

NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service & Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Initiatives in Hawai'i



The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is a science-based federal agency within the Department of Commerce with regulatory, operational, and information service responsibilities with a presence in every state and U.S. territory. Here in Hawai'i, NOAA has a leadership role to protect and preserve living marine resources and their habitats through place-based management, scientific research, science-based resource management and habitat conservation. Through science, service and stewardship, NOAA is taking action to address community and stakeholder concerns related to marine resources conservation and management in the Hawaiian Islands. The following are some activities being undertaken by two of NOAA's offices - the National Ocean Service (NOS) Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary and the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Pacific Islands Regional Office over the next two years. Although there are many NOAA activities happening in Hawaii, the following summarizes the major activities of these two offices. These offices are working in close coordination at many levels including the Pacific Region Executive Board, which is made up of senior office leadership.

NOAA NOS HAWAIIAN ISLANDS HUMPBACK WHALE NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

The sanctuary office is undergoing a management plan review as directed by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. This review is a multi-year process that will result in a new management plan for the sanctuary. The final plan is anticipated in early 2014.

• **Management Plan Development**

Development of the draft management plan will begin in Spring 2012. The draft plan will contain multiple action plans that address resource protection issues and outline future sanctuary management. It may propose regulatory changes.

• **EIS Alternative Development and Analysis**

NOAA, in coordination with the State of Hawaii, will initiate a full environmental assessment, as required by law, to address potential environmental impacts resulting from proposed actions in the draft plan.

• **Draft Plan out for Public Comment**

The public will have opportunity to provide input on the draft management plan during a 90 day comment period. Input will be collected in writing and during multiple public meetings.

• **Present Proposed Management Plan to Governor of Hawai'i**

Following the public comment and any necessary changes, the proposed management plan, regulations, and any recommendations will be submitted for review and approval by the Governor of Hawai'i for areas in state waters.

• **Final Management Plan**

This step will include additional public meetings and another 90 day comment period. After comments are addressed, a final record of decision on the management plan and EIS will be issued.

Contact Malia.Chow@noaa.gov for information.

NOAA NMFS PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIONAL OFFICE (PIRO)

PIRO is completing a number of regulatory actions under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) to meet the conservation and recovery objectives for several protected species (e.g., monk seals, sea turtles) and determine whether other species (e.g., corals) warrant further protection. Most of these actions have a statutory timeline.

• **Biological Opinion on Hawai'i Longline Fisheries**

NMFS will assess Hawai'i longline fishery impacts on protected species including humpback whales and sea turtles.

• **Final Rule - ESA Listing for Insular False Killer Whales**

NMFS will make a final determination whether to list the Hawaiian Insular Distinct Population Segment of False Killer Whales as endangered.

• **12-Month Finding for ESA Petition to List Corals**

NMFS will make a finding regarding the ESA listing status of 75 coral species in the Pacific Islands Region.

• **ESA Critical Habitat Designation for Hawaiian Monk Seals**

NMFS will make a final determination whether to revise existing critical habitat to better identify those features that are essential to the conservation of the species.

• **Proposed Rule (MMPA) for Hawaiian Spinner Dolphins**

NMFS is proposing to protect spinner dolphins from harassment by designating time-area closures in four bays on Hawai'i and one on Maui.

• **Final Rule (MMPA) for Hawaiian False Killer Whale Take Reduction Plan**

NMFS will finalize the Take Reduction Plan to reduce false killer whale incidental mortality and serious injury in the Hawai'i-based longline fisheries.

