



WESTERN
PACIFIC
REGIONAL
FISHERY
MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL

6.B.1(1)

190th CM

CNMI ISLAND REPORT

CNMI COUNCIL MEMBER JOHN GOURLEY, VICE CHAIR

190th Meeting of the
Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

Five-year review of the Marianas Trench nomination for the Sanctuary Inventory List

- ⦿ Communication and outreach within the Marianas - very little, especially in Guam
- ⦿ Much confusion on what exactly is being proposed by proponents (Friends of Mariana Trench); chaos ensues in the community
- ⦿ 1 February 2022: Legislative Public Meeting by Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and Friends of Mariana Trench hosted by Natural Resource Chair, Representative Sheila Babauta.



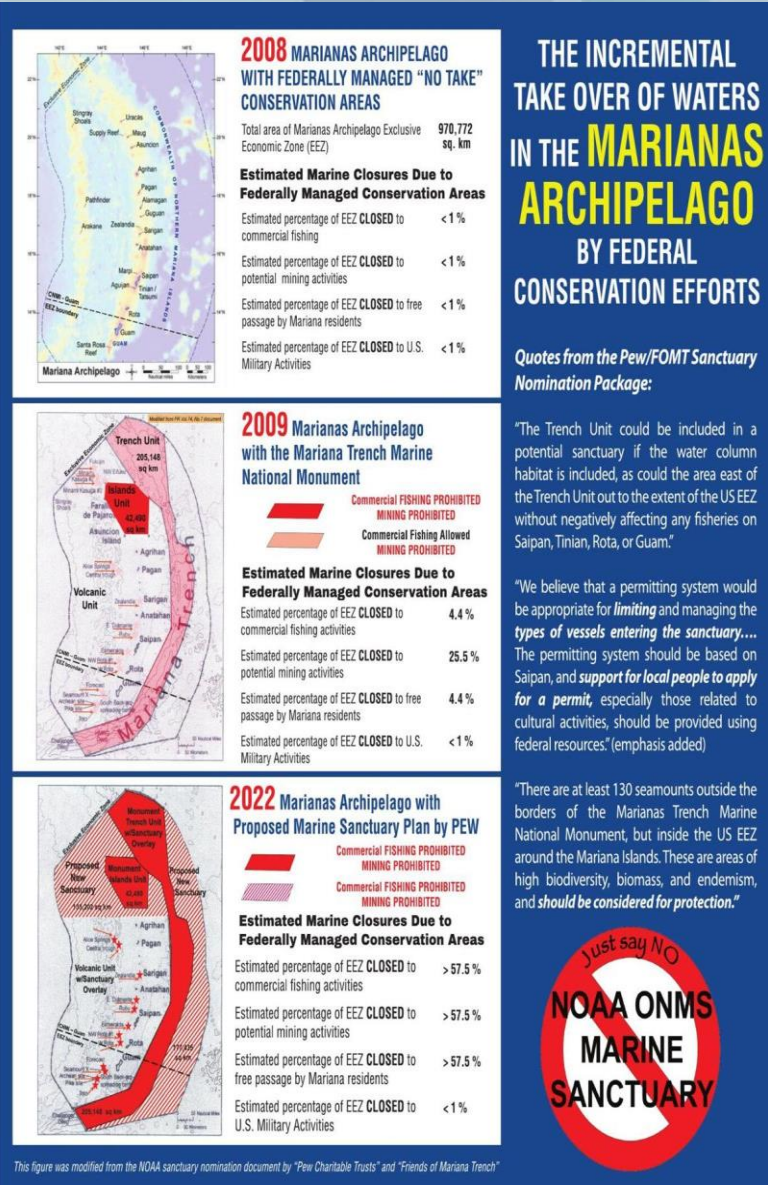
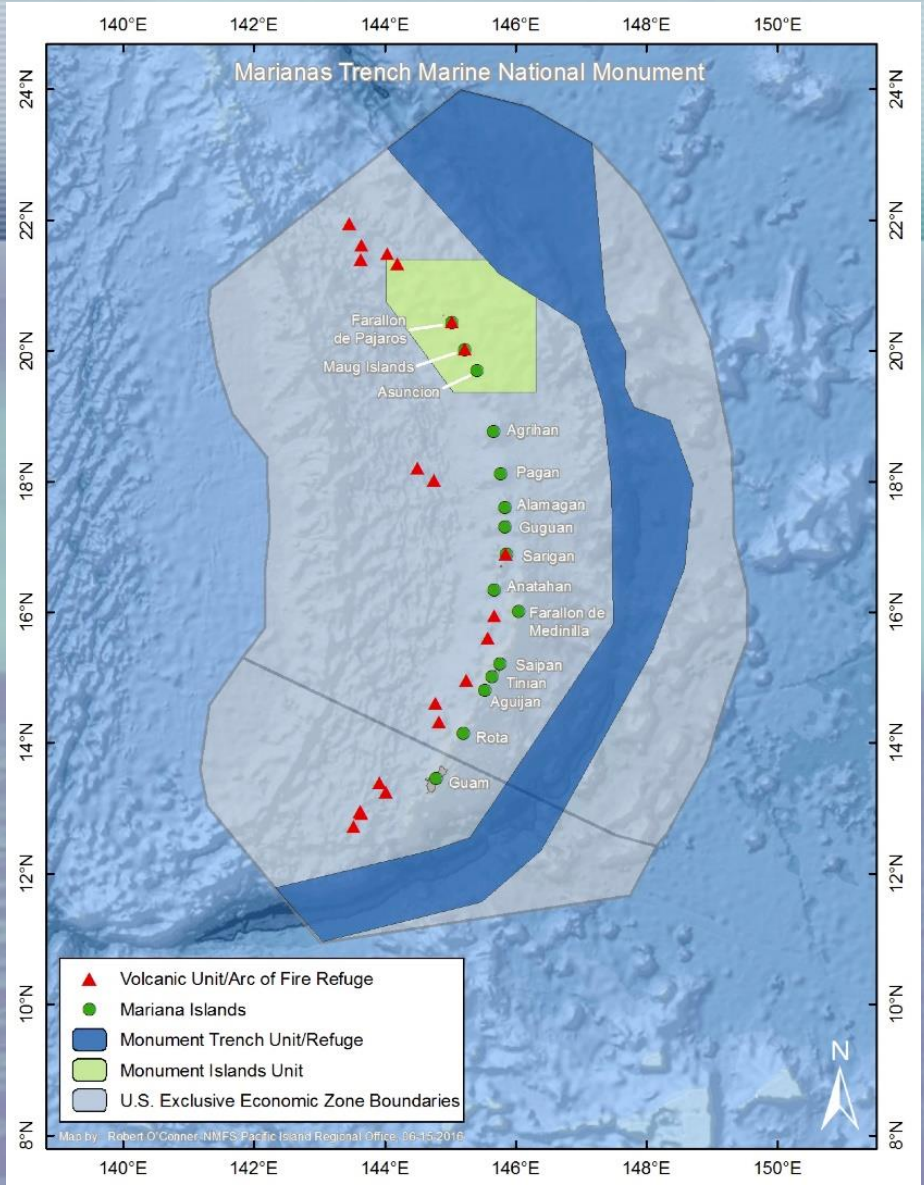
House Natural Resources chair Rep. Sheila Therese Babauta (D-Saipan) leads the Environmental Sustainability and Stewardship Stakeholders meeting on whether the nomination of Mariana Trench should remain on the inventory of sites for potential national marine sanctuary designation.

