

PACIFIC REMOTE ISLANDS MARINE NATIONAL MONUMENT (PRIMNM) RENAMING AND CULTURAL RECOGNITION ASSESSMENT REPORT



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March 2024

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report documents the results of an assessment conducted by [John S. McCain III National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution](#) (National Center), a program of the [Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Foundation](#) (Udall Foundation). The Udall Foundation is an independent, nonpartisan Federal agency of the Executive Branch of the United States Government. The National Center provides collaboration, consensus-building, and conflict resolution services on a range of environmental, natural resource, cultural resource, and public lands issues involving the Federal Government.¹

The assessment was conducted to gather input from a broad range of individuals and groups who are interested in renaming and cultural recognition for the [Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument](#)² (PRIMNM; the Monument). The renaming process was first directed by the Department of Interior, and reaffirmed by President Joe Biden through issuance of the [Memorandum on Conserving the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Pacific Remote Islands on March 24, 2023](#) (PRI Memo). The PRIMNM is managed in coordination by the [United States Fish and Wildlife Service](#)³ (USFWS; an agency within the Department of Interior) and the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#)⁴ (NOAA; an agency within the Department of Commerce).

The outcomes of this assessment will advise and inform any processes to rename the Monument, the seven National Wildlife Refuges (Refuges) that rest within the Monument boundary, and place-based areas including geographic features, islands, and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument. Input was received from 66 individuals. For additional details on participation, please see the [Methodology section](#) below.

Key learnings include:

- No one we spoke with or who provided input supported the current name fully. A few participants felt positive or neutral about the current name.
- Most participants⁵ expressed generally negative feelings about the name; a few participants shared strong negative feelings regarding the name.
- Most participants felt that any renaming process should be inclusive of diverse voices and empower communities, especially Indigenous communities, with connections to the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument.
- Participants who addressed cultural recognition emphasized the importance of consulting directly with voyagers and voyaging communities and suggested that Hui Panalā'au should be honored and memorialized in the renaming process or in some other way.
- Almost all the individuals we spoke with felt strongly that a collaborative and culturally appropriate process should be used to determine a new name for the Monument, Refuges, and the islands, atolls, and reefs within the Monument.

¹ Additional information about the Udall Foundation and the National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution is available at: www.udall.gov.

² See <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/pacific-islands/habitat-conservation/pacific-remote-islands-marine-national-monument> and <https://www.fws.gov/national-monument/pacific-remote-islands-marine>

³ Pacific Islands Refuges and Monuments Office; <https://www.fws.gov/office/pacific-islands-fish-and-wildlife>

⁴ National Marine Fisheries Service, Pacific Islands Regional Office; <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/about/pacific-islands-regional-office>

⁵ Throughout this report we use the term “participant(s)” to refer to those who chose to be a part of the discussion interviews.

- Most participants recommended that a new name recognize Indigenous and cultural connections to the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument and that a new name should be unifying and inclusive of all Indigenous Pacific Island cultures.
- A significant number of participants we spoke to recommended including reference to the biodiversity and natural features present in the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument.
- Most participants declined to offer any recommended names for the Monument or places within the Monument. Most of these individuals indicated that a group process amongst different Indigenous groups would be the best way to generate a culturally appropriate name. As one participant stated, “Because I’m not an Indigenous Pacific Islander, I would not want to make a suggestion. Let the peoples of the region do the naming and tell their stories.”

II. BACKGROUND

The PRIMNM was established by President George W. Bush on January 6, 2009, and portions of the Monument were later expanded by President Barack Obama in 2014. As one of the largest and most intact marine protected areas in the world, the PRIMNM contains a diverse array of species and habitats and is home to seven National Wildlife Refuges. It provides an especially important refuge for species threatened by climate change and other stressors caused by humans. In addition to its ecological value, the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument are significant to a diverse cross-section of communities, including Indigenous Pacific Islanders, cultural practitioners, fishers, conservationists, educators, and researchers.

