



HAWAII SEAFOOD COUNCIL

1130 N Nimitz Hwy., Ste. A-263
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817 USA

Tel/Fax: 808.521.5020
info@hawaii-seafood.org

www.hawaii-seafood.org

July 8, 2016

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

Re: Citizen's Proposal for Expanding the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument while allowing Responsible Pelagic Fishing.

I am John Kaneko, Program Manager of the Hawaii Seafood Council, a non-profit organization in Honolulu, Hawaii. HSC's mission includes educating the public about the health benefits, safety and sustainability of Hawaii's seafood and ocean fisheries through education, outreach, training and research.

In the past few months, the campaign for the proposed expansion of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) has accelerated with pro-expansion proponents and the fishing community polarized and at odds when a rational compromise solution exists. The debate has degenerated into presenting the public with a grossly oversimplified and misleading choice between "conservation and fishing". It's not that simple.

The environmental protections and conservation goals within the current 50-mile boundaries of the PMNM are already being achieved. Responsible pelagic longline fishing exists and can operate between 50 and 200 miles of the expanded PMNM, without adverse impacts on the protected resources and habitat within the existing 50-mile PMNM boundaries. This has been monitored and verified repeatedly by NOAA Biological Assessments and other evaluations which are required to insure compliance of Hawaii's longline fishing industry and management system with federal and international fishery and environmental laws.

The attached Citizen's Proposal builds on the June 16, 2016 proposal made by U.S. Senator Brian Schatz that accommodates fishing by trolling and handline fishermen in a small but important part of the waters between 50 and 200 miles of the PMNM. This Citizen's Proposal seeks to recognize and accommodate verifiable responsible pelagic longline fishing in the 50 to 200 mile zone in the expanded PMNM. Responsible fishing operations would be verified through intensive monitoring and evaluation by competent federal authorities of the performance of the fishery, the scientists and managers, to keep this important Hawaii fishery operating sustainably with ecosystem protections in place within the current PMNM boundaries. Please give consideration to the Citizen's Proposal and perspective on the merits of allowing responsible fishing to continue in the area from 50 to 200 miles being considered for expansion of the PMNM.

Sincerely,

John Kaneko MS, DVM
Program Manager

cc. U.S. Senator Brian Schatz; U.S. Senator Mazie Hirono; U.S. Representative Mark Takai; U.S. Representative Tulsi Gabbard

The Citizen's Proposal for Expanding the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) while allowing Responsible Pelagic Fishing to occur between 50 and 200 miles.

- Expand the PMNM boundaries from 50 to 200 miles creating the world's largest Marine National Monument.
- Disallow activities that have direct adverse impact on bottom substrate, biota and artifacts of historic significance throughout the expanded PMNM.
- Maintain all established protections and exclusion of commercial fishing within 50 miles, the current boundary of the PMNM.
- Allow fishermen using trolling and handline gear to maintain access to PMNM waters from 50 to 200 miles of shore east of 163°W in the PMNM as proposed by U.S. Senator Schatz.
- Require Responsible Trolling, Handline and Longline fishermen to follow all current and applicable fishing and environmental regulations.
- Maintain management authority of fishing activity from 50 to 200 miles in the expanded PMNM under the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.
- Allow Responsible Pelagic Longline fishing to occur in the PMNM from 50 to 200 miles.
- Responsible Pelagic Longline fishing rules for the PMNM would include among others,
 - 100% of the longline vessels must hold a valid Hawaii Limited Access Permit.
 - 100% Satellite vessel tracking to verify movements and location of fishing activity.
 - 100% of longline vessels using shallow-set gear and 20% of those using deep-set gear must carry a federal observer to verify fishing activities and to assist fishermen with accurately identifying and properly handling protected species.
 - 100% Annual Protected Species Training requirement for vessel operators.
 - Monitor impacts of longline fishing, scrutinize new data for adverse impacts on the PMNM resources and habitat and respond as required by law.
 - Make certain that the fishery is operating in compliance with 1) Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), 2) the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), 3) the Endangered Species Act (ESA), 4) the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and others.

Benefits of the Citizen's Proposal.

- The PMNM becomes the largest Marine National Monument. Hawaii and the US can be proud.
- The PMNM resources and habitat inshore of 50 miles will continue to be protected.
- Hawaii longline vessels will be present in the PMNM from 50 to 200 miles and able to support federal surveillance and protection of PMNM from illegal foreign vessel incursions.
- Hawaii's No. 1 local food production sector will be supported.
- Hawaii's consumers will benefit from local supply of health-promoting, fresh wild-caught seafood.
- NOAA Fisheries and the US Regional Fishery Management Council process will gain recognition for insuring that the Hawaii longline fishery continues to operate responsibly.
- A strong message is sent that the US supports responsible fisheries operating under a verifiable science-based management system with stakeholder input and a public rule-making process.
- A strong message is sent to the international community that the US is serious about responsible fishing, sustainable seafood and combating illegal, underreported and undocumented (IUU) fishing.
- All of this can be done without additional tax payer burden because the proposed rules have been in place since 2004.