA/NMFS/PIRO	lydia.munger-little@noaa.gov
Malia Chou	Acting Superintendent	NOAA/NMFS/HITW	malia.chou@noaa.gov
Earl M. Yonoto	MARINE WILDLIFE PROGRAM COORD	DAR	earl.yonoto@hawaiiwildlife.net
Lisa White	"	"	Lisa.white@hawaiiwildlife.net
Asion Hebshi	Natural Resources Mgt	Navy Region HF	asion.hebshi@navy.mil
Matthew Vandersande	NEPA & Permits Coordinator	NOAA/NMFS/PIFSC	matthew.vandersande@noaa.gov



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Pacific Islands Regional Office
1601 Kapiolani Blvd., Suite 1110
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-4700
(808) 944-2200 • Fax (808) 973-2941

Addressee
Company
Address
Suite
City, State Zip

Dear Sir/Madam:

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Pacific Islands Regional Office is beginning to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) on a proposed research and enhancement program to improve juvenile survival of Hawaiian monk seals (*Monachus schauinslandi*). NMFS will be the lead agency in preparing the PEIS in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The purpose of this letter is to invite you and your agency to participate in the PEIS process and to provide some background information on Hawaiian monk seal research and enhancement. Please see the enclosed document for additional background information. NMFS recognizes the knowledge and expertise within your agency and welcomes your participation in this effort.

The process of preparing the PEIS formally began with publication of the Notice of Intent to prepare the PEIS in the Federal Register on October 1, 2010. The process is tentatively scheduled to be completed by December 2011. Public scoping meetings will be held October 20-27, 2010, in Honolulu, Hilo, Kihei, Kaunakakai, and Lihue. We also will be holding an additional scoping meeting specifically for government agencies and we would like to invite you and/or your representative to attend this meeting. The purpose of the agency scoping meeting is to brief you on preparation of the PEIS and to solicit your agency's comments and suggestions. The meeting will be held on October 20, 2010, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., at our offices at 1601 Kapiolani Blvd., Suite 1110. In accordance with NEPA, NMFS requests any comments you may have about potential management actions and associated research and enhancement program activities that may be performed on Hawaiian monk seals in an effort to recover the species.

If you would like to participate in the PEIS agency scoping meeting, please notify Jeff Walters, our Hawaiian monk seal recovery coordinator, by phone (808-944-2235) or by e-mail (jeff.walters@noaa.gov). We would appreciate being notified by October 15, 2010. Whether or not you are able to participate in this meeting, your written comments and/or recommendations are welcome and can be sent to monkseal@noaa.gov or 1601 Kapiolani Boulevard, Suite 1110, Honolulu, HI 96814. Please send your scoping comments and/or recommendations no later than November 15, 2010. Please note that this invitation to the PEIS scoping meeting is in addition to our September 14, 2010 letter to you inviting your agency to participate in the PEIS process as a cooperating agency. We look forward to seeing you at the agency scoping meeting and/or to receiving your comments regarding the PEIS.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Tosatto
Acting Regional Administrator

Enclosure
Cc:



Hawaiian Monk Seal Research and Enhancement Activities Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

National Marine Fisheries Service
Pacific Islands Regional Office
October 1, 2010

Background Information

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO) is preparing a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As part of the PEIS preparation process, NMFS is soliciting scoping comments on a proposed research and enhancement program for Hawaiian monk seals (*Monachus schauinslandi*).

NMFS is the federal agency responsible for management of Hawaiian monk seals under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*). In 1976, NMFS listed Hawaiian monk seals as “endangered” under the ESA and “depleted” under the MMPA. As required under Section 4 of the ESA, NMFS published a Recovery Plan for the species in 1983, which was revised in 2007.

Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), requires NMFS to ensure that any action it authorizes, funds or carries out (such as research or enhancement), is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any threatened or endangered species, or result in destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat. Permits for research and enhancement activities are issued by NMFS pursuant to the provisions of Section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA, Sections 104 (c)(3)(A) and 104 (c)(4)(A) of the MMPA, and NMFS regulations implementing these statutes.

