



PACIFIC
ISLANDS
FISHERIES
GROUP

July 1, 2019

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the Pacific Islands Fisheries Group, I would like to respectfully request that the commercial fishing prohibitions within the Marine National Monuments in the Western Pacific Region be removed. Management of our nation's resources should be carried out through the transparent and inclusive process of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The Pacific Islands Fisheries Group (PIFG) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to supporting marine and fisheries conservation and management in the Pacific through cooperative research, education and outreach.

We live in island communities whose culture and traditions are deeply tied to our ocean and marine resources. In 2016 we wrote to President Obama asking him not to expand the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument from its existing 50 nm to include the entire 200 nm of our Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI). Unfortunately, the predictable impacts on our local commercial fishing community and seafood consuming public were ignored.

Nearly half of the US Exclusive Economic Zone (2.2 million square miles) is located in the US Pacific Island Region and today over 50% of this area is prohibited to US commercial fishing vessels. Nearly three quarters of the EEZ waters surrounding the Hawaiian archipelago are closed to US domestic fishing vessels. The troubling fact is that the Monument closures do not and will not provide an additional conservation benefits over what was already in place through the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), Endangered Species Act (ESA) and other statutory authorities.

Thank you considering our request to remove the commercial fishing prohibitions within the Marine National Monuments in the Western Pacific and return fishery management to the transparent science-based process under the MSA.

Respectfully,

Neil Kanemoto
President
Pacific Islands Fisheries Group