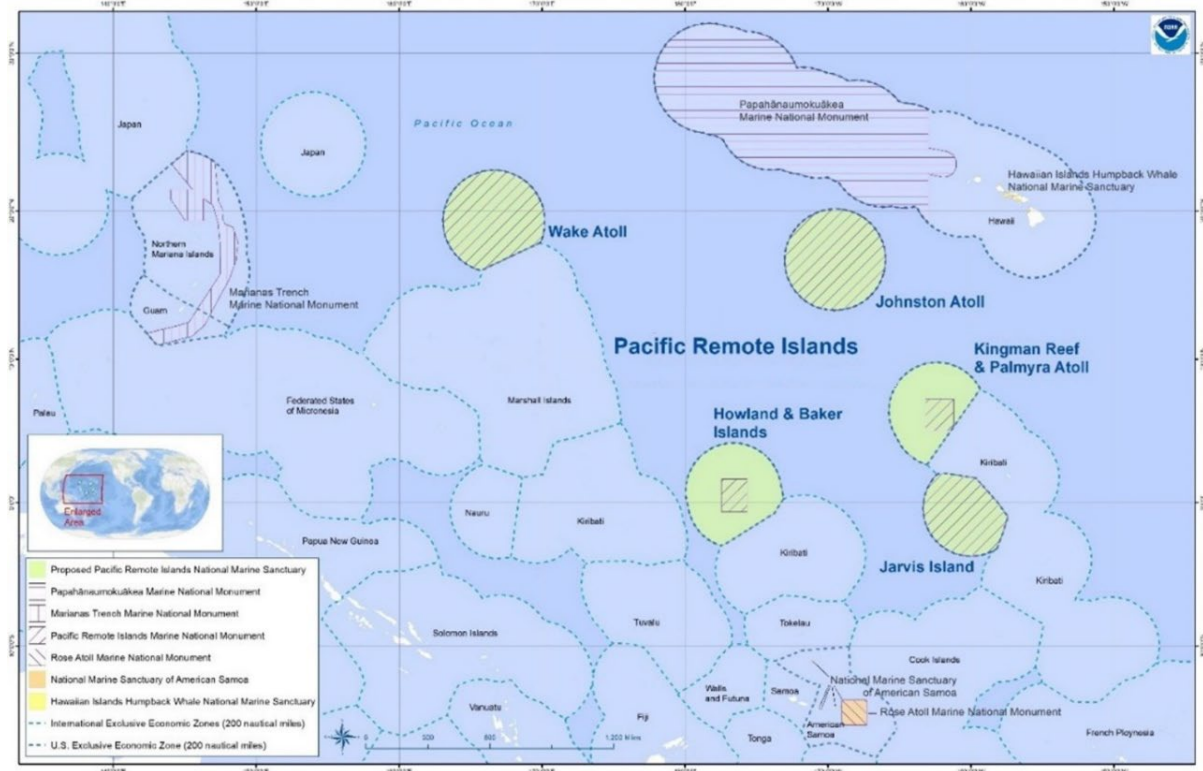
After receiving a request from the [Pacific Remote Islands Coalition](#) to consider renaming the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument, Department of Interior (DOI) Secretary Deb Haaland made a commitment to consider renaming at the Our Oceans Conference in Palau in April 2022. In December 2022, senior DOI Leadership requested the USFWS and NOAA begin assessment of issues related to renaming the Monument. On March 24, 2023, U.S. President Joe Biden issued the [Memorandum on Conserving the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Pacific Remote Islands](#) (PRI Memo), which directed the Secretaries of the DOI and the Department of Commerce to develop a process to collaborate with Indigenous experts, Native Hawaiian organizations, and other representatives from Indigenous communities with ancestral, historical, and cultural connections to the area to develop names and naming conventions for the PRIMNM, National Wildlife Refuges, and any National Marine Sanctuary designated in the area of the PRIMNM.

To support these requests, the USFWS and NOAA asked the National Center to assess the issues of renaming and cultural recognition by gathering input from a broad range of interested individuals and groups, analyzing the data gathered, and producing a summary report. Since the PRI Memo also directed NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries to consider initiating designation process for a proposed national marine sanctuary in the Pacific Remote Islands area, staff from the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) were invited to be part of the renaming process. Figure 1 below shows the area of the proposed National Marine Sanctuary and the existing Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument.

An assessment is a valuable tool to determine the levels of trust, willingness, and ability of parties to work together collaboratively towards a common goal. National Center staff serve as impartial facilitators and process experts when conducting assessments. The goals of this assessment are to:

- Identify interested groups and individuals willing to share their thoughts and recommendations regarding alternate names for the PRIMNM and the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument.
- Conduct discussions and identify the key concerns and values of participants regarding names and naming conventions.
- Determine key areas of consensus and divergent viewpoints amongst participants regarding the renaming process and elements to consider for a proposed Monument name, including any preliminary suggestions for a proposed Monument name.
- Provide the USFWS and NOAA with participant thoughts on renaming and recommendations on proposed names for the PRIMNM and the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument.
- Gather input on how to appropriately honor the voyagers, Hui Panalā‘au, and others who have a historical and cultural connection to the Monument.

Figure 1. Map of the Pacific Remote Islands



III. METHODOLOGY

The National Center worked collaboratively with USFWS and NOAA to define the scale and scope of the assessment, identify a comprehensive list of potentially interested participants, design discussion questions, and determine an approach for reporting the results. An assessment that engages a wide range of parties who may have knowledge about or potential cultural or historic connections to the PRIMNM was identified as the best approach to obtain the desired information for the renaming process, and potential options for new names for the PRIMNM and the proposed marine sanctuary should it be designated.

Interviews were conducted between March and November of 2023. The National Center invited more than 159 individuals to participate in an interview. Input was received from 66 individuals⁶, including from more than 25 organizations and 16 States, Nations, Republics, Commonwealths, Territories, or Countries. Information obtained was then analyzed for prevalent topics and themes. A list of participants is included in [Appendix B](#).

Participant organizations included:

- East Carolina University
- East-West Center
- Friends of the Mariana Trench
- Global Island Partnership
- Marine Conservation Institute
- The Nature Conservancy
- Pacific Remote Islands Coalition
- Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) Community Group (CG)
- The Pacific Community (SPC) Pacific Ministers for Culture, Pacific Regional Culture Strategy Working Group
- Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PRMNM) Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group (CWG) United States Government
- University of Guam
- University of Hawai'i
- Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council
- Wildlife Conservation Society

Participants lived in or are associated with the following States, Nations, Republics, Commonwealths, Territories, or Countries:

- American Samoa (U.S. Territory)
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) (U.S. Territory)
- Cook Islands
- Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) (Freely Associated States)
- French Polynesia (French Territory)
- Guam (U.S. Territory)
- Hawai'i (U.S. State)
- Kingdom of Tonga
- New Caledonia (French Territory)
- New Zealand
- Republic of Fiji
- Papua New Guinea
- Republic of Kiribati
- Republic of the Marshall Islands (Freely Associated States)
- Republic of Palau (Freely Associated States) Territory of the Wallis and Futuna Islands (French Territory)
- United States of America

Interviews consisted of one-hour discussions via video calls using either Microsoft Teams or Zoom.

⁶ Discussions were held with 62 individuals. Four individuals provided written input.

Interviews were conducted by Stephanie Kavanaugh, Deputy Director of the National Center, Courtney Owen, a Senior Program Associate at the National Center, and Narrissa P. Brown, PhD, a Conservation Planner in the USFWS Pacific Islands Refuges and Monuments Office.

Interviews were conducted in two phases. Phase one consisted of interviews with agency staff, agency associates, and PRIMNM Community Group⁷ members that opted to participate and focused on gathering general recommendations and additional individuals to interview. Phase two focused on interviews of groups and individuals suggested by participants in phase one and utilized an expanded list of questions. Lists of questions asked of both participant groups are available in [Appendix C](#). Not all participants answered all questions listed. Additional follow-up questions may have been asked to clarify a statement or based on unique issues raised during discussion.

Detailed notes were taken by the interview team for each interview session. To support confidentiality, only the interview team of Stephanie Kavanaugh, Courtney Owen, and Dr. Narrissa Brown had access to interview notes. Once all interviews were complete, National Center staff conducted in-depth, qualitative analysis (sometimes referred to by social scientists as “coding” or “content analysis”) of all interview data to determine major and minor themes voiced by participants. Dr. Narrissa Brown gave input during this phase of analysis.

This report outlines all major and minor themes, as constructed and defined by the assessment team. While interview data analysis is necessarily a qualitative pursuit, where possible the authors estimate the degree of consensus amongst participants by using qualifiers like “most,” “majority of,” “few,” “some,” and others. Quantitative definitions for these qualifiers can be found in the following section.

IV. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The following sections of this report summarize the range of responses and perspectives shared by participants. Findings are organized by topic, and summarize participant thoughts, concerns, and suggestions.

The themes described under each topic below arise from a limited sample size and do not represent a statistically significant sample of all individuals with an interest in the renaming of the Monument. The intent of the authors is to capture the diversity of opinions from as many interested groups and individuals as possible, with a focus on “Indigenous language experts, Native Hawaiian Organizations, and other representatives from Indigenous Peoples with ancestral, historical, and cultural connections to the area,” as directed by the PRI Memo.

Interpretation of interview data can be subject to bias and misinterpretation. To minimize the opportunity for misinterpretation, the authors systematically analyzed interview notes multiple times and developed the themes discussed below in consultation with partners at USFWS and NOAA. The authors feel that the results below accurately reflect participant thoughts and concerns, while indicating where consensus may exist or could be achieved through dialogue.

⁷ The Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) Community Group was an 11-member body that provided input to Federal agencies on the management, proper care, and effective stewardship of the PRIMNM during the development of a Monument Management plan. See <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/pacific-islands/habitat-conservation/pacific-remote-islands-marine-national-monument-community-group> for more information.

Where half or more of the participants addressing a specific issue those interviewed expressed a similar concern or sentiment, we use “majority of” or “most” to indicate such areas where a degree of consensus may already exist. “Many” or “a significant number” is used to indicate that between one quarter and one half of participants who addressed a specific issue expressed a particular theme. “Some” is used to indicate themes expressed by less than one quarter but more than five participants; and “few” is used to indicate themes expressed by four or fewer participants. Occasionally, important or novel themes mentioned by one or two participants are highlighted because they are especially relevant to the topic area. While these terms are utilized to enhance understanding of interview data, the reader should keep in mind two important caveats. First, because not all participants answered every question asked, it cannot be inferred that the use of “majority of” refers to a specific number of interviewees. It means only that more than half of the participants who addressed this issue expressed this perspective. Second, themes expressed only by a few participants during our interviews may reflect a more widely held opinion, but additional interviews and dialogue amongst participants would be necessary to make such a determination.

Finally, names and name elements throughout this report have not been fully vetted with native speakers, linguists, cultural practitioners, and other experts to ensure proper spelling, context, and appropriateness. The authors welcome feedback in this area.

Opinions of Current Name

Of the individuals we spoke with, none supported the current name fully and enthusiastically. A few participants felt generally positive or neutral about the current name, including one who stated that the name was “quite neutral.... but doesn’t engender any emotional attachment to the place.” Another stated that the name “makes sense, but it will be good to have it changed.”

“Remote islands certainly doesn’t motivate engagement with the place or its resources.”

A few other individuals had strong negative feelings towards the current name, saying the name was either not inclusive, colonialist, or even terrible. One voiced that “it’s not popular, it’s not relatable, and it makes her community feel like it’s not their business.” Another participant stated, “The name is terrible. Colonial history is reinforced in this name.”

Most participants felt generally negative about the current name. A variety of reasons were cited including that the name is inappropriate, unengaging, uninspiring, bland, or misleading and inaccurate with respect to culture, history, and science. Of note, eight participants mentioned that use of the word “remote” is inaccurate because to the people who live in the area, the islands and ocean areas of the Monument are central and connected. One participant shared that by not reflecting the culture or history of the place, it “fails to engage folks with the place through the name.” Other illuminating responses included that the current name “has no meaning,” “doesn’t encapsulate everything the islands mean to science and the people who live in the region,” “doesn’t tell you what the place is,” “doesn’t give a sense of a living place,” and “doesn’t recognize connections to local communities.”

What to Include and What Not to Include in a New Name

In line with the PRI Memo, most participants recommended that a new name recognize Indigenous and cultural connections to the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument. Representative comments include:

“I am very happy to have it renamed to hopefully an Indigenous name.”

“Changing to a more culturally appropriate name is a step in right direction.”

“It is important that a proper name be given to a place that has life and a history of cultural interactions. There are layers of activities that connect people, place, and resources that are part of a living place.”

“There should be meanings and context for people who are connected to those places. It should describe something important to the cultures that are connected to there.”

Some participants cautioned against including any references to colonial or military history in the area. One participant recommended not to include “any references to outside entities” since the “Pacific Islands have such a history of colonization by various nations who have claimed them at some point and western influence is more of an interloper than cultural, biological, and geographic history.” A few others cautioned against naming the Monument or any places within it after specific people, such as a Western explorer who “discovered” the place or the U.S. President who designated the Monument. One participant voiced that the contribution of the U.S. military should be recognized.

Many participants recommended that a new name be unifying and inclusive of all Indigenous Pacific Island cultures and include elements that unite Pacific cultures with each other and the ocean. Illustrative quotes include:

“We usually focus on how we’re different or unique, but our ancestors were all on the same canoe at one point in the Pacific..... This is about recognizing our ancestral connection and our relationship to each other as ocean people.”

“Westerners see the ocean as a divider, but we [Indigenous Pacific Island communities] see it as a connector.”

While only one participant indicated that an English language name would be acceptable, a significant number of others suggested that utilizing an Indigenous language or languages is extremely important. A few participants also recommended inclusion of anything that would help to specifically unify Polynesian and Micronesian peoples and cultures; and some individuals suggested seeking appropriate words that may be similar across multiple languages, including but not limited to Hawaiian, CHamoru⁸, Carolinian, Samoan, and Marshallese. A few participants also challenged the assumption that the Monument could only have one name, referencing cultural practices that allow for multiple names for one location or thing. One participant explained that some of the islands in the Monument have names in Marshallese and are included in Marshallese navigational charts. This participant said it would be respectful to

⁸ Chamorro is an alternate older spelling.

rename those islands close to the Marshall Islands with a Marshallese name. An additional participant recommended that whatever language is used, the English translation be provided.

“Keep the Indigenous voice and Indigenous language in the center.”

“It’s hard to assign more rights to one group [over another] in this area so assigning a name from one language from one group may not be appropriate or satisfactory to other groups with other languages. There are likely joint feelings of ownership and attachment to these places.”

“Be sure [the new name is] inclusive of the different islanders who have voyaged and lived in this region for thousands of years.”

Some participants further expressed that it may be difficult to decide on one Indigenous language to use since multiple languages are used throughout the region.

While some individuals thought Hawaiian names could be appropriate for the Monument or the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument, a few cautioned against using Hawaiian since most of the Monument lies within Micronesia. These participants felt that Micronesian perspectives are often not valued or even excluded by the U.S. Government. One participant stated that renaming the Northwest Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument to Papahānaumokuākea was appropriate “because of Hawaiian connection, but in this case it’s very different. There are connections to the Line Islands (Kiribati), Micronesia, and other non-Hawaiian places.” Another participant suggested using Indigenous words for numbers since numerical references are similar across many Pacific Island languages and referenced Tuvalu⁹ as an example.

“With this region now, the name should reflect specifically the relationships that all peoples in the Pacific have with the place and each other. The practices and stories we share. The name should evoke those relationships and connections and reflect the diversity of all of us in the space.”

A significant number of people we spoke to recommended including reference to the biodiversity and natural features present in the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument in a new name, including sea birds, corals, monk seals, fish, or plants. A few of these participants specifically mentioned utilizing Indigenous words for such elements and reflected that natural and cultural elements are deeply connected in Pacific cultures. One participant suggested that no reference should be made to people since the islands were uninhabited.

“Look to traditional knowledge. Even though they have modern, scientific names, [I] would love to see an animal name in Indigenous language be considered.”

“[These islands are] uninhabited for a reason and voyagers knew.... that other land was better for settlement. Seabirds are super important, and a name should be using the terms of safeguarding and protection front and center.”

Finally, some participants recommended that a new name include words that are descriptive of the place itself, or events that occurred in the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument. The following elements were suggested for inclusion by at least one participant: modern maritime navigation

⁹ “Tuvalu” means “eight standing together” and references the eight inhabited islands of the country. <https://natlib.govt.nz/blog/posts/tuvalu-tau-gana-ko-tou-lagaifakalaga>

(since many nearby residents are employed in this sector), reference to how the islands were formed, historical narratives, recognition of the negative effects of guano mining and the burial sites of guano miners, the Hawaiian relationship to colonization of Micronesian islands, and the general vastness of the Monument area. While one participant suggested that a new name should be easy to pronounce or recall, others shared their conviction that this should not be a factor and referenced the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument naming process as a successful example of a naming process that utilized an appropriate Indigenous name.

Honoring the Voyaging Tradition

The PRI Memo also directed the Secretaries of Interior and Commerce to provide “recommendations on honoring the heritage, traditional practices, ancestral pathways, and stopping points for Pacific Island voyagers...”

While not all individuals interviewed addressed this topic, those that did felt it was important to honor the tradition of voyaging in the renaming of the Monument or the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument. They emphasized the importance of consulting directly with voyagers and voyaging communities to gather input. Many recommended incorporating traditional navigation words, chants, songs, or stories into the Monument name. Others shared traditional knowledge that connects Indigenous Pacific cultural beliefs and practices to voyaging and emphasized the importance of co-management with voyagers. Comments included:

“There was a time in Micronesia when we had 20 different schools of traditional navigation, including from Polynesia, Melanesia. Today there are only 2 remaining.”

“The history and knowledge of voyagers... needs to be highlighted.”

“Give [navigators] a place at the table as a consultant or as a committee member where you look to them for guidance on traditional cultural matters. [Providing] resources [is] one thing but getting the content and the knowledge is another.... recognize the island navigators in some form that is intention and not just symbolic.”

Some participants suggested that voyaging and navigation could be honored and acknowledged by promoting awareness, supporting the teaching navigation, or officially sanctioning the teaching of navigation within the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument.

“We need to keep the tradition alive and get youth interested.”

Finally, some individuals emphasized the history of the islands in the Monument and their relationship to voyaging as waypoints, resting points, or locations for cultural practices.

Honoring the Hui Panalā'au

The PRI Memo directed the USFWS and NOAA to provide posthumous recognition for the Hui Panalā'au, who were a group of young men (mostly Native Hawaiians) sent to the Pacific Remote Islands between 1935 and 1942 from Hawai'i.¹⁰ Participants who addressed this topic felt that the Hui Panalā'au should be honored and memorialized in the renaming process in some significant way.

Some participants suggested engaging the descendants of the Hui Panalā'au directly in the renaming process or to consider naming islands or ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument after the Hui Panalā'au.¹¹

Others suggested memorializing the Hui Panalā'au history by telling their story in educational materials about the Monument. One participant suggested that the history "should include the work, sacrifice, and what this meant to the Native Hawaiians and the families of the Hui Panalā'au." Two participants suggested placement of a physical memorial. Another stated that the cultural connection of the Hui Panalā'au to the islands and the ocean needs to be acknowledged by stating, "We didn't just take individuals who happen to be Hawaiian and the most conducive to living in a far-flung place without life and abandon them expecting them to survive. The ocean is their county and their home, and these islands didn't remove them from their home, it extended their home. It's important that this part of the story isn't lost."

Some participants voiced that the Hui Panalā'au should be acknowledged more for their contribution and that the role of colonialism and racism in their story be told. As one individual stated, "it would be nice to honor them, but at the same time it would be celebrating the colonialism and racism of the United States and the unfair treatment of the Hui Panalā'au." Another participant pointed out that a group of CHamoru men on Wake Island, known as the Wake Island Defenders, should be equally recognized for their contribution during World War II.