Five-year review of the Marianas Trench nomination for the Sanctuary Inventory List

12 February 2022: Formal FR Oral Public Comment Period - Virtual Meeting

- 5 people spoke – 4 negative; 1 positive
- Commenters were given only three minutes to talk
- Low participation caused ONMS to stop the comment period 2 hours early
- One commenter requested to make a second comment – ONMS refused
- Time periods advertised for oral comment period were confused





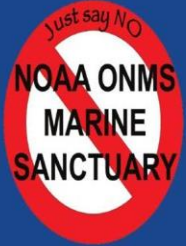
THE INCREMENTAL TAKE OVER OF WATERS IN THE MARIANAS ARCHIPELAGO BY FEDERAL CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Quotes from the Pew/FOMT Sanctuary Nomination Package:

"The Trench Unit could be included in a potential sanctuary if the water column habitat is included, as could the area east of the Trench Unit out to the extent of the US EEZ without negatively affecting any fisheries on Saipan, Tinian, Rota, or Guam."

"We believe that a permitting system would be appropriate for *limiting* and managing the *types of vessels entering the sanctuary*.... The permitting system should be based on Saipan, and *support for local people to apply for a permit*, especially those related to cultural activities, should be provided using federal resources." (emphasis added)

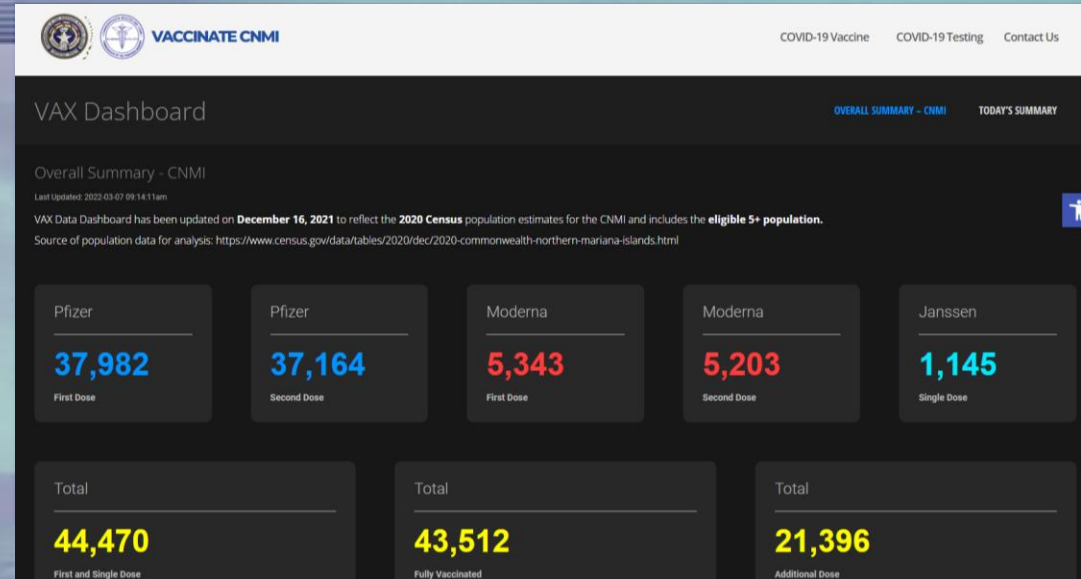
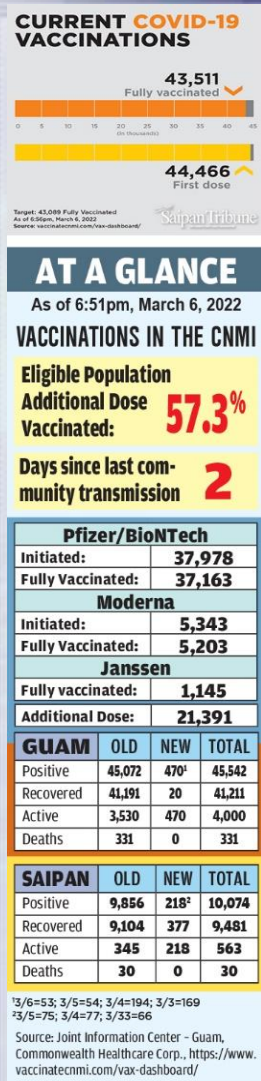
"There are at least 130 seamounts outside the borders of the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument, but inside the US EEZ around the Mariana Islands. These are areas of high biodiversity, biomass, and endemism, and *should be considered for protection.*"



Five-year review of the Marianas Trench nomination for the Sanctuary Inventory List

- 18 February 2022: CNMI Governor Torres scoping meeting on the five-year review of the nomination of the Mariana Trench on the Sanctuary Inventory List.
- Public Comments
 - There are approximately 3 negative comments to one supporting comment
 - Not all comments known to have been submitted were posted, had to submit multiple comments to ONMS that were not posted
- Second 45-day comment period has opened

COVID-19 Updates – 100.1% Vaccinated in the CNMI.



As of Mar. 07, 2022 the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands reported 218 cases of COVID-19, bringing the total number of cases to 10,074 since the start of the pandemic.

Eligible Population Additional Dose Vaccinated (12+) is at 57.3%

CNMI Economy – CNMI Tourism

- Travel Bubble on-going. CNMI revised travel policy:

1. February 8, 2022, all travelers entering the CNMI by air or sea will no longer be tested on arrival.
2. All travelers are required to complete a mandatory health declaration form and upload their vaccination card.
3. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 on any COVID-19 test platform (an at-home test kit or otherwise), regardless of vaccination status, must stay home and isolate for at least five (5) days (except to get medical care).



CNMI relaxes quarantine rules for some travelers

