



Report of the Non-Commercial Fishery Advisory Committee Meeting

Tuesday, June 13, 2023

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Webex

1. Welcome and Introductions

Dean Sensui, NCFAC Chair, opened the meeting at 1:05 p.m. NCFAC members in attendance included: Keith, Hongguang Ma, Ben Walin, Phil Fernandez

NFAC members absent included: Steve Kaneko, Audrey Toves, Kin Cruz,

Others in attendance included Joshua DeMello, Zach Yamada, and Felix Reyes (Council Staff); Bryan Ishida (DAR); Marlowe Sabater, Kirsten Leong (NMFS PIFSC), Floyd Masga (CNMI DLNR),

Public members in attendance included: Barbara Quimby, Tammy Harp

2. Review of Last NCFAC Meeting and Recommendations

Council staff reported that the last NCFAC meeting was held on Thursday, September 8, 2022 via Webex and provided the status of the last recommendations. He noted that the NCFAC's recommendation on the NWHI Monument Expansion Area (MEA) was taken into account when the Council took final action in March 2023. However, the cost-recovery component was rejected by the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the Council is working with NMFS on finalizing the amendment to the Hawaii Fishery Ecosystem Plan. The NCFAC's recommendation on data collection is being worked on through proposals submitted to increase public engagement and utilizing existing registries to collect data. Staff said more information will be provided as these projects are implemented.

The NCFAC discussed their disappointment in not allowing cost recovery for fishing in the MEA and agreed that fishing in that area would be limited to only those who can afford to do so.

3. Non-commercial Data Collection

A. Review of creel survey

This agenda item was postponed until members from the Marianas are available.

B. Hawaii small-boat fishery plans

Council staff reported on a Hawaii small-boat project that is being initiated by the Council this year. He said that a presentation by the community to the Council and NMFS spurred a project to increase engagement with the fishing community. The project will engage the fishing community in a series of meetings on issues that are of importance to the community, including data collection. He said the NCFAC members may be called upon to participate in these meetings.

An NCFAC member said that there are roadshows planned between the State of Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources and the Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition to talk with the community about herbivore regulations. He was concerned about meeting fatigue

in the community if the meetings are around the same time. He suggested including the state in planning the Council's engagement.

C. MRIP Regional Implementation Plan Updates

Council staff explained that the Pacific Islands Regional Implementation Plan (PIRIP) expired at the beginning of 2023. He reviewed the projects that were included in the previous plan noting that many of the projects have been addressed or will be addressed. It is important to provide an updated PIRIP in order to receive assistance from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) for data collection.

A member asked if the Hawaii Marine Recreational Fishing Survey (HMRFS) provides data by island and if it is by size or number. Ma replied that HMRFS only provides state level but can differentiate between federal, state, and inland areas. There were some efforts to get estimates of catch and fishing effort by island but no official estimates have been developed. HMRFS captures data by numbers but if there are enough weight measurements, an estimate of catch by weight can be provided as well.

4. NMFS Socio-economics Project Updates

Kirsten Leong, NMFS PIFSC, provided update on socioeconomic projects being worked on or developed by PIFSC. A Hawaii recreational fishing expenditure survey was completed in 2022 and will be used to amplify the contributions of non-commercial fishing to Hawaii's economy. There was also a Recreational Fisheries Economics Constituents Workshop held April 25-26 and the region's representation consisted of one PIFSC scientist. The goal of the workshop was to increase the understanding of how economics plays a role in recreational fisheries management, understand constituents' perception of data, and identify how participant groups can contribute, collaborate, and communicate. A workshop report is due in the fall. She said NMFS PIFSC is also working on implementing a Pacific Islands Region Charter/For-hire Survey in 2024 to understand the economics of the charter industry and detail its economic contributions. On the social science side, PIFSC is examining the concepts behind the term non-commercial and working with others on such terms as sustenance, customary exchange, etc. A paper is being developed on thinking about what non-commercial fishing really is and looking at fisher demographics, constraints, fish disposition, beneficiaries of fishing, motivations and benefits. There is an emerging application for social science in determining resilient seafood systems as well as tracking fish flow and downstream disposition. This allows non-commercial fishing to be thought of in terms of not just economic gain but also food systems, community resiliency, and maximization to the community.

An SSC member said that resilient food systems are important for the community and there have been efforts in the legislature to pursue this type of information. He welcomed the additional information that would be useful for this effort.

There was concern that the Recreational Fisheries Economics Constituents Workshop had only one representative and there should have been equitable representation. A member said that the region's interest needs to be represented and the same thing happened at the recreational fishing summit. Another member asked how the region's economic value for non-commercial fisheries compares with other regions. They thought that the information from the economic reports

would provide proof that the Council should be at the table. The Chair noted that when the charter fishery is added into the non-commercial expenditures, the total is almost \$1B which is a huge impact to the state economy. *The NCFAC suggested that these concerns be communicated to NMFS.*

The NCFAC discussed identifying who is a non-commercial fisher. One member noted that some fishers may not consider themselves commercial because they only cover costs and do not make a profit. Others are part-time commercial and sell when they have a surplus. He said that there needs to be a breakpoint between true commercial and non-commercial and that might increase the non-commercial value. Leong said it is the way people think about themselves is what makes a difference and even though the regulations say if you sell one fish you are commercial, the identity and motivations don't align with the way regulations are crafted.

5. Offshore Development Issues

Council staff provided an update on offshore wind development. Last December, the Department of Energy deployed a LIDAR buoy 12 miles off of Makapu'u to collect wind direction and strength to assist in the development of offshore wind projects. He said that around the nation there are contracted companies going through the NEPA process to develop offshore wind projects as well.

The NCFAC said that bird interactions will be a concern with any offshore development. Staff responded that there is a working group formed by the Hawaii Advisory Panel that has been providing issues and having discussions with offshore developers to ensure that Hawaii's fishermen are considered. An NCFAC member noted that the fishing data isn't available by location so the offshore projects won't know who they are affecting. He said the Council should think about how to document the fishing grounds to provide a way to provide fishing history in those areas. Staff replied that the Hawaii Advisory Panel is developing "FishMaps" as a tool to look at traditional fishing areas and provide it to managers as a resource but agreed that there needs to be additional support. The NCFAC agreed that the small-boat fleet should document their fishing grounds in order to be able to sit at the table in offshore development discussions.

6. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

7. Discussion and Recommendations

The Non-Commercial Fisheries Advisory Committee made the following recommendations:

1. The NCFAC recommended the Council communicate to NMFS the disappointment in the lack of, or disproportionate representation of, the Pacific Islands Region at national non-commercial meetings like the recreational fishing summit and economics workshop.

The NCFAC felt that there was need for constituent representation of the non-commercial sector at these meetings, particularly in light of the Administration's push for EEJ.

2. The NCFAC recommended the Council work with the non-commercial fishing community to document those areas used for non-commercial fishing. With the increase in

offshore development, the NCFAC wants to ensure that the non-commercial fisheries are recognized and consulted with as these projects are developed.

3. The NCFAC requested the Council continue to update the NCFAC on FishMaps activities. The NCFAC appreciated the work of the Hawaii Advisory Panel to document traditional fishing areas and hopes to incorporate non-commercial fishing as well.

8. Other Business

Council staff noted the 148th Scientific and Statistical Committee was being held next week and the 195th Council Meeting is to be held in American Samoa on June 27-29, 2023. He invited members to participate online and noted the information for the meetings are available on the Council's website, wpcouncil.org.

The meeting ended at 3:02 pm