"It needs to be acknowledged that there is culture there. We didn't just take individuals who happen to be Hawaiian and the most conducive to living in a far-flung place without life and abandon them to survive. The ocean is their country and their home, and these islands didn't remove them from their home – it extended their home. It's important that this part of the story isn't lost."

Who Should Be Consulted?

When asked who should be consulted regarding the renaming of the PRIMNM, most participants recommended consulting with Indigenous communities, cultural practitioners, elders, and voyagers with connections to the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument. Both Polynesian and Micronesian voyaging groups were mentioned, including the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS), 500 Sails, and Werieng¹².

"Traditional Indigenous knowledge is key and speaking with those who have... cultural connections are who we should be working closely with."

¹⁰ For more information, please read "A Story of the Hui Panalā'au of the Equatorial Pacific Islands" https://www.protectpri.com/wp-content/uploads/hui-panalaau_FWS.pdf

¹¹ A participant highlighted that it would be important for the families of the Hui Panalā'au to be asked if they would want their names associated with the Pacific Remote Islands.

¹² Werieng (also spelled "Warieng") is one of the last two schools of traditional [navigation](#) found in the central [Caroline Islands](#) in [Micronesia](#), the other being [Fanur](#). By tradition these two schools were considered to be the most high of all the schools of

Many participants suggested speaking with representatives of government, non-governmental organizations, and naming bodies. Specific suggestions included governors of territories and protectorates, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, UNESCO’s World Heritage Sites Naming Commission, the Department of Chamorro Affairs, the Marshall Islands Conservation Society, and others.

“Speak with cultural practitioners. All these folks may be completely unaware that this renaming effort is happening.”

“Seek out those who are storytellers and historians....”

Some participants suggested consulting linguists, language experts, academics, and naming committees in Micronesia and Hawai’i . A few of these cautioned against overemphasizing Native Hawaiian perspectives in the renaming of the Monument in relation to Micronesian and broader Pacific Island community perspectives. A few participants encouraged consulting the commercial and subsistence fishing communities. One participant suggested consulting with religious organizations.

A significant number of participants suggested that people living closest to the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument should be consulted, including U.S. Territories and Freely Associated States as well as sovereign nations like Kiribati. Kiribati was suggested by multiple participants as important to consult with given its proximity to the Monument.

A few participants referenced how the history of colonization in the area should be considered when deciding who to include in any discussions about renaming. In the words of one of these individuals, “You don’t have to defer to one group or another just because they have a more recent place to folks who have been lost in time.” Two of the people we spoke with recommended consulting with the U.S. Department of Defense, one of whom specifically mentioned the U.S. Army Pacific Task Force.

How Should a Name Be Decided?

Almost all the individuals we spoke with felt strongly that a collaborative and culturally appropriate process should be used to determine a new name for the Monument, Refuges, and the islands, atolls, reefs and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument. Most participants felt that the process should be inclusive of diverse voices and empower communities, especially Indigenous communities, with connections to the islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument. Two participants emphasized that strong outreach efforts would be needed to inform people of the renaming opportunity and enable them to participate. Including youth in the process was also noted as important to some individuals, a few of whom referenced the recent youth contest to name mud volcanoes in the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument.

“Rather than trying to decide what should or shouldn’t be in the name now would come from one perspective. If this is an inclusive process – the name shouldn’t be pre-determined but should emerge from an inclusive process.”

“It’s a good recommendation to tell agencies that folks should have a dialog about the name in a multicultural setting - you can’t just go to one culture.”

navigation that once dotted the islands of the central Carolines. By tradition the Weriyeŋ school was founded on the island of [Pulap](#), which is today in the [Pattiw](#) region of [Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia](#). [Mau Piailug](#) is one of the most famous navigators of this school. He trained the well-known modern Hawaiian wayfinder, [Nainoa Thompson](#)

Many participants also suggested that any collaborative process strive for consensus. Some shared that the use of dialogue and consensus is inherent to Pacific Island cultures, and others emphasized that the renaming process could bring cultures together and ease tensions that may exist between Polynesian and Micronesian groups.

“It would be good to get everyone on the same page of consensus for the renaming including the non-Indigenous people on board. If everyone isn’t on board, it could lead to conflict, so this is a good opportunity to include everyone.”

“This is an exciting opportunity. It lets us dive deep into our ancestral connections. We usually focus on how we’re different or unique, but our ancestors were all on the same canoe at one point in the Pacific. The process of naming is a good process to bring us together and reawaken our responsibility to each other.”

Some participants emphasized that the renaming process should not be rushed, especially if striving for some degree of agreement amongst relevant groups. Adequate time for notice and participation, some noted, is respectful of the limited time and resources available to people in the region and in line with cultural practices of the region.

“Consensus is what we [Indigenous Pacific Islanders] are good at. Sit together and look at the ocean, look into... baskets of wisdom and talk about how to resolve. All it takes sometimes is people to listen. Don’t talk, argue, about what to name a space, rather let the space reveal its name in its own time.”

“In order to meaningfully participate or provide input and spend time away from our obligations, what does that look like for the folks involved? We are already overstretched from our obligations. A lot of people have the question: what are we sacrificing to get this? There has to be a sacrifice to get a benefit – so what are we getting as a benefit for the sacrifice of our involvement.”

While specific recommendations for a type of collaborative process varied, suggestions included: voting, town halls, listening sessions, and utilizing existing Pacific bodies or cultural processes or bodies such as the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, Micronesian Chief Executive Summit, Pacific Forum, the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group (CWG), or *Inafa’maolek*¹³ to discuss or decide. Finally, some participants recommended that the [13th Annual Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture](#) would be an ideal opportunity to support dialogue amongst voyagers, cultural practitioners, and language experts from across Polynesian and Micronesia.

“I think FESPAC or an event like FESPAC would be great since the traditional island ways people will be there.”

Some individuals suggested that USFWS and NOAA should incorporate cultural naming practices utilized both Hawaiian and Micronesian cultures instead of relying on the modern methods commonly used by the U.S. Government. A few participants suggested that the process used by the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group (CWG) to rename the

¹³ The phrase *inafa’maolek* (pronounced e-na-fah mao-lek) describes the Chamorro concept of restoring harmony or order. The literal translation is ‘to make’ (*inafa*) ‘good’ (*maolek*). (<https://www.guampedia.com/inafamaolek/>)

Northwestern Hawaiian Islands to Papahānaumokuākea could serve as an example, but with involvement from both Micronesian and Hawaiian cultural practitioners and experts. Others suggested traditional processes from Guam, Fiji, and Melanesian communities.

“Naming in [Pacific] Island cultures is so important. The genealogy of place is connected to the genealogy of the people. The name has to be connected to the people. When you name a child, the child.....is placed within the kinship social network. We look at place the same way.”

“Refer to traditional practices. Defer to the local communities on how they make decisions with their community and with the government and with the Chief system. It’s challenging when traditional and western decision-making processes collide, but there is a way to do it. It involves a lot of talking, a lot of trust-building, storytelling and shared understanding.”

“There was an intentional community of care around Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument... A community gets things moved. This community puts this together because these are ancestral pathways that connect us to the past because these oceans connect us.... don’t lose sight of it with the deadline [for] a name.”

“This process should be more involved than even the process was for Papahānaumokuākea. Need to tread carefully on this and not make any assumptions or pre-determined conclusions. Acknowledge that Hawaiians aren’t the only island people attached to these islands and that the ocean is our collective home. Opportunity to tie us to the greater Pacific [is] better than just being a part of the U.S. jurisdiction.”

Suggested Names

While some participants emphasized the importance and larger meaning of restoring traditional and Indigenous names to places that were taken from Indigenous Peoples, and the significance that names and naming practices have in Pacific Island and Indigenous cultures, the majority of participants declined to offer any recommended names for the Monument or the islands and ocean areas within or adjacent to the Monument. Most of these individuals indicated that a group process amongst different Indigenous groups would be the best way to generate a culturally appropriate name. As one participant stated, “Because I’m not an Indigenous Pacific Islander, I would not want to make a suggestion. Let the peoples of the region do the naming and tell their stories.”

“We’re moving forward and want to determine how best to serve the care and protection of a place that is outside of our vision. Doesn’t mean it’s not part of our view. The name of this place can connect us to it even though we don’t ‘see’ it across the water like Lanai to Maui. A proper name will help me see it in my mind and keep it in our memory and history and consciousness.”

Of the thirteen individuals who did recommend a name or elements of names for the Monument, Refuges, or islands and ocean areas in and adjacent to the Monument, most voiced deference to Indigenous and cultural leaders and clarified that their recommendation was only a suggestion to be considered. Participants from the Republic of the Marshall Islands (Marshall Islands) and other participants shared their strong conviction that the correct name for Wake Island is Ānen Kio.

“We are only concerned about Ānen Kio. It belongs to us [the Marshall Islands]. We have many stories from this place. It is really significant for the Marshallese. We want to carry on the traditional knowledge and significance of Ānen Kio for our culture.”

Names or elements of names mentioned for consideration are listed in Figure 2 below, along with any reasoning or background provided by participants.

Figure 2: Suggested Names or Name Elements for the Monument or Refuges

Names and name elements below need to be vetted with native speakers, linguists, cultural practitioners, or other experts to ensure proper spelling, context, and appropriateness. The authors welcome corrections and feedback from readers.

