
FAX TRANSMITTAL SHEET

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DATE: 10/15/2010

FROM: Peter Rappa
Environmental Review Coordinator

TO: **HAWAIIAN ISLANDS HUMPBACK WHALE
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY (397-2650)**

**SUBJECT: HAWAIIAN ISLANDS HUMPBACK WHALE
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY MANAGEMENT
PLAN REVIEW**



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MĀNOA

October 15, 2010
RG:0153

Management Plan Review Coordinator
Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary
6600 Kalaniana'ole Highway, Suite 301
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96825

Dear Sanctuary:

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary
Management Plan Review

The U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is beginning a process to determine the future direction and scope of the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale Sanctuary (sanctuary). The purpose of the management plan review scoping period, and these comments, is to identify priority issues to be addressed during the management plan review, and to inform the development of action plans that address priority issues.

These comments were drafted with the assistance of David Penn, Environmental Center.

General Comments

In 1994, the Environmental Center contributed to a sanctuary Site Characterization Study. The following recommendations for sanctuary management are based on the recommendations from the 1994 study:

- (1) Identify and track terrigenous-based, ocean based, and atmospherically-delivered water pollutants.
- (2) Conduct additional research and management efforts on reducing the impacts of nonpoint source pollution on whale habitat.
- (3) Incorporate the management strategies recommended in the recovery plans for sea turtles and monk seals as part of the management regime of the designated sanctuary.
- (4) Encourage fishpond restoration efforts, not just for education, but for food security.
- (5) Establish a comprehensive environmental monitoring program.

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In addition to our general comments, we offer the following specific comments on the management plan review:

Role of the State of Hawaii Department of Health

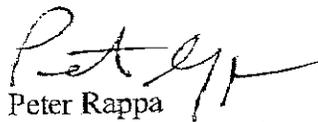
The State of Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) has a seat on the sanctuary advisory council that DOH has left vacant for many years. As a powerful co-trustee of state waters, DOH should be at the table, and we urge DOH to appoint its representative immediately. Because DOH has public trust responsibility and statutory authority to protect (1) humpback whale habitat, and (2) the biological, chemical, and physical integrity of sanctuary waters, we suggest that the management plan review consider whether or not DOH should be added to the existing MOU that establishes the procedures and protocols for the coordinated management of the sanctuary between NOAA and the state. Also, we suggest that the management plan review examine the ambiguity of DOH administrative rules governing the classification of sanctuary waters, and explore how this ambiguity affects DOH's regulatory policy and practice for sanctuary waters.

Sanctuary Resources and Mission

In response to the questions posed on p. 25 of the Summer 2010 Kohola Connection, we believe that regulatory changes may be needed to protect sanctuary resources, especially if other resources are added to the Sanctuary. In our 1995 comments on the first Sanctuary Management Plan, we noted that "the single species focus of the management plan seem[s] questionable." However, we emphasized that decisions about adding other resources to the Sanctuary should have a strong scientific basis. We also believe that the sanctuary should have a major role in addressing two of the emerging topics presented on p. 23 - water quality (go beyond "a supporting role"), and aquaculture (go beyond "learning more about this . . .").

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the sanctuary management plan review.

Sincerely,



Peter Rappa

Environmental Review Coordinator, Environmental Center

cc: Chittaranjan Ray, Interim Director, Water Resources Research Center, UH Manoa
David Penn