



ESA Section 6 Species Recovery Grants

— FY25 Regional Priorities & Needs for the Pacific Islands Regional Office —

Sea Turtles

Hawaii — CNP green turtle and hawksbill turtles

- Reduce harmful interactions between state-managed coastal fisheries and Hawaiian sea turtles via:
 - Coastal fishery bycatch monitoring, mitigation, and management, including Recreational fishing licensing and reporting
 - Exploration of new, creative management strategies that reduce the chance of sea turtle injury (hooking or entanglement) and mortality, including removal of gear from reefs
- Develop an ESA section 10 incidental take permit application and associated conservation plan to address incidental take in state fisheries
- Implement habitat conservation and restoration:
 - Predator control (cat, rat, and mongoose management)
 - Light pollution mitigation
 - Restrict vehicle beach driving on nesting and basking beaches
 - Habitat restoration to mitigate effects of climate change and sea level rise (e.g., planting native plants, beach erosion control measures)
- Undertake vessel strike monitoring and management
- Lead state-wide public management of green turtle basking areas
- Conduct disease (e.g., Fibropapillomatosis) monitoring and management (e.g., removal/reduction of sewage injection wells) [green turtles only]

Guam & CNMI — CWP green turtle and hawksbill turtles

- Undertake nesting beach monitoring and conservation (of females and nests)
- Reduce direct take (i.e., poaching) — monitoring and management
 - Includes population monitoring of sea turtles to gather data and information to support poaching reduction measures and/or social science-based research to identify and develop appropriate management strategies
- Undertake disease monitoring and management
- Implement habitat conservation and restoration (e.g., predator control, light pollution mitigation, marine debris removal, restrict vehicle beach driving, beach erosion control measures)
- Develop an ESA section 10 incidental take permit application and associated conservation plan to address incidental take in territorial fisheries



Main Hawaiian Island Insular False Killer Whales

- Gather new/more information on the status, demography, and life history of the main Hawaiian Islands insular false killer whales (MHI IFKWs) (e.g., abundance, population trends, survival rates, calving rates, injury trends, social dynamics, movement, habitat use) via expansion of photo-ID efforts and deployment/analysis of satellite tags and acoustic instrumentation to help us better understand MHI IFKWs and their recovery needs. This foundation of knowledge can drive research and monitoring to determine if and to what extent recovery actions are successful and inform potential management options
- Address threats from fisheries, including incidental take. Specifically, determine how, why, and which non-longline commercial and/or recreational fishery or fisheries may be causing serious injury and/or mortality to develop mitigation measures
- Establish a recreational fishing license and reporting form, and modify the state Commercial Marine License reporting form to capture more accurate and higher-quality data from commercial fishers
- Undertake new/more feasibility studies on passive (e.g., video, onboard observer) and active (e.g., phone app, data notebook, GoPro) data collection, etc.
- Develop an ESA section 10 incidental take permit application and associated conservation plan to address incidental take by state fisheries
- Support enhanced outreach (e.g., strategic outreach messaging, tools, and programs) for the fishing community and other stakeholders who may interact with MHI IFKWs and other protected species

Hawaiian monk seals

- Reduce harmful interactions between state-managed fisheries and Hawaiian monk seals via:
 - Enhanced compliance with existing state regulations, such as lay gill net regulations that reduce harmful interactions
 - Development and implementation of new policy, regulatory, and enforcement measures aimed at minimizing harmful interactions
 - Exploration of new, creative management strategies that reduce the chance of monk seal injury and mortality
 - Conducting strategic outreach to high-priority stakeholder groups (e.g., fishers at a particular geographic location or using a particular fishing method) and engaging with the fishing community through targeted messaging campaigns and directed outreach emphasizing coexistence and the mutual benefits of avoided interactions
- Develop an ESA section 10 incidental take permit application and associated conservation plan to address incidental take by state fisheries
- Develop and implement strategic management and policy actions to reduce the threat of toxoplasmosis to monk seals, and strengthen enforcement of existing regulations that have the potential to minimize oocysts loads in the environment
- Support population assessment and recovery activities at state wildlife sanctuaries, including Kure Atoll Wildlife Sanctuary



Oceanic whitetip sharks

- Collect new/more information on the status, demography, and life history of oceanic whitetip sharks in Hawaii and the Territories (e.g., abundance, population trends, survival rates, reproductive rates, injury trends, movement, and habitat use) via expansion of and deployment/analysis of satellite tags and acoustic instrumentation to help us better understand oceanic whitetip sharks and their recovery needs
- Address threats from fisheries, including incidental take to specifically determine how, why, and which non-longline commercial and/or recreational fishery or fisheries may be causing injury and/or mortality of oceanic whitetip sharks to develop mitigation measures
- Support increased outreach and education of fishing communities in Hawaii (particularly in Kona, Big Island) and the Territories regarding the protected status of oceanic whitetip sharks, species ID training, and conservation needs (e.g., handling and release practices to ensure minimum harm)

Giant manta rays

- Gather new/more information on the status, demography, distribution, and life history of giant manta rays in Hawaii and the Territories (e.g., abundance, population trends, survival rates, reproductive rates, injury trends, movement, and habitat use)
- Deploy satellite and acoustic telemetry technologies to address habitat requirements, movement behavior, and post-release survival rates to help us better understand giant manta rays and their recovery needs
- Investigate the use of new methodologies, such as aerial surveys to monitor for giant manta rays in Hawaii and the Territories
- Identify areas critical to life history functions such as feeding, breeding, and cleaning stations
- Support education and training in the identification of mantas/mobulids to species across fisheries in Hawaii and Territories

Indo-West Pacific scalloped hammerhead sharks

- Identify nursery habitats in the Indo-West Pacific and other aggregation sites for other biological imperatives (feeding, cleaning sites, etc.) in Guam, CNMI, and American Samoa

Corals (*Acropora globiceps*, *Acropora retusa*, *Acropora speciosa*, *Fimbriaphyllia paradivisa* and *Isopora crateriformis*. Note: the priorities are the same for each species)

- Enhance initiatives and commitments to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, such as those supporting existing climate action plans (e.g. by [Hawaii](#), [Guam](#), [CNMI](#), and [American Samoa](#)).
- Develop and strengthen measures and tools to reduce the exposure, decrease the susceptibility, and increase the resilience of listed corals and their ecosystems to climate change stressors.
- Support and develop initiatives and strategies that prevent and intervene in disease events.



- Develop, coordinate, and implement watershed management plans and/or build and sustain watershed management capacity at the local level to reduce land-based sources of pollution.
- Enhance ecosystem-based management for sustainable fishing and/or build capacity for coral reef fisheries management to improve fisheries sustainability.
- Improve coral health and survival, enhance population resilience, and/or improve coral recruitment habitat to protect and restore viable coral populations.
- Assess the status and condition of listed species and systematically monitor, evaluate, and report changes in their status and condition, their response to threats, and threat management.
- Collect and incorporate human-use, cultural, and socioeconomic data into coral ecosystem-based management.

