



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office
300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 3-122
Honolulu, Hawaii 96850



6.F(1)
204th CM

Mr. William Sword
Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council
1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Mr. Sword:

The Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office (PIFWO) would like to report the following activities related to USFWS managed lands and waters in the Western and Central Pacific Region to you and the rest of the Council, on behalf of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration, Ecological Services, National Wildlife Refuges, Marine National Monuments, and Migratory Bird Programs. The following activities took place from May 16 to August 15, 2025.

Jeremy Raynal is now the FWS primary representative but has other commitments during the time of the 204th meeting. Dr. Sean Macduff remains as the alternate and is attending in place of Mr. Raynal.

Pacific Islands Heritage MNM:

- USFWS issued a Special Use Permit for research in the Pacific Islands Heritage Marine National Monument (PIHMNM) from June to August 2025 for the University of Hawaii in and the Howland Island, Baker Island, Jarvis Island, Palmyra Atoll, and Kingman Reef Monument Units to catch and release bigeye, skipjack, and yellowfin tuna with conventional tags around industry provided existing drifting FADs (dFADs) in the area using the vessel Gutsy Lady 4 (United States flagged).
- USFWS will be issuing a research permit in the PIHMNM for the Ocean Exploration Trust using the vessel Nautilus August to September 2025. They will explore and map the Howland and Baker Islands Monument Unit.

Marianas Trench MNM:

- A right of way Special Use Permit (SUP) has been issued to allow a fiber-optic submarine cable to be laid within the Mariana Trench National Wildlife Refuge.

PACIFIC REGION 1

IDAHO, OREGON*, WASHINGTON,
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*PARTIAL

- A research special use permit was issued to Ocean Exploration Trust to allow the E/V Nautilus to explore hydrothermal vent, abyssal plain, and seamount habitats within the monument. The expedition began in early May and was completed in June 2025.
- Commercial scattering of ashes within the refuge was determined to be appropriate and compatible with Mariana Trench NWR refuge goals. A SUP for this activity is likely to be issued later this month.
- The Japanese government (JAMSTEC) applied to conduct research in the Marian Arc of Fire NWR and the Mariana Trench NWR to investigate faunal and microbial ecosystems at various seamounts, mud volcanoes, and deep sea areas in the Mariana subduction system. A SUP is likely to be issued next month for work to occur in December 2025 and January 2026.

Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR):

- The American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR) has expressed interest in purchasing a drone to assist with FAD maintenance and monitoring. WSFR is planning to work with partners to add this as proposed action in their consultation. We will provide additional updates on this as more information becomes available.

Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office (PIFWO):

- 22 long-term coral reef ecosystem monitoring transects were installed at Wake Island seaward reef and lagoon sites in June 2025. Baseline benthos, invertebrate, and fish monitoring data were collected.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Raynal
Biologist – Aquatic Ecosystems
USFWS WesPac Council Representative
Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service