

**NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL**

2 November 2011

T. 'Aulani Wilhelm
NOAA Superintendent, Papahānaumokuākea
Marine National Monument and World Heritage Site
6600 Kalaniana'ole Highway, Suite 300
Honolulu, HI 96825

Dear Ms. Wilhelm:

The Reserve Advisory Council (RAC) is writing to support the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whales National Marine Sanctuary and its management plan review (MPR) process to evaluate its current management plan and determine future management activities for the sanctuary. Ensuring a high level of engagement from technical experts, community members with place-based knowledge from across the state, representatives from federal and state agencies, and NGOs is crucial to the success of this process.

A list of priority issues were identified by the public during the sanctuary's public comment period during the summer and fall of 2010. To address these issues the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) formed a series of working groups to develop management recommendations for consideration by sanctuary management for inclusion in a new draft management plan.

The working groups have been discussing priority issues, identifying gaps in current resource protection efforts, reviewing programs in other national marine sanctuaries, and developing potential management recommendations to be considered by the SAC and ultimately presented to sanctuary management.

The RAC has a long history of planning and community engagement leading to the creation of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. The RAC supports the sanctuary's efforts to engage communities to explore the possible expansion of the sanctuary from a single species to a sanctuary that adopts an ecosystem-based approach to management. The RAC looks forward to learning more about the Sanctuary's management plan review process and increased engagement with the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale Sanctuary Advisory Council.

Sincerely,



Linda Paul
Advisory Council Vice-Chair,
Northwestern Hawaiian Islands
Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve