

Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve/ Proposed National Marine Sanctuary

US Coral Reef Task Force Meeting
May 4, 2006



History of the Reserve



In **November 2000** Congress passed NMS Amendments Act, which provided the authority to create the NWHI Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve.



In **December 2000**, President Clinton established the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands **Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve** by executive order.

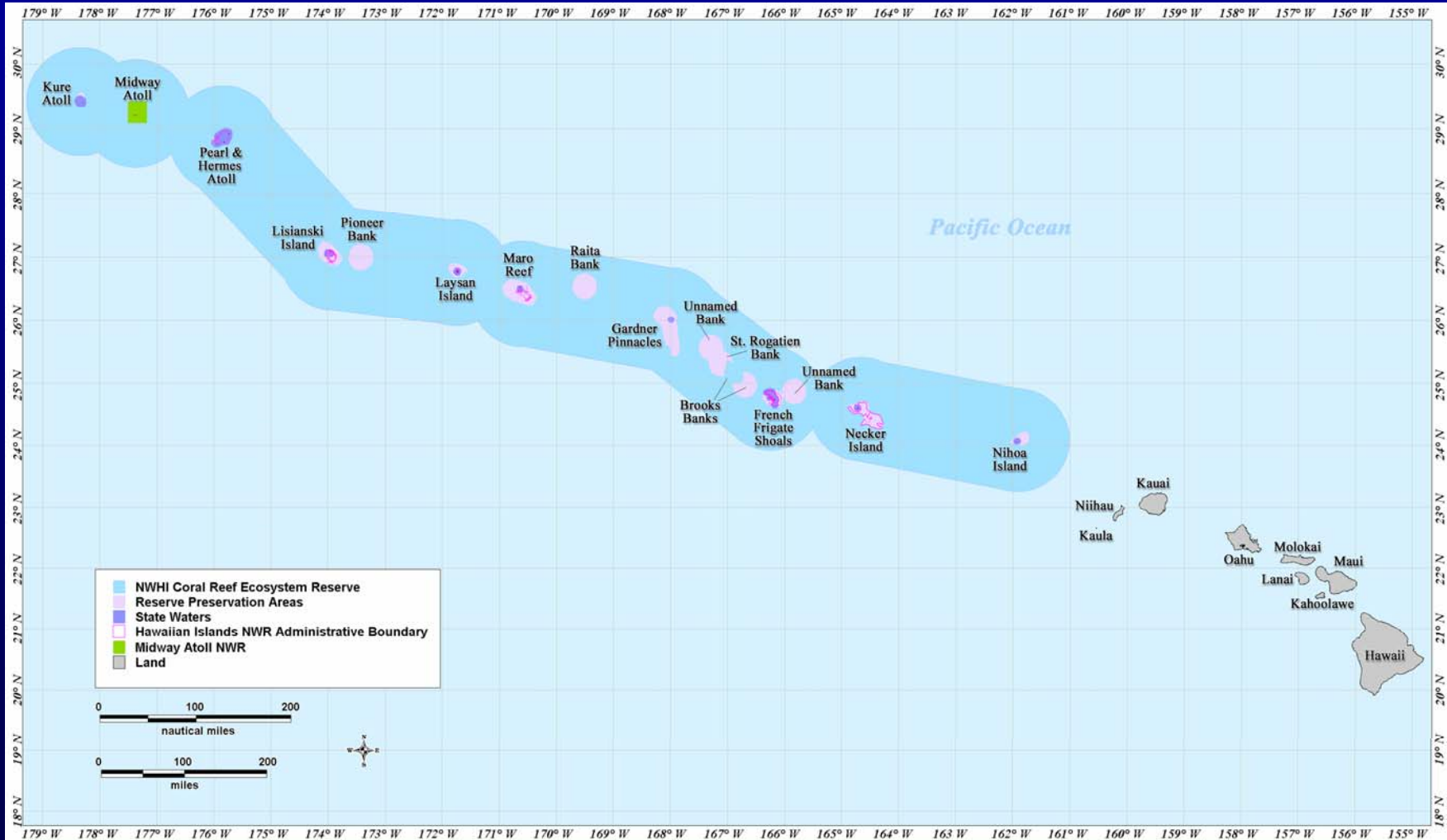


Northwestern Hawaiian Islands



Map of the USA with the Hawaiian Archipelago overlaid. Black outline shows the boundary of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve.

