

**Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council
Resolution in Support of
An Elevated Focus on Education at
Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument**

WHEREAS the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve and Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument have always placed a premium on the need for education because the importance of the region as a world natural and cultural heritage public trust merits a focus on educating the public about this irreplaceable world treasure;

WHEREAS because the region's remoteness and pristine character necessitated that an education principle of "bringing the place to the people and not to the people to the place" also had to be established early on, and that, as a result, the Reserve and Monument's education strategy was bifurcated into education activities and programs that: (1) occur on the Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) and serve broad populations without having to bring them to the NWHI, and (2) education programs that do bring small numbers of people into the NWHI;

WHEREAS education efforts that occur on the MHI bring the place to the people through diverse efforts and often strive to teach about the NWHI while drawing parallels to our MHI and beyond, and that these efforts are important in introducing the broadest range of people to the NWHI and providing for them foundational knowledge about the region's natural resources, cultural importance and value to the earth community;

WHEREAS education efforts that occur in whole or in part in the NWHI bring a few people to the place for an intense experience that is transformative and enlightening, and these lucky few, because of the intensity of their experience, the deep knowledge gained and their particular skill sets, become life-long ambassadors of the NWHI so that the transformed become the transformers, employing all of their varied skills, connections and charisma in their own education and outreach efforts that bring the place to the people for the rest of us;

WHEREAS the Monument is a place where research is conducted, and in so far as this research provides exciting new scientific and cultural insights into the Monument, potentially critical information about marine ecosystems, insight into the value of marine protected areas, and an opportunity for humans to better understand our relationship to and dependence on marine resources, and finally, as the public outcomes of this research are often only the publication of articles in peer-reviewed academic journals that are not readily accessible to the public or educators;

WHEREAS O'ahu is the "Gathering Place" island with over 70% of the State's inhabitants and the largest number of visitor accommodations, and since Papahānaumokuākea is the nation's largest marine protected area and a place the vast majority of people cannot visit;

- Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument
- Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary
- Hawaiian culture and the ocean
- Ocean science
- Maritime archaeology
- Climate change: marine ecosystem and human impacts;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RAC fully supports the establishment an attractive Discovery & Education Center on Oahu centered around Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary that would educate residents and tourists and act as the major real-time location bringing Papahānaumokuākea to the people; would educate visitors about the Humpback Whale Sanctuary and additional Hawaiian ocean-related phenomena including Hawaiian culture and the ocean, ocean science, maritime archaeology and the implications of climate change for Hawaii; and would contain an interactive museum and/or aquarium-style public areas with an auditorium (for films and presentations), an outdoor meeting area/amphitheatre, a large classroom and a wet lab;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RAC believes that the center will be a place that creates and nurtures supporters of the Monument and Sanctuary from all over the U.S. and world; would be a center of the caliber that we envision provides an opportunity for the State of Hawai‘i to increase its tourist revenue; and a would be a center whose funding comes from private interests such as private foundations, large businesses, state agencies such as HTA, penalties from environmental litigation, family memberships, a gift shop, evening events and a Friends program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the RAC suggests that the center be located within Honolulu, adjacent to the ocean, public transportation and the future rail system, making it accessible to residents and tourists alike; that the center be in town so that it acts as a critically important public interface and gathering place, needed especially now since the Sanctuary Program is moving to Ford Island; and a center that is potentially located near what is now the Hawai‘i Maritime Center, an ideal site for such a center;

ADOPTED by the NWHI Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council at its regular meeting of November 2, 2011.


Linda Paul, Vice-Chair