



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
**NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE**  
Pacific Islands Regional Office  
1601 Kapiolani Blvd., Suite 1110  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-4700  
(808) 944-2200 • Fax (808) 973-2941

Dear Reviewer:

Thank you for agreeing to participate as a peer reviewer of the Draft Biological Report for Proposed Critical Habitat for the Hawaiian monk seal. We appreciate your willingness to help with this important effort to prepare for publication of the proposed rule associated with this document, especially within such a short time frame.

General Directives:

1. Please provide comments on the scientific information and data contained within the biological report.
2. If you believe that justification is lacking or specific information was applied incorrectly in reaching specific conclusions, please specify.
3. Please provide your comments by \*October 22, 2010.\*

Requirements for the Peer Review:

1. The President's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published a Peer Review Bulletin (December 2004) that requires online posting of this peer review as it has been determined to be "influential." To ensure that we have a transparent process for public disclosure, names and affiliations of each peer reviewer, as well as the reviewer's comments, are posted online. We are required to identify peer reviewers by name and affiliation, but NMFS has the ability to post a compilation of reviewer comments. Therefore, I will not associate individual comments with reviewer name; rather I will compile the unabridged comments and organize by a reviewer number. Previously submitted Peer Reviews are available at [http://www.cio.noaa.gov/Policy\\_Programs/prplans/PRsummaries.html](http://www.cio.noaa.gov/Policy_Programs/prplans/PRsummaries.html)
2. The Peer Review Bulletin further requires that non-Federal peer reviewers complete a "Confidential Conflict of Interest Disclosure" form – I attached the form and request that it be returned with your review. Please note that you are required to submit a CV with the signed form. Peer reviewers who are federal employees do not need to sign the conflict of interest form; rather they must comply with applicable federal ethics requirements such as those at: [www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_07/5cfr2635\\_07.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_07/5cfr2635_07.html).
3. Please note, if NMFS receives a FOIA request, anonymity of peer reviewers or comments cannot be guaranteed.



Logistics:

1. Please feel free to mark directly on the draft and return it to me via the pre-addressed, pre-paid FedEx envelope included. You may also submit comments electronically to me in whatever format you wish (e.g., word document).
2. Please make sure that you return a signed conflict of interest form with the peer review and attach a CV. I tabbed locations within the form that require your signature or initials.
3. I have included a copy of the Revision of Critical Habitat for Hawaiian monk seals Draft Biological Report for your information – you do not need to return it to me. However, this document is in a pre-decisional/pre-dissemination status. Thus, please keep this document confidential.
4. We would like to receive your comments by October 22, 2010.

The Pacific Island Regional Office appreciates the time and effort that you have made available for this review. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Jean Higgins, Endangered Species Biologist, by phone at (808) 944-2157 or by email at [jean.higgins@noaa.gov](mailto:jean.higgins@noaa.gov).

Sincerely,

Jean Higgins  
Endangered Species Biologist  
Protected Resources Division

enclosure