The NWHI Encompass Two-thirds of the Hawaiian Archipelago



Rich Biological and Cultural Heritage

- One of the last predator-dominated coral reef ecosystems left on the planet.
- 7,000 marine species, 1/4 of which are endemic.
- Nearly 100% of the highly endangered Hawaii monk seal.
- Nesting ground for 90% of all green sea turtles in Hawaii.
- In Native Hawaiian traditions, the NWHI are considered a sacred place.
- Numerous ancestral sites provide evidence, along with songs, chants, stories.



Current Reserve Activities

Sanctuary Designation

Site Operations/ Advisory Council

Field Operations

Education and Outreach

Research Mapping and Monitoring



Sanctuary Designation



The process of designating the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve as a National Marine Sanctuary has been **our primary activity** for the past five years.

Focused on public process and broad community involvement.

Process has been inclusive of all jurisdictional agencies, including DOI/USFWS and the State of Hawaii.

Agency & Public Involvement

Since 2002, conducted over **100** meetings with partner agency and stakeholder groups to collect input and information.

Since 2000, extensive visioning, public hearing, and scoping processes have involved the active public participation.

To date, more than **52,000** public comments have been received. Majority of comments support strong protection.

More to come



The Draft EIS will:

- Be the focal point for continued public discussion and process.
- Consider and analyze a range of management alternatives.
- Analyze environmental and socioeconomic impacts of each alternative and a 'preferred' will be identified.
- Provide for coordinated ecosystem management with existing authorities in the NWHI.
- Consider various uses that could be allowed or prohibited (e.g. fishing, ocean tourism, recreation, education, research, management).
- Consider zoning as a management tool for management and enforcement.



Tentative Sanctuary Designation Timetable

Early Summer 2006	DEIS/DMP available for public review
Summer 2006	Public hearings (all main Hawaiian islands + DC)
Late 2006	Final Sanctuary proposal (FEIS)
Early 2007	Sanctuary designation decision



Site Operations

Reserve operations constitute the day-to-day activities of the Reserve operations and proposed Sanctuary planning. These include support for the Reserve Advisory Council, operation of Hilo and Honolulu offices and facilities, and other assets.



Field Operations



Field operations include research, management and enforcement, including ship planning and land-based activities at Midway, FFS and Kure atoll via the State of Hawaii.



Includes coordination of regional field activities that include DOI, State of Hawaii and others.



Education, Outreach & Community Involvement

- Education and Outreach is a primary program priority for the National Marine Sanctuary Program.
- The Reserve's education and outreach program seeks to enhance ocean literacy and build an active and involved constituency to support marine conservation.
- Moku pāpapa Discovery Center
 - Opened in 2004
 - 200,000 visitors/ 350 school groups



Outreach & Community Involvement Highlights

Archipelago Exhibit

- Touring of Archipelago exhibit showcasing NWHI wildlife in communities statewide.

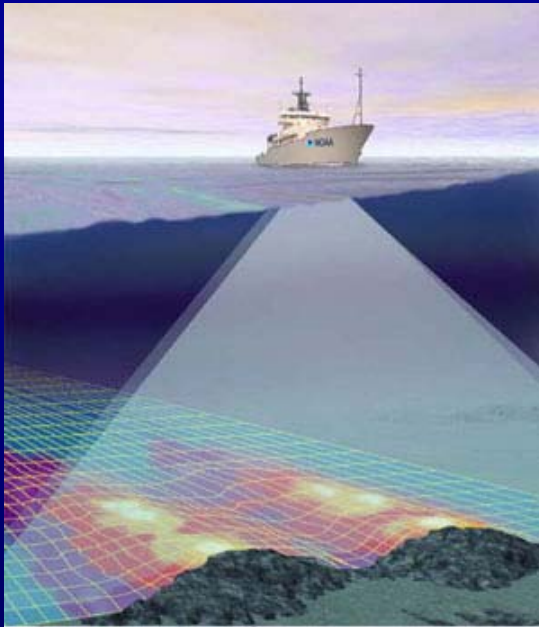


Generating public input on the DEIS and management plan

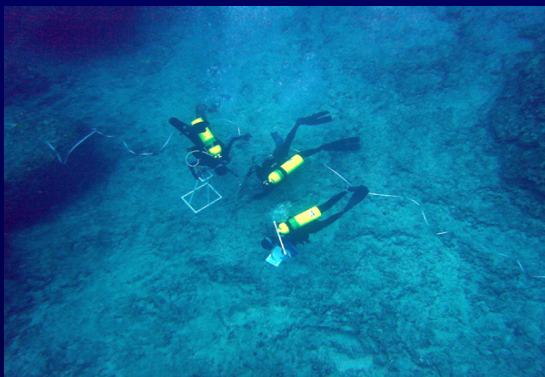
- Reserve Advisory council meetings
- Developing outreach materials



Research, Mapping and Monitoring



The Reserve's research program is designed to provide the scientific basis to support ecosystem-based approaches to management in the NWHI. In addition, the Reserve is focused on cultural and historic research and will build a social science research component in the future.