• **Permit for Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery Actions**

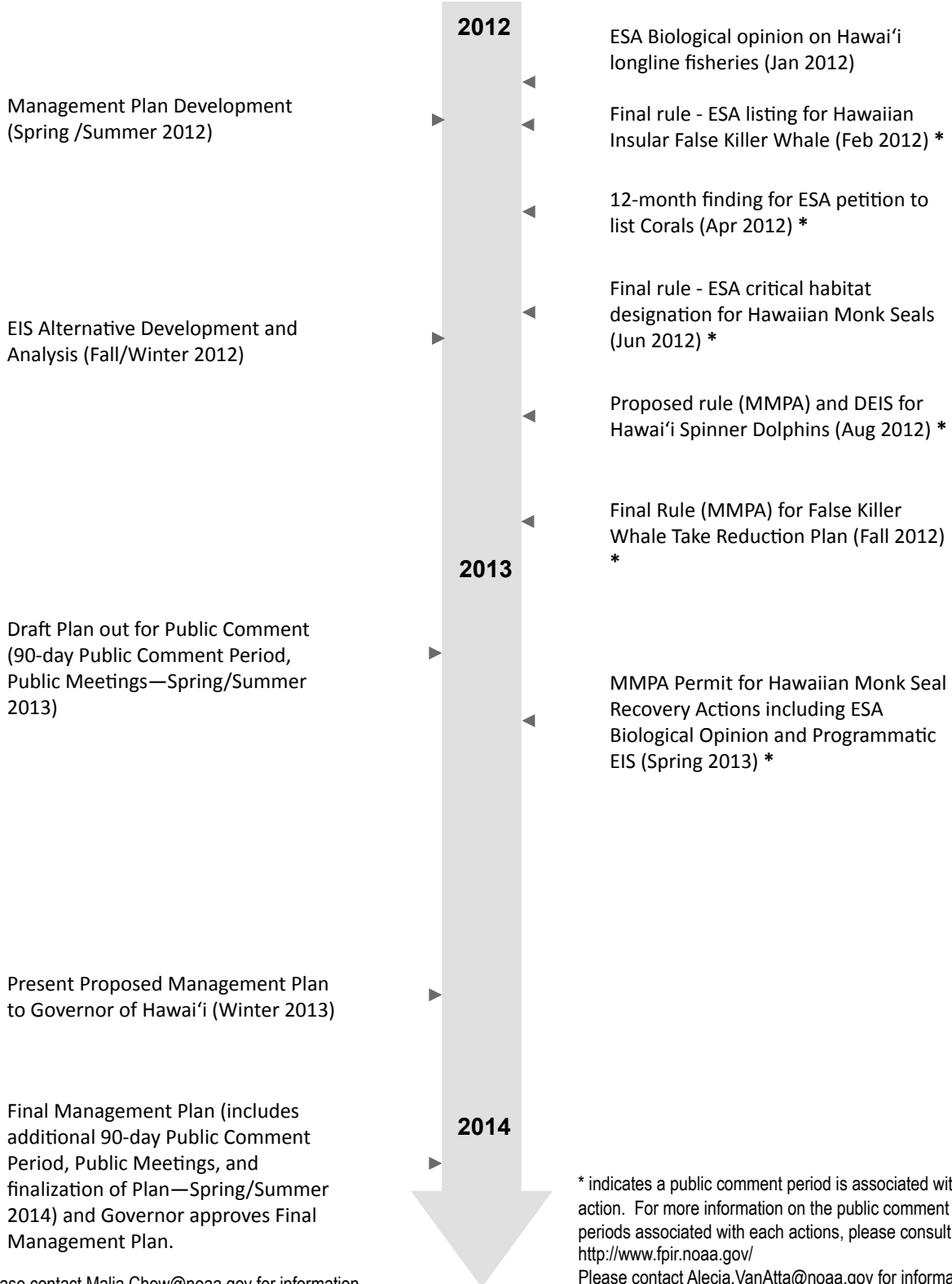
NMFS is seeking a permit for a suite of management and research actions designed to help prevent the extinction of the Hawaiian monk seal.

Contact Alecia.VanAtta@noaa.gov for information.

NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service & Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Initiatives in Hawai'i Over the Next Two Years (and Anticipated Dates for Completion)

SANCTUARY

FISHERIES



Please contact Malia.Chow@noaa.gov for information.

* indicates a public comment period is associated with the action. For more information on the public comment periods associated with each actions, please consult <http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/>
Please contact Alecia.VanAtta@noaa.gov for information.