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**CHAPTER 5:**  
**AGENCY AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**



## CHAPTER 5

# AGENCY AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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The establishment of the NWHI Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve (Reserve), and steps taken to designate it as a proposed sanctuary, represent a long and extensive history of public consultation and involvement. As a result of this outreach, nearly 52,000 public comments were received in support of strong protection of NWHI.

Since 2000, NOAA conducted over 100 meetings with interagency partners, the Reserve Advisory Council, Western Pacific Fishery Management Council, Native Hawaiian community groups, stakeholders, and the general public. The purpose of the meetings was to identify issues related to designating a proposed sanctuary and to solicit input on developing the alternatives to be considered in a draft environmental impact statement. Furthermore, these stakeholder groups helped prepare a draft management plan for the proposed sanctuary, which serves as the basis for the Monument Management Plan.

Monument regulations established as a result of Presidential Proclamations 8031 and 8112 and codified in 50 CFR Part 404 reflect input received during agency and public participation. After the Monument was established, public informational meetings were held on all main Hawaiian Islands to inform the public. A total of 471 people attended. Overall, the establishment of the Monument and the regulations codified under 50 CFR Part 404 were well received by the public, most of whom supported strong protection of the ecosystem of the Monument.

In addition, in December 2006, FWS released the draft Midway Atoll NWR Interim Visitor Services Plan proposing small-scale visitation at Midway. The draft Interim Visitor Plan was publicly distributed and received over 6,000 comments during the review. This interim plan was finalized in May 2007 and a final plan is incorporated in the Monument Management Plan.

On April 4, 2007, FWS and NOAA issued a *Federal Register* notice (72 FR16328) to prepare the Monument Management Plan and associated EA for the Monument. The notice stated that “It is the intent of the Co-Trustees to integrate agency planning and operational needs into a single Monument Plan. A draft Monument Plan [and associated environmental assessment] will be distributed for public review and comment early in 2008.” The public was directed to focus additional comments “on any new environmental issues identified as a result of new information

or changed circumstances since the comment periods identified above.” The public comment period for this notice ended on June 4, 2007. A scoping report was prepared that summarized all issues raised over the course of this process and a September planning update was publicly distributed that described the primary issues identified during the scoping process.

NOAA, the FWS, and the State of Hawai‘i released the Draft Monument Management Plan and the associated EA for public comment on April 22, 2008. The documents were made available on the Internet at <http://papahanaumokuakea.gov>, at local libraries in Hawai‘i, and by calling the Fish and Wildlife Service. The federal public comment period was from April 23 to July 8 and later was extended to July 23, 2008, at the request of members of the public during a series of ten public meetings in June.

**Public Meetings**

The co-trustees hosted public meetings in nine locations throughout Hawai‘i and one in Washington, DC. Table 5-1 lists the locations of the public meetings, the number of persons attending, and the number of speakers providing testimonials.

Public comments on the Draft Monument Management Plan and EA were submitted by individuals, organizations, and agencies via mail, hand delivery, e-mail, and testimony at the public meetings (Table 5-1). A total of 6,434 comments were received, including 27 letters, 6,246 form letters as e-mails, 74 e-mails, and 87 testimonials. A summary of comments and responses and agency comments and responses is provided in Volume V, Response to Comments, and a list of commenters, including federal, state and local agencies and organizations is provided in Table 5-2 below.

**Table 5-1  
Public Meetings**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of Attendees</b>	<b>Number of Speakers</b>
June 9, 2008	Wai‘anae Parks and Recreation Complex 85-601 Farrington Highway, Wai‘anae, O‘ahu	12	3
June 11, 2008	Auditorium, Main Interior Building 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC	10	1
June 12, 2008	Maui Arts and Cultural Center One Cameron Way, Kahului, Maui	15	7
June 13, 2008	Lāna‘i High and Elementary School 555 Frasier Avenue, Lāna‘i City, Lāna‘i	3	2
June 16, 2008	Kūlana ‘Oiwī Hālau 610 Maunaloa Highway, Kaunakakai, Moloka‘i	12	9
June 17, 2008	He‘eia State Park 46-465 Kamehameha Highway, Kāne‘ohe, O‘ahu	20	6
June 18, 2008	King Kamehameha Hotel 75-5660 Palani Road, Kailua-Kona, Kona, Hawai‘i	35	22
June 19, 2008	Mokupāpapa Discovery Center 308 Kamehameha Ave., Suite 109, Hilo, Hawai‘i	36	9
June 23, 2008	Hilton Kaua‘i Beach Resort 4331 Kauai Beach Drive, Līhu‘e, Kaua‘i	28	11
June 24, 2008	Japanese Cultural Center 2454 South Beretania Street, Honolulu, O‘ahu	60	17

**Table 5-2  
Agency/Organization Affiliation**

'Aha Kiole Advisory Committee
Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
BEACH
Center for Biological Diversity
Conservation Council for Hawai'i
Coral Reef Alliance and Project S.E.A. Link
Defenders of Wildlife
Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife
Earth Corps International
Friends of Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge, Inc.
Friends of the Earth
Hawai'i County Council
Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology
Hawai'i Undersea Research Laboratory
Hawai'i Cultural Alliance
Historic Hawai'i Foundation
Kahea
Kanaka Nation
Kaua'i Alliance for Peace and Social Justice
Kaua'i Monk Seal Conservation Hui Volunteer
Marine Biology Conservation Institute
Marine Conservation Biology Institute Hawaii
Marine Mammal Commission
Memorial University, Biology Department
Midway Alakai Program
Missile Defense Agency
Molokai High School & Fisherman
Na Koa Ikaika
U.S. Navy
NOAA Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Volunteers
NWHI CRER Advisory Council
Ocean Conservancy
Office of Hawaiian Affairs
OHA Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group
Public Voice
Recreational Fishing Alliance
Save Our Seas
Space Options
Surfrider Foundation
U.S. Navy, JAGC, Pacific Fleet Environmental Counsel
Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

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**CHAPTER 6:**  
**REFERENCES**