The proposed research and enhancement program is being specifically designed to improve the survival of juvenile Hawaiian monk seals in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI). To achieve improved juvenile seal survival in the NWHI, the proposed program is expected to entail an integrated suite of research and enhancement activities for implementation in the NWHI and Main Hawaiian Islands. The intent of the PEIS discussed here is to evaluate, in compliance with the NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on the human environment of the proposed research and enhancement activities under the Hawaiian monk seal recovery program.

Purpose and Need

NMFS is responsible for management, conservation, and protection of Hawaiian monk seal, under the ESA and the MMPA. The NMFS PIRO and NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) are responsible for implementation of the Hawaiian monk seal Recovery Plan (NMFS 2007) and the proposed action, which includes implementation of specific management actions and administering the associated research and enhancement program. The purpose of the proposed action is commensurate with the goal of the Recovery Plan to assure the long-term viability of the HMS in the wild, initially supporting a reverse in overall population decline, eventually allowing for reclassification of Hawaiian monk seals to threatened status, and ultimately, allowing for removal of the species from the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife.

The need for the proposed Hawaiian monk seal research and enhancement program is rooted in fundamental biological and ecological factors that are now limiting the population. The Hawaiian monk seal population has experienced a prolonged decline and currently, only around 1,200 monk seals remain. Numerous threats to the survival of Hawaiian monk seals are identified in the Recovery Plan. In the NWHI, young seals are starving, pups are being killed by sharks, seals are getting entangled in marine debris, and sea level rise threatens terrestrial habitats. Low juvenile survival is the primary cause of the population's decline over the past two decades. There is insufficient recruitment of healthy female seals into the breeding population, and the population decline will almost certainly continue without enhanced intervention. Research and enhancement activities, including but not limited to translocating seals from areas of lower to higher survival probability within the NWHI, have been tested and show promise for improving juvenile survival. Additional translocation activities are being considered, along with a suite of other research and enhancement activities, to improve juvenile survival in the NWHI and the overall health of the population.

In the Main Hawaiian Islands, incidents such as disturbance of seals on beaches, hooking and entanglement in fishing gear, and intentional killings (e.g., shootings) counteract recovery efforts. Improved public outreach and education, enforcement of federal statutes, and other actions to protect seals from harmful situations and reduce negative human/seal interactions are essential to minimize impacts in the Main Hawaiian Islands.

A comprehensive research program enables NMFS to recognize, and possibly quantify, factors limiting the population in order to designate appropriate actions to minimize impacts of human-induced activities and other factors affecting Hawaiian monk seal survival. Data and analyses derived from research lead to improved decision-making and strategic management and enhancement activities that promote population recovery, prevent harm, and avoid jeopardy or continued disadvantage to the species. Research and monitoring will continue to play a key role in determining whether enhancement activities achieve their desired outcomes.

Proposed Action and Possible Alternatives

The final scope and structure of the alternatives presented in the PEIS will reflect the combined input from the public, research institutions, affected State and Federal agencies, and NMFS administrative and research offices. The number and structure of the alternatives that are analyzed in the PEIS will be determined after scoping. Themes to include in the range of potential alternatives are presented here to provide a framework for your comments:

- No Action Alternative: Existing permitted research and enhancement activities would continue until expiration of the permit in 2014. Recovery Plan actions beyond 2014 would not be implemented. Currently, the existing research and enhancement activities include, but are not limited to:
 - Population assessment (e.g., counting, resighting, marking for identification, flipper tags, etc.);
 - Health and disease studies (e.g., tissue sampling, morphometric measurements, etc.);
 - Foraging studies (e.g., telemetry, scat collection, etc.);
 - De-worming research (e.g., fecal samples, testing anti-parasite treatments, etc.);

- Translocation of weaned pups within the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands to improve juvenile survival;
- Mitigation of fishery interactions (e.g., disentanglement, removal of fishing hooks, etc.); and
- Mitigation of adult male aggression (e.g., removal of aggressive males).
- Status Quo Alternative: The existing types and scope of research and enhancement activities would continue beyond 2014 under a new permit.
- Enhanced Implementation Alternative (Proposed Action): This alternative considers implementation of activities under the Status Quo, as well as additional activities to achieve more comprehensive Recovery Plan implementation and improved survival of juvenile seals in the NWHI. These additional activities include, but are not limited to:
 - Vaccination research studies (including potential vaccination of Hawaiian monk seals);
 - Aversive conditioning (e.g., develop tools to modify undesirable behavior including interaction with humans or domestic animals);
 - Archipelago-wide translocation of Hawaiian monk seals to improve juvenile survival; and
 - De-worming.

