



Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council

80th MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 14, 2019 8:30 am – 11:30 pm

Virtual meeting via GoToWebinar

NON-GOVERNMENT (Voting)

Thorne Abbott
Business Commerce

James Kelleher
Commercial Shipping

Kawika Winter
Conservation

Maya Walton
Education

Vacant
Fishing

Jayne LeFors
Hawai'i Island

Maxx Phillips
O'ahu Island

Barbara Maka'ala Ka'aumoana
Kaua'i Island

Solomon Pili Kaho'ohalahala
Lāna'i Island

Vacant
Maui Island

Malia Akutagawa
Moloka'i Island

Roxane Keli'ikipikāneokolohaka
Native Hawaiian

Chad Wiggins
Ocean Recreation

Jens Currie
Research

Greg Nielson
Tourism

Jim Coon
Whale Watching

Anabelle Padilla
Youth (non-voting)

GOVERNMENT (Non-Voting)

Mary Alice Evans
DBEDT – Office of Planning

Cameron Black
DBEDT Renewable Energy

Jeannine Rossa
Division of Aquatic Resources

Alec Wong
DOH

Sandra Rossetter
DOT – Harbors

Keola Lindsey
OHA (Voting)

Athline Clark
Papahānaumokuākea MNM

Jeffrey Pollack
NOAA OLE

Jeff Walters
NOAA Fisheries PIRO

Joshua DeMello
WESPAC (Voting)

Linda Speerstra
US Army Corps of Engineers

Maile Norman
US Coast Guard

Janice Fukawa
US Navy

Attendance

Primary SAC council members present: Business – Thorne Abbott, Commercial Shipping – James Kelleher, Conservation – Kawika Winter, Education – Maya Walton, Hawai'i Island – Jayne Lefors, Kaua'i Island – Maka'ala Ka'aumoana, Lāna'i Island – Sol Kaho'ohalahala, Moloka'i Island – Malia Akutagawa, Native Hawaiian – Roxane Keli'ikipikāneokolohaka, Ocean Recreation – Chad Wiggins, Research – Jens Currie, Tourism – Greg Nielson, Energy Office – Cameron Black, DAR – Jeannine Rossa, NOAA NMFS PIRO - Jeffrey Walters, PMNM – Eric Roberts, U.S. Navy - Janice Fukawa, U.S. Coast Guard – Maile Norman, WESPAC – Joshua DeMello and HIHWNMS Sanctuary Superintendent – Allen Tom

Alternate SAC council members present: Education – Robyn Ehrlich, Hawai'i Island – Bob Gladden, Kaua'i Island – Nina Monasevitch, Ocean Recreation – Shoko Ogata and Whale Watching – Sherry LeMaster

ONMS Staff: Cindy Among-Serrao, Ed Lyman, Marc Lammers, Jean Souza, Amy Eldredge and Sara Wood

Members of the public: Ella Siroskey, Harrison Schmitt, Nicole Davis, Polly Talton, Robin Baird, Shelby Serra and Tori Spence

*****Webinar Technology Check-in for SAC members**

Council Business

- Council Chair, Sol Kaho'ohalahala called the meeting to order. Introductions of new and current members followed.
- Review and approval of November 12, 2019 Meeting Minutes
 - Native Hawaiian representative, Roxane Keli'ikipikāneokolohaka recommended to amend the meeting minutes by including the discussion and request held during that meeting for NOAA PIRO to be put on a future agenda to discuss concerns from Hawaiian cultural practitioners and community members regarding marine mammal responses.
 - A motion by Moloka'i Island representative, Malia Akutagawa to approve the November 12 meeting minutes with the suggested amendment. Motions were also made to approve meeting minutes by the following members: Education



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representative, Maya Walton, Research representative Jens Currie, and Tourism representative, Greg Nielson.

