

Expansion of NWHI Should Be Opposed

Other Voices

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The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands monument expansion should be opposed. If you eliminate the US (Hawaiian) fishery, then the area will be completely open to Illegal, Unregulated, Unreported (IUU) fisheries. US fishers are regulated in equipment, species interactions (takes), amount of fish caught and they have VMS onboard as well as observers. The White House supposedly wants to regulate IUU fishing, but this action opens the door for IUU in the area. Who will stop IUU and how will they enforce rules?

The State of HI (DLNR) is very quick to claim how they are trying to create a "community" managed system of fisheries ecosystem management with consultation and community involvement in the planning, implementation and operation of community-based fishing. This top-down edict is a complete 180 from "community."

The Antiquities Act does NOT require ANY public input. A small group is forcing their view on the people of Hawaii Nei without any discussion of the public (LOCAL--not Mainland) perception on the use of the area. This is NOT pono.

This action will eliminate 67 percent of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) around Hawaii. The Remote Pacific and Marianas Monuments and the expansion will leave 28 percent of the US EEZ in the Pacific Ocean off-limits to fishing. That leaves 33 percent of the EEZ around the Main Hawaiian Islands as potential fishing grounds. Much of this is also being systematically removed by Bottom Fish Reserve Areas, MPAs and Marine Reserves, Sanctuaries, and the new community-based areas. This will NOT ensure food security or food sovereignty for the residents of Hawaii Nei.

The expansion proponents keep stating the area is "overfished". Suzanne Case said this, and DLNR has absolutely no data to back up this statement--they have NO jurisdiction here. The waters in question are federally managed under the Magnussen-Stevens Act. Either the expansionists are saying that the Federal Government has mismanaged this area and so we should continue to give them more area to mismanage, or they are trying to eliminate the M-S Act. This latter is an objective of Pew Trusts.

I think Suzanne Case wants a big flag to wave at the IUCN showing how we now have the largest no-fish area in the world. The size of Washington, Oregon and California, combined.

The area is being poorly managed in a sense, and this will only aggravate the problem. The problem is that the fishery is managed as part of the US international quota, especially for tuna. Hawaii is a REGIONAL fishery and should be managed as such. The expansion area removes a large part of what is required to have a sustainable, regional fishery, and will increase Hawaiian fishers' reliance on "traded" quotas from areas like the Marshall Islands. Hawaii

should be managed as its own regional fishery and not part of the US International allocation that can be traded around.

Permits in the area show clearly that the main access is for scientists. Education, NH access and recreational use are very small compared to the numbers of "researchers" who can go in there. An interesting note is that, since NOAA has "cared" for the monk seal in the NWHI, their numbers have dropped continuously. As a scientist, one needs to ask if their constant "studying" is detrimental. One also needs to ask why, if they say lack of clean habitat, and forage fish and too many top predators are creating the problems, why hasn't this been the focus of their efforts instead of poking seals?

The people who have weighed in against this are really formidable: Mayor of Kauai, the Western Pacific Fisheries Management Council, the combined councils of ALL the fisheries management councils in the US, 30 elected representatives in the Hawaii State Legislature, The Head of the State Senate, and fishing groups statewide. When do these voices get heard? Why does it feel like this is a done deal?

Fish and mammals don't know anything about imaginary lines drawn on a map. Once you set a boundary like this it will be forever. The fish will continue to adapt to changes within their own ecosystems and don't give a darn about these imaginary lines. They will migrate in and out of the area and this will change over time. What protection is this?

The military is not subject to ANY of the conservation rules, and by allowing them to operate sonar in the area and continue missile launches and at sea training, the conservation rules are meaningless. Recently, the Pacific Missile Firing Range has been expanding its territorial restrictions on fishers due to rocket firing and missile testing. If the boundary of the new NWHI area was expanded from Nihoa to 200 miles, then Niihau and part of Kauai would be off limits to fishers, and the line would conveniently come right up to the restricted area around PMRF.

Since there is talk of making PMRF an active military base, and since recent activity took place in an expanded range restriction (during a prime fishing week), fishers are very concerned that expanded military use will result in further restrictions.