The PEIS under NMFS preparation will assess the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of implementing the alternative approaches for research and enhancement activities on Hawaiian monk seals, as well as other components of the marine ecosystem and human environment. Anyone seeking to provide information for NMFS to consider in its analysis is requested to provide a description of that information along with complete citations for any supporting documents.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Pacific Islands Regional Office
1601 Kapiolani Blvd., Suite 1110
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-4700
(808) 944-2200 • Fax (808) 973-2941

SEP 14 2010

Loyal Mehrhoff, Ph.D.
Field Supervisor
Pacific Islands Ecological Field Service Office
Fish and Wildlife Service
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 3-122
Honolulu, HI 96850-0056

Dear Dr. Mehroff:

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is planning to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) regarding implementation of various research and enhancement activities designed to improve survival of Hawaiian monk seals (HMS) in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI). As you are aware, the NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO) and NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) are responsible for HMS recovery and research under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (16 United States Code [U.S.C.] 1531 et seq.) and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) (16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.).

The PEIS, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), will evaluate potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of implementing a range of research and enhancement activities stipulated in the HMS Recovery Plan (2007) to address low juvenile seal survival in the NWHI. As you know, low survival to reproductive age in the NWHI has been identified as a main factor driving the current steep HMS population decline.

Given the jurisdiction of USFWS within the proposed project area (the NWHI) and your agency's technical expertise regarding much of the subject matter to be covered in the PEIS, we are inviting your agency to participate as a cooperating agency on the proposed action pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1501.6).

Should USFWS decide to work with NMFS as a cooperating agency, we suggest that we meet to discuss developing an MOU to delineate our respective roles and responsibilities. Should you decide not to serve as a cooperating agency, please know that we will include USFWS in all of the public information gathering processes undertaken during the PEIS preparation. Regardless of your decision regarding this invitation, we look forward to continuing our coordination with USFWS on HMS recovery and research activities in the NWHI as co-trustees of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.



We would appreciate being notified of your decision regarding this invitation on or before October 8, 2010. If you have any questions or would like to meet to discuss this request, please contact Jeff Walters, our Hawaiian monk seal recovery coordinator, at (808) 944-2235, or via email at jeff.walters@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "m. d. to", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael D. Tosatto
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: Barry Stieglitz, USFWS, Hawaiian and Pacific Islands NWR Complex



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Pacific Islands Regional Office
1601 Kapiolani Blvd., Suite 1110
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SEP 14 2010

Barry Stieglitz
Project leader
Hawaiian and Pacific Islands National Wildlife Refuge Complex
Fish and Wildlife Service
300 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 5-231
Honolulu, HI 96850-0056

Dear Mr. Stieglitz:

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is planning to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) regarding implementation of various research and enhancement activities designed to improve survival of Hawaiian monk seals (HMS) in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI). As you are aware, the NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO) and NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) are responsible for HMS recovery and research under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (16 United States Code [U.S.C.] 1531 et seq.) and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) (16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.).

The PEIS, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), will evaluate potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of implementing a range of research and enhancement activities stipulated in the HMS Recovery Plan (2007) to address low juvenile seal survival in the NWHI. As you know, low survival to reproductive age in the NWHI has been identified as a main factor driving the current steep HMS population decline.

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Should USFWS decide to work with NMFS as a cooperating agency, we suggest that we meet to discuss developing an MOU to delineate our respective roles and responsibilities. Should you decide not to serve as a cooperating agency, please know that we will include USFWS in all of the public information gathering processes undertaken during the PEIS preparation. Regardless of your decision regarding this invitation, we look forward to continuing our coordination with USFWS on HMS recovery and research activities in the NWHI as co-trustees of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.



We would appreciate being notified of your decision regarding this invitation on or before October 8, 2010. If you have any questions or would like to meet to discuss this request, please contact Jeff Walters, our Hawaiian monk seal recovery coordinator, at (808) 944-2235, or via email at jeff.walters@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "m. d. tosatto".