- Whale Watching representative, Sherry LeMaster seconds the motion therefore approving the November 12 meeting minutes with suggested amendment.
- Brief review and summary of previous issues, action items, and status (*Cindy Among-Serrao*)
 - Completed: The October-December 2019 recruitment period has been completed. HIHWNMS advisory council welcomed 13 new/returning members in June 2020.
 - In progress: Future meeting topics such as toxoplasmosis impacts and cultural integration with strandings and more are still in the que to be brought to attention in future meeting agendas.

Sanctuary Advisory Council 101 (*Cindy Among-Serrao*)

- SAC coordinator presented a National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council orientation over view for new council members and as a refresher for current members. Presentation informed members of council responsibilities in addition to protocols/guidelines for carrying out council business and meetings. Information from presentation is taken directly from the HIHWNMS council charter and advisory council handbook.
- Copies of the council charter, advisory council handbook, and the powerpoint presentation can be found on our website <https://hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov/>

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary 101 (*HIHW staff*)

- Superintendent, Allen Tom presented a Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary (HIHWNMS) overview. Presentation provided info on the management and history of the sanctuary. HIHWNMS is a co-managed sanctuary with the state of Hawai'i. Other highlights of presentation include appropriation information, National Marine Sanctuary Foundation support, sanctuary boundaries, past 2016 proposed expansion, sanctuary top priorities, West Hawai'i volunteers, current memorandum of agreements, capacity building and more. Allen mentions that if members have or are aware of any issues in their communities or potential partnerships to please inform him via the chair or vice chair. If you have any questions you may email at Allen.Tom@noaa.gov.

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- State Co-Manager, Jeannine Rossa provided a state co-management update. Presentation included why the sanctuary is co-managed which is due to both state and federal waters encompassed in the sanctuary boundaries; more info on the co-management including NOAA and state of Hawai‘i formed a compact agreement in 1998 and have an annual memoranda of agreement between Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and Hawai‘i state Department of Land and Natural Resources. State co-manager duties include supporting and participating in sanctuary priorities (Science and monitoring, whale entanglement, marine best practices, education and community outreach and sanctuary management), resource in addition to assisting and advising different decisions with sanctuary superintendent. As a state employee there are other responsibilities including climate change, coral reefs and etc. Important note, state co-manager only has responsibilities for large whale strandings only after the large whale stranding has passed and NOAA Fisheries is the organization in charge of all strandings. New maps of sanctuary have been created and will be shared. You may e-mail cindy.among-serrao@noaa.gov to receive the updated maps.
- Research Coordinator, Dr. Marc Lammers provided an update on research activities current and on-going in HIHWNMS. Presentation included brief overview of North Pacific humpback whale population migration and activity; steady trends in the number of whales wintering in Hawai‘i since 1975; acoustic and visual monitoring which includes deployed hydrophones at various locations and on-shore monitoring data collection; displayed the data from hydrophones that show seasonal humpback whale chorusing; SanctSound project which is a ONMS-wide effort to study the soundscapes of 7 National Marine Sanctuaries and 1 Marine National Monument funded by the U.S. Navy through a legal settlement; and different methods of counting/estimating the number of whales via vessel transects and multi-functional tagging studies. Dr. Lammers also presented a video showing a 3D model of data from one of the tags displaying a reconstruction of a humpback whales movement and activity.
- Natural Resources Management Specialist, Ed Lyman provided an update on health and risk assessment monitoring and entanglement response programs. Presentation included updates on the “Happy Whale” partnership with over 1,100 fluke matches; demographics with structure and behavior changes over time; entanglement scar

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analysis since 2013; entanglement reports which include zero reports for the 2019-2020 season but there was an increase in whale-vessel contacts; information on the entanglement response technique; Hawai'i accomplishments since 2002; serious injury determinations a partnership with NOAA Fisheries; a draft for best practices for large whale entanglement response; Alaska detail is a partnership with NOAA Fisheries up in Alaska; and importance of Hawai'i training and online first responder training (<https://pacific-islands-training.whaledisentanglement.org/#/>). Also included in presentation was emphasis on getting community involvement with health and risk assessments, ocean count on the water vessel transects, and use of drones in partnerships.