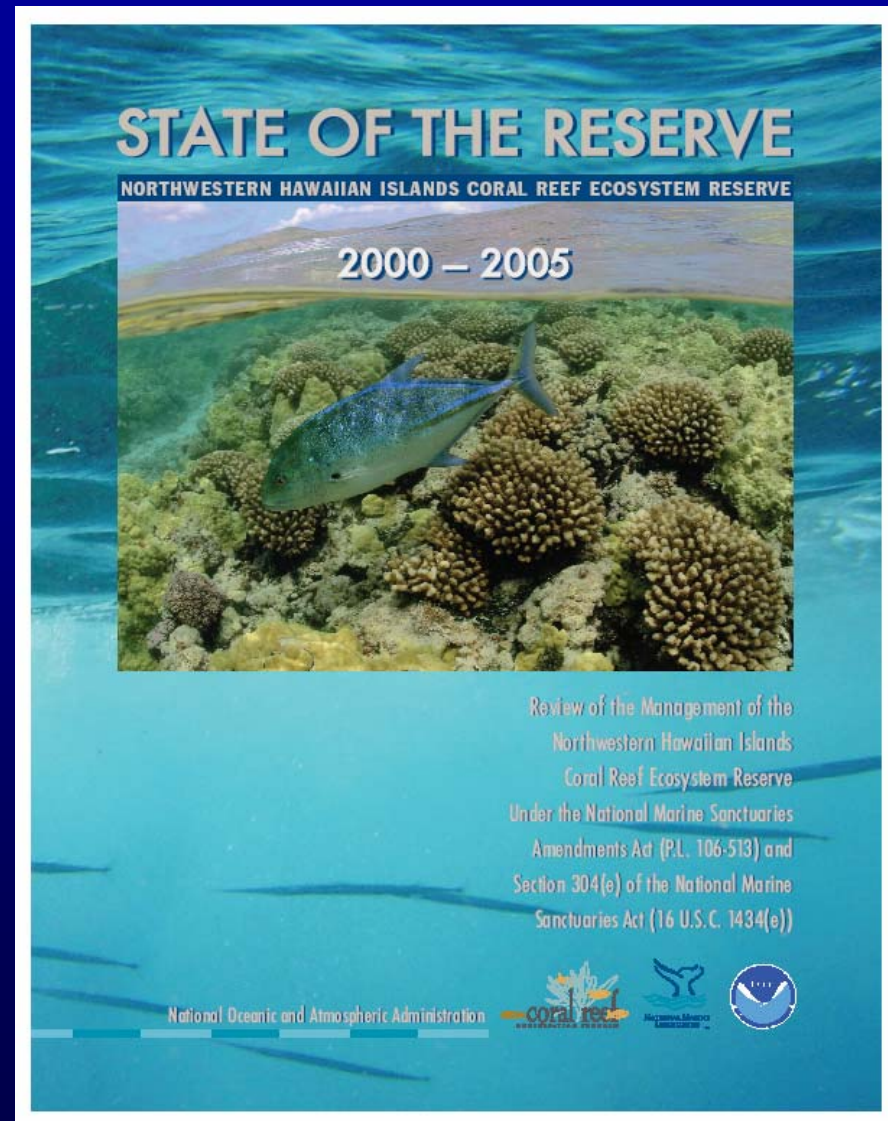


State of the Reserve 2000-2005

The National Marine Sanctuaries
Amendments Act of 2000 states:

“If the Secretary has not designated a national marine sanctuary in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands under sections 303 and 304 of the National Marine sanctuaries Act (16 U.S.C. 1433, 1434) before October 1, 2005, the Secretary shall conduct a review of the management of the reserve under section 304(e) of that Act (16 U.S.C. 1434(e)).”

Report available on line.



Memorandum of Understanding



NOAA, DOI and the State of Hawaii will sign an MOU that will provide seamless ecosystem management for the NWHI Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve and the foundation for the future sanctuary.



www.hawaiireef.noaa.gov