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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



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NOAA's Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Releases Public Scoping Report

Report Lists 11 Priority Issues

NOAA's Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary has compiled a report listing 11 priority issues identified by the public during the scoping period of the sanctuary's management plan review process.

The priority issues include humpback whale protection; ecosystem protection; enforcement; offshore development; native Hawaiian culture; ocean literacy and water quality.

During a 90-day public scoping period, July 14 to Oct. 16, 2010, the sanctuary received more than 12,000 submissions by email, U.S. mail, fax and voicemail, as well as comments presented at 10 state-wide public meetings. Input was provided by a diverse constituency, including agencies, organizations, elected officials, and community members from throughout Hawai'i, the U.S. mainland, and around the world.

"The sanctuary has the most robust public participatory process in government today," said Malia Chow, sanctuary superintendent. "We received excellent input from the public, which is important for effective sanctuary management."

Sanctuary managers will use the comments to develop action plans to help guide the next phase of the management review process. Periodic management plan review is required by Congress for national marine sanctuaries to ensure they continue to conserve, protect and enhance their nationally significant living and cultural resources while allowing compatible commercial and recreational activities consistent with protection goals.

The report is available online at http://hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov/management/pdfs/final_scoping.pdf along with more information about the sanctuary's management plan review and how citizens can get involved.

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Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary:
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