- Copy of staff presentations can be found on our website once it's uploaded <https://hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov/>
- Questions for staff presentations:
 - Will the sanctuary be involved in the states 30x30 initiative?
 - Allen responded: Yes, we have been invited to participate by co-state manager, Jeannine Rossa and we intend to be involved.
 - Are there targets for management in terms of population size, entanglement scars, or other metrics that are being tracked?
 - Marc & Ed responded: No specific target size in mind but in 2016 the North Pacific humpback whale population was taken off the endangered species list by the NOAA Fisheries due to a met standard in population size. Marc and Ed provide helpful information and are consulted but NOAA Fisheries are the primary folks that deal with management of populations. There is a post-delisting monitoring plan that evaluates all the various humpback whale populations.
 - Was there a specific change in fishing gear that may have led to the difference in gear impacts since 2014?
 - Ed responded: Global issue but did see changes in existing gear such as more frequent entanglements from near shore gear and also distribution change with more entanglement gear from British Columbia which is the lower end of the feeding grounds.
 - Can we take the online training mentioned in Ed's presentation?

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- Responded via question box: Yes! <https://pacific-islands-training.whaledisentanglement.org/#/>
- Entanglements decrease during El Nino years, why is that? Where are majority of entanglement gear (lines/nets) coming from?
 - Ed responded: Comparisons of entanglements versus environmental factors are ongoing evaluations with more research to be closely looked at. Majority of gear is coming from feeding grounds but about 1/3 is from local waters. Everything and anything in the water column is the threat to be entanglement gear.
- Are there any plans for another SPLASH study?
 - Marc responded: There is a desire for something similar to the SPLASH study and more discussions are being done in order to build a case since our humpback whale population has been delisted from the endangered species list. There are other methods to possibly do a similar effort utilizing other avenues with drones and etc.
- Just wondering why the population graph shown by Marc and (Allen at previous meeting) is not up to date? The dotted red arrow implies population going up. Does not show decrease from 2014 and on.
 - Marc responded: The graph shows the population growth up until we had data. The slide was intended to illustrate that historically there's been an increasing trend. There's been this assumption that the population has been increasing and sustained but really the actual status of the population right now is somewhat of an unknown.
- If this Covid-19 mess continues, will it affect next year's whale counts?
 - HIHWNMS & Foundation are working on Ocean Count 2021 with COVID 19 in mind. No decisions have been made at this time.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Potential Actions:

- SAC comments on Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary proposed rulemaking for sanctuary expansion (*Sol Kaho'ohalahala*)
 - Chair started discussion to support the rule making process for a sister sanctuary which includes the expansion from 56 to 160 square miles. This will allow for

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more comprehensive representation, more protection, limiting impacts, and areas identified get a little more protection.

- A motion to draft a proposed resolution in support of the expansion of Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary to be considered for final action at the next meeting was motioned by several members (Research representative, Jens Currie, and Tourism representative, Greg Nielson, Kaua‘i Island representative, Maka‘ala Ka‘aumoana, Commercial Shipping representative, James Kelleher, and Conservation representative, Kawika Winter. Motion was seconded by Hawai‘i Island representative, Jayne Lefors. Council voted unanimously to draft a resolution in support of the expansion of Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary to be considered for final action at the next meeting.
- SAC discussion on proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (*Maka‘ala Ka‘aumoana*)
 - Vice Chair started discussion to support proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. Connection with Chumash culture and Hawaiian culture is that of a shared canoe people. They are working hard to re-establish their cultural connections and kuleana with their coastal resources and relationships. Mentioned from website that shows a great connection to Hawai‘i *“When incorporated with science, our perspectives highlight Grandmother Ocean’s life and connectivity in a living matrix of thriving. The connectivity of life in Grandmother Ocean needs our assistance in understanding ways to support the life force of our Grandmother Ocean, in these times. This is an opportunity, for all communities along our coast to support the most unique and diverse Grandmother Ocean coast, and it is the time for all of us to assist NOAA in the journey to a “one of a kind Marine Sanctuary,” The Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary”* (<https://chumashsanctuary.com/>).
 - A motion to draft a resolution to support a Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary for edit and final vote at the next meeting was motioned by a couple of members Moloka‘i Island representative, Malia Akutagawa and Tourism representative, Greg Nielson. Motion was seconded by Commercial Shipping representative, James Kelleher, and Education representative, Maya Walton. Council voted unanimously to draft a resolution to support a Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary for edit and final vote at the next meeting.

