

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument Permit Application Cover Sheet

This Permit Application Cover Sheet is intended to provide summary information and status to the public on permit applications for activities proposed to be conducted in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. While a permit application has been received, it has not been fully reviewed nor approved by the Monument Management Board to date. The Monument permit process also ensures that all environmental reviews are conducted prior to the issuance of a Monument permit.

Summary Information

Applicant Name: Robert B. Moffitt

Affiliation: Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center

Permit Category: Research

Proposed Activity Dates: June 2009 - July 2012 (field season each year is essentially the month of June)

Proposed Method of Entry (Vessel/Plane): NOAA Research Vessel Oscar Elton Sette

Proposed Locations: Necker Island and Maro Reef (and possible fuel dropoff to Tern Island). No fishing operations will be conducted in State of Hawaii waters.

Estimated number of individuals (including Applicant) to be covered under this permit:

12 (does not include ship's component)

Estimated number of days in the Monument: 29

Description of proposed activities: (complete these sentences):

a.) The proposed activity would...

add another year's data to a long-term resource monitoring program. It records all encountered taxa and monitors changes in abundance over years in many species of the moderate depth coral reef community including fish, invertebrates, and algae.

b.) To accomplish this activity we would

conduct lobster trapping and bottomfishing operations at Necker Island and Maro Reef. The lobster trapping operation is a set site sampling program started in 1985 where 160 lobster traps are set at depths of 15-35 fathoms each afternoon and soaked overnight. Bottomfishing operations will be conducted on the deep slopes at depths of 60-150 fathoms. Samples of otoliths, gonads, and tissue will be retained and used in on going age-and-growth, reproductive, and genetic studies.

c.) This activity would help the Monument by ...

helping to define the unique community occurring in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. It will also provide information on interannual changes in species abundance for

important coral reef species including many cryptic and nocturnal species that are under-represented in daytime visual surveys. It is also important in its ability to monitor the recovery of lobster resources after many years of commercial fishing pressure.

Other information or background: Algal material collected on the lobster traps will be collected and given to the University of Hawaii for identification. Algae is a bycatch of the lobster trapping operation, not a targeted organism. The cruise is tentatively scheduled to stop at French Frigate Shoals to offload fuel for the Tern Island field camp if needed. No other operations are scheduled for this stop.