Michael D. Tosatto
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: Loyal Mehrhoff, USFWS, Pacific Islands Ecological Services



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
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SEP 14 2010

Ms. Laura H. Thielen
Chairperson
Department of Land and Natural Resources
1151 Punchbowl St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Ms. Thielen:

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is planning to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) regarding implementation of various research and enhancement activities designed to improve survival of Hawaiian monk seals (HMS) in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI). As you are aware, the NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO) and NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) are responsible for HMS recovery and research under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (16 United States Code [U.S.C.] 1531 et seq.) and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) (16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.).

The PEIS, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), will evaluate potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of implementing a range of research and enhancement activities stipulated in the HMS Recovery Plan (2007) to address low juvenile seal survival in the NWHI. As you know, low survival to reproductive age in the NWHI has been identified as a main factor driving the current steep HMS population decline.

Given the jurisdiction of DLNR within the proposed project area (the NWHI) and your agency's technical expertise regarding much of the subject matter to be covered in the PEIS, we are inviting your agency to participate as a cooperating agency on the proposed action pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1501.6).

Should DLNR decide to work with NMFS as a cooperating agency, we suggest that we meet to discuss developing an MOU to delineate our respective roles and responsibilities. Should you decide not to serve as a cooperating agency, please know that we will include DLNR in all of the public information gathering processes undertaken during the PEIS preparation. Regardless of your decision regarding this invitation, we look forward to continuing our coordination with DLNR on HMS recovery and research activities in the NWHI as co-trustees of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.

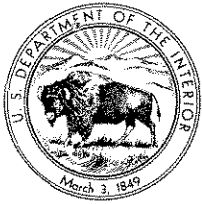


We would appreciate being notified of your decision regarding this invitation on or before October 8, 2010. If you have any questions or would like to meet to discuss this request, please contact Jeff Walters, our Hawaiian monk seal recovery coordinator, at (808) 944-2235, or via email at jeff.walters@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "m.d. Tosatto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "m.d." written in lowercase and the last name "Tosatto" in uppercase.

Michael D. Tosatto
Acting Regional Administrator



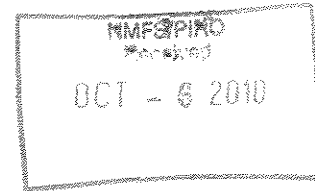
United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Hawaiian and Pacific Islands National Wildlife Refuge Complex
300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 5-231
Box 50167
Honolulu, Hawaii 96850



October 5, 2010



Michael D. Tosatto
Acting Regional Administrator
Pacific Islands Regional Office
National Marine Fisheries Service
1601 Kapiolani Blvd., Suite 1110
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-4700

Dear Mr. Tosatto:

Thank you for your letter dated September 14, 2010, regarding an invitation to participate as a cooperating agency on the preparation of the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) to improve the survivability of the Hawaiian monk seal (HMS). The Hawaiian and Pacific Islands National Wildlife Refuge Complex recognizes the importance of this National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) action to evaluate potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of implementing a range of research and enhancement activities identified in the HMS Recovery Plan (2007) to address low juvenile seal survival in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. On behalf of the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), we accept your invitation to participate in the preparation of this PEIS as a cooperating agency in accordance with NEPA regulations and procedures.

Based on FWS legally mandated management responsibilities and technical expertise associated with protecting, conserving, and, where appropriate, restoring fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats within the Hawaiian Islands and Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuges, we look forward to working together with you on this PEIS. We also support your suggestion to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to delineate our respective roles and responsibilities.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce you to Mr. Thomas R. Edgerton, who will be arriving in Honolulu on November 8, 2010, to fill the currently vacant FWS Superintendent position for the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. Tom will be your point of contact for this cooperative effort and will also be replacing Ms. Susan White as the Fish and Wildlife Service member of the Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery Team.

If you have additional questions or need assistance prior to Tom's arrival, please contact Ray Born, our Acting Superintendent, at 808.742.9488 or via email at Ray_Born@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

Barry W. 

Barry W. Stieglitz
Project Leader

Cc: Loyal Mehrhoff, USFWS, Pacific Islands Ecological Services