So, is this the federal government messing with the federal government and Pew using 7 Native Hawaiians and OHA's desire to be the point of contact for nation-within-a-nation status for NH under the legislation being promoted by ANOTHER handful of NH? Without having a public discussion, the people lose. A few times over all at once with the stroke of a pen.

Consequences of a unilateral, federal decision like this will be felt for decades, and will result in more closures.

So, the proponents' actions will result in:

- Shutting out regulated fishers and replacing them with IUU
- Closing all access to the area, impacting food sovereignty and food security for a regional fishery

- Setting up an artificial promotion for OHA, a bunch of elected officials with no real background in large-scale marine resource management
- Removing all commercial and recreational fishers from the area yet opening it to all military training and activities
- Limiting sovereignty for State and Local authorities in 67% of Hawaii's offshore areas (out to 200 miles offshore)
- Creating a group of "privileged" folks who can go to the monument
- Ignoring input from State and Local groups in favor of a small number of residents and Mainland-funded conservation organizations (especially Pew) who have an admitted agenda to eliminate the Magnussen-Stevens Act
- Creating artificial boundaries for migratory species
- Allowing military expansion that also affects fishing closer to the MHI
- Setting the precedent that public comment is unnecessary if the Federal Government wants something.

Lyn McNutt is a resident of Wailua.

- Bertrand Kobayashi, House Representatives, District-19: Waialae, Kahala, Diamond Head, Kaimuki, Kapahulu
- Sam Kong, House Representatives, District-33: Aiea
- Bob McDermott, House Representatives, District-40: Ewa, Ewa Beach, Ewa Gentry, Iroquois Point.
- Angus McKelvey, House Representatives, District-10: West Maui, Maalaea, North Kihei
- John Mizuno, House Representatives, District-28: Kalihi Valley, Kamehameha Heights, portion of Lower Kalihi
- Dee Morikawa, House Representatives, District-16: Niihau, Lehua, Koloa, Waimea
- Mark Nakashima, House Representatives, District-1: Haumakua, North Hilo, South Hilo
- Marcus Oshiro, House Representatives, District-46: Wahiawa, Whitmore Village
- Feki Pouha, House Representatives, District-47: Waialua, Haleiwa, Pupukea, Kahuku, Laie, Hauula, Waiahole, Waikane, Sunset Beach, Punaluu, Ka'a'awa
- Calvin Say, House Representatives, District-20: St. Louis Heights, Palolo, Maunalani Heights, Wilhelmina Rise, Kaimuki
- Gregg Takayama, House Representatives, District-34: Pearl City, Waimalu, Pacific Pallsades
- James Tokioka, House Representatives, District-15: Wailua Homesteads, Hanamaulu, Lihue, Puhi, Old Koloa town, Omao
- Cliff Tsuji, House Representatives, District-2: Keukaha, parts of Hilo, Panaewa, Waiakea
- Gene Ward, House Representatives, District-17: Hawaii Kai, Kalama Valley
- Ryan Yamane, House Representatives, District-37: Mililani, Waipio Gentry, Waikele
- Kyle Yamashita, House Representatives, District-12: Sprecklesville, Pukalani, Makawao, Kula, Keokea, Ulupalakua, Kahului
- ✓ Senate President Ronald D. Kouchi District-8: Niihau, Kauai (April 28, 2016)

Fishing Organizations and Associations

- ✓ Oahu Council of the Association of the Hawaiian Civic Clubs (July 9, 2016)
- ✓ Hawaii chefs and businessmen letter to POTUS (July 8, 2016)
- ✓ Dean Okimoto, Owner, Nalo Farms (May 2, 2016)
- ✓ MGrew Rice, Captain, on behalf of 120 Captains and Owners of Charter Boat Operators (May 5, 2016)
- ✓ Sean Martin, President, Hawaii Longline Association (April 2, 2016)

- ✓ Neil Kanemoto, President, Pacific Islands Fisheries Group (March 7, 2016)
- ✓ John Kaneko, Manager, Hawaii Seafood Council (March 25, 2016)
- ✓ Basil Oshiro, President, Maui Fishermen's Cooperative (March 22, 2016)
- ✓ Phil Fernandez, President, Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition (March 15, 2016)