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- SAC discussion on Executive Order to Promote American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth (*Sol Kaho 'ohalahala*)
 - Chair started discussion to support for Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) and Pacific Remote Islands Monument in Response to Presidential Executive Order of May 7, 2020. To maintain the protections for which they were established and to ensure that the Presidential Executive Order of May 7, 2020, does not diminish them especially since humpback whales frequent PMNM and as the HIHWNMS we should protect humpback whales and the waters they in-habit. In addition to supporting our sister sanctuaries/monuments. Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council has written a letter for supporting American fisheries through the issuance of your Executive Order Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth which Chair references. WESPAC representative, Joshua DeMello stated if there are questions on their council's request under this Executive Order feel free to contact him at joshua.demello@noaa.gov or (808)-522-7493.
 - A motion to draft a resolution in support of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument to maintain the protections for which they were established and to ensure that the Presidential Executive Order of May 7, 2020 to be considered for final action at the next meeting was motioned by Research representative, Jens Currie. Motion was seconded by Business/Commerce representative, Thorne Abbott. Council voted 13 ayes and one Nays. Due to majority vote the council will draft a resolution in support of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument to maintain the protections for which they were established and to ensure that the Presidential Executive Order of May 7, 2020 to be considered for final action at the next meeting.

Next Steps (*Sol Kaho 'ohalahala*)

- Next proposed meeting is set for July 29, 2020 and will be virtual via GoToWebinar. The time will be determined but most likely 9:00 am – 11:30 am HST. The back to back meeting dates are to ensure any action items discussed during Today's meeting can be put into action sooner rather than later especially

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with public comment periods on those topics being recently past due or a hot topic item.

- Council officer (Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary) elections will be held at next meeting. Information on the voting will be sent in a future e-mail prior to July 29 meeting.
 - During this topic nominations were stated in the question box which include Conservation representative, Kawika Winter nominating Sol as Chair, Maka'ala as Vice Chair and Ocean Recreation representative, Chad Wiggins nominating Kawika Winter as chair.
- Proposed future meeting dates were presented to the SAC. Due to Wednesday schedule conflicts among several members it has been suggested to stagger meeting dates on different days of the week to better accommodate members' schedules. Dates will be updated and members will be informed.
 - Wednesday, September 16, 2020
 - Wednesday, November 18, 2020
 - Wednesday, January 13, 2021
 - Wednesday, March 10, 2021
 - Wednesday, May 12, 2021
 - Wednesday, July 14, 2021
 - Wednesday, September 8, 2021

Additional Discussions/Questions

- Potential future agenda and action items on:
 - Conservation representative, Kawika Winter stated given that the sanctuary is a co-management effort in an Indigenous place, it would behoove us to create a Culture Committee to ensure that management and actions within the sanctuary are culturally appropriate. As such, I make a motion to create a Culture Committee within the SAC that is comprised of the Native Hawaiian members of the SAC as well as those who are well versed in Hawaiian cultural practices. Request to include as an agenda item for a future meeting has been noted and agreed upon by several members.
 - Moloka'i Island representative, Malia Akutagawa proposed a future agenda item on an activity report on the Navy's Environmental Assessment Naval Special Operations Hawai'i. This is due to a submarine rising near waters off of East Moloka'i during the time humpback whales are in our waters. Request to include as an agenda item for a future meeting has been noted.

11:47 am Meeting Adjourned

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