

Main Hawaiian Islands IMMA

Description

Hawaiian monk seals occur throughout the Hawaiian Island chain. Their six main reproductive sites are in the North-western Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) at Kure Atoll, Midway Atoll, Pearl and Hermes Reef, Lisianski Island, Laysan Island, and French Frigate Shoals (National Marine Fisheries Service, 2007). While sightings were previously rare in the main Hawaiian Islands, monk seals are now regularly seen there and births have been documented on all of the major islands (Baker and Johanos, 2004; Littnan et al., 2015). This IMMA includes all areas identified as critical habitat for the Hawaiian monk seal (see NOAA federal registry document 50 CFR 226 (2015)) in the Main Hawaiian Islands. It also includes other important areas in the island group that are managed under "Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans", but are not included in the designated critical habitat (i.e. areas subject to the Marine Corps Base Hawaii, the Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, and the Pacific Missile Range Facility).



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Figure 1: A monk seal surfaces near a fish farm within the Main Hawaiian Islands IMMA. Photo: Robin W. Baird, Cascadia Research Collective

Criterion A: Species or Population Vulnerability

The Hawaiian monk seal (Fig. 1) is listed as Endangered (EN C1) on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (Littnan et al., 2015). According to the current IUCN Red List account, within the Hawaiian monk seal's range, two regions are often



Area Size

6,396 km²

Qualifying Species and Criteria

Hawaiian monk seals –

Neomonachus schauinslandi

Criteria A, C1

Marine Mammal Diversity

Stenella longirostris, *Tursiops truncatus*, *Feresa attenuata*, *Globicephala macrorhynchus*, *Kogia sima*, *Mesoplodon densirostris*, *Peponocephala electra*, *Stenella attenuata*, *Steno bredanensis*, *Ziphius cavirostris*, *Pseudorca crassidens*, *Megaptera novaeangliae*, *Neomonachus schauinslandi*

Summary

The Main Hawaiian Islands IMMA holds a significant proportion of the global population of the Endangered Hawaiian monk seal (*Neomonachus schauinslandi*). It encompasses 6 discrete areas of critical habitat designated for the Hawaiian monk seal in the Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. These areas include preferred pupping and nursing areas, significant haul-out areas, and/or marine foraging areas that are essential for the persistence of the species.

distinguished: the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, comprising eight subpopulations located on remote atolls and small islands, and the main Hawaiian Islands, comprising eight large, high islands and associated small islets. Monk seals in the Main Hawaiian Islands are a single subpopulation. The Main Hawaiian Islands IMMA specifically includes the Main Hawaiian Island subpopulation of Hawaiian monk seal.



Figure 2: Monk seals rest on an offshore islet in the Main Hawaiian Islands. Photo credit: NOAA Fisheries Permit 16632-02.

Criterion C: Key Life Cycle Activities

Sub-criterion C1: Reproductive Areas

The area provides critically important breeding habitats for the Endangered Hawaiian monk seal, which includes areas for pupping (Fig. 2) (Littnan et al., 2015).

Supporting Information

50 CFR 226. (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 50, Part 226)) 2015. Endangered and Threatened Species: Final Rulemaking To Revise Critical Habitat for Hawaiian Monk Seals, pp: 50925-50988

Baker, J. D. and Johanos, T. C. 2004. Abundance of the Hawaiian monk seal in the main Hawaiian Islands. *Biological Conservation* 116: 103-110.

Littnan, C., Harting, A. and Baker, J. 2015. *Neomonachus schauinslandi*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2015: e.T13654A45227978. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2015-2.RLTS.T13654A45227978.en>. Downloaded on 28 March 2017.

National Marine Fisheries Service. 2014. Revision of Critical Habitat for Hawaiian Monk Seals. Final Biological Report. Honolulu, HI, USA. Available at: http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/Library/PRD/Hawaiian%20monk%20seal/Hawaiian_monk_seal_Biological_Report_for_Critical_Habitat.pdf

National Marine Fisheries Service. 2007. Recovery Plan for the Hawaiian Monk Seal. Honolulu, HI, USA. Available at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/recovery/hawaiianmonkseal.pdf>.

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MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTED AREAS TASK FORCE

IUCN SSC WCPA IMMA

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