HOW YOU CAN HELP TO PROTECT THE NWHI

Voice your concerns about the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands to policymakers. Join over 750,000 people concerned about the environment by signing up with the online Action Alert Network. Through the Action Network, you can make your voice heard through free faxes or emails to key decision-makers.

Sign up with KAHEA and Environmental Defense at www.actionnetwork.org to receive information on steps you can take to protect the NWHI and to receive periodic alerts about other pressing issues.

Contact Governor Cayetano and encourage the state to develop protection measures in state NWHI waters that are consistent with the Executive Order protections for NWHI federal waters.
Fax: (808) 586-0006

Contact Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans and encourage him to keep all of the NWHI Executive Order protections in place.
Fax: (202) 482-4576

Participate in upcoming public hearings on the NWHI. Public input is needed on the Draft NWHI Reserve Operations Plan developed by the NWHI Reserve Council, a broadly representative body tasked with recommending appropriate management strategies to protect the NWHI.

As the NWHI Reserve moves toward Sanctuary status, there will be other important public hearings and opportunities to make your voice heard.

The Northwestern Hawaiian Island CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM RESERVE provides a pu‘uhonua (refuge) for our future generations.

KAHEA is an alliance of Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners, environmentalists and others concerned about protecting traditional and customary rights and our fragile environment.

KAHEA
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PUBLIC INPUT

T HREATS TO THE NWHI R ESERVE

PROTECTING JOBS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

In 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt issued an Executive Order designed to protect the NWHI from the depredations of guano harvesting, pillaging of feathers (for hats), eggs, and shells. This led to the creation of national wildlife refuges designed to protect land and surrounding waters of the NWHI. In the 1990’s, however, under the management of the federally funded Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (Wespac), the NWHI lobster population crashed after severe overfishing. The lobster industry also trapped close to 200 “non-target” species of fish, octopus, and other animals which monk seals depend upon for food. An increasing number of monk seals in the NWHI have been found emaciated and starving. As a result of legal action, the lobster fishery—consisting of 7 vessels in 1998—has been closed for the past two years.

PUBLIC INPUT

In May 2000, President William Clinton called for public input into the design of additional protection measures for the vast and distant NWHI. This led to one of the most open public dialogues ever held in Hawai‘i on a resource protection issue. A Native Hawaiian fisherman drafted a community-based protection plan for the NWHI and presented it at a workshop organized by KAHEA, a grassroots alliance of Hawaiian cultural practitioners and environmentalists. Led by kupuna (elders), sixty-five people from 5 islands reworked the fisherman’s plan. Two sets of six public federal hearings were held throughout the islands. Over 9,500 people submitted written testimony, overwhelmingly in support of many of the strong conservation measures outlined in the community plan.

THREATS TO THE NWHI RESERVE

The Western Pacific Fisheries Management Council has led an unrelenting campaign to convince the Bush Administration to annul or rescind the Executive Orders establishing the NWHI Reserve. Wespac is seeking to open up the protected area for coral harvesting and other extractive activities. The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands need your help.