Name or Name Element	Language	Meaning
Abwungrosch	Carolinian (Satawal)	Participant shared that this Carolinian (Satawal) word is the name of the voyaging sealane between the Hawai'ian Islands and Micronesian Islands where the PRIMNM are located to include the sealane to Samoa.
Centro Pacifico		<i>"It would have more support if maybe they would put an Indigenous name like Centro Pacifico. You would probably have more support from Indigenous people if it is their name. They look at this in a general term if you will. Central Pacifico."</i>
Ānen Kio or Eneen-Kio	Marshallese	Marshallese refer to Wake Island as Ānen Kio. <i>"[This island] is really significant for the Marshallese. We want to carry on the traditional knowledge and significance for our culture. When we get to Ānen Kio, that flower there is a symbol of power that people achieve by going to that island. After you got to that island, you take that flower and you eat it. You get that power of that experience and that journey from sailing and from that battle to sail there. It has a lot of associations in Marshallese traditions – power, bravery, and experience."</i>
Fa'a Pasifika	Samoan	<i>"It should be a Pacific Island name. Since Samoa is at the core of central Polynesia, before the long pause, I'd suggest that it is Samoans are the best ones to suggest that name. The name could be: "Fa'a Pasifika." A regional name instead of Samoa. Samoa is important in the sustainable use of the resources within it."</i>
ṂṂweṂapṂap	Marshallese	Participant shared that according to the stories of the Marshall Islands, this region (the Monument) is called ṂṂweṂapṂap.
Maui or Loheloha	Hawaiian	One participant recommended naming the Monument after a great navigator such as Maui or Loheloha.
Metwan Itūki Raej	Marshallese	Participant shared that this may refer to the sea in between the greater parts of the Marshall Islands and Ānen Kio is called - an area that was seen as belonging to a Marshallese clan.

Name or Name Element	Language	Meaning
Micronesian Cultural Marine National Monument or Micronesian Islands Marine National Monument	English	Participant shared that Micronesia is historically and currently connected to the Monument. While Micronesia is a given name from colonizers, this is an accepted name by Micronesians to identify their region.
Moku		“A pan-Polynesian word. Something that has moku in it would recognize that there are no people there but there is a connection to it.”
Motu Mamao		“The Samoans were the original travelers. These were the navigator islands...It should be named by Samoa people. It could be named “Motu Mamao.”
Navigator Islands	English	“These islands have been navigated by birds, navigators, Captain Cook, turtles, and other species.”
Ngāmotuamāui (Ngāmotu-a-Māui; lit., "Māui's uninhabited islands") Marine National Monument		“This name is not in the language of the colonizer. It is a name that is recognizable by multiple Polynesian languages (uses central Polynesian form of the plural definite article "ngā" instead of the Hawaiian "nā" such that island groups outside of Hawai'i will see themselves in it. It honors Polynesian voyaging traditions using one of the most storied navigators (Māui) as an eponym and Polynesian views of relationships to islands (moku vs. 'āina).”
Oceania or Pasifika		One participant suggested that it may be more appropriate to use these words instead of “Pacific.” They added that “some other folks feel “Oceania” is not great because it is an English language word. And others think that “moana” is just a different form of colonial renaming. Then there’s the word ‘Pasifika.’ Pasifika has been used specifically to indicate the [Pacific] diaspora.”
Puaka’ilima Marine National Monument or Puaka’ilima-Kilipaki Marine National Monument	Gilbertese (or I-Kiribati)	<p>“A suggestion could be to call the whole zone something like ‘Puaka’ilima Marine National Monument.’ Expanding on the Hawaiian Kingdom’s guano industry in those islands is a worthy backstory as there was a lot of reporting about activities in those islands throughout the 1800s in Hawaiian newspapers.”</p> <p>Participant shared that “Kilipaki” is the Hawaiian for Kiribati, and there were many Kilipaki immigrants who settled in the Hawaiian Kingdom in the 1800s.</p>

Name or Name Element	Language	Meaning
Te Moana - Motu Fa'asao	Samoan	"Te Moana is the area around the south pacific that included the Samoa, Tonga, Fiji. The names of the islands should be Pacific related and related to the resource. Related to location, stopover, environment sustainability."
Ribako-Amakua or Ribako Marine National Monument		Participant shared that a Micronesian clan identifies as "people of the shark," and that Hawaiians have a similar word - 'aumakua.
Seven Safeguarding Islands	English	"There are seven islands [in the Monument]. Sometimes it's a good idea to use numbers.... It's easier to find similarities in languages in numbers. Numbers can sound the same. One way to have a macro way to work it is a group of numbers. It's a neutral way but it follows a Pacific logic..... Eight of the nine islands of Tuvalu were inhabited; thus the name, Tuvalu, means 'eight standing together' in Tuvaluan"
Siumetau	Carolinian (Satawal)	Participant shared that siumetau is the chant and permission to open sealanes and sailing routes.
Volcorano Islands	English	Participant recommended because "volcarano" is a combination of volcano/coral/guano Islands and "represents the islands and what they are from."

Other Issues Raised by Participants

While some participants expressed gratitude and happiness about the Monument renaming effort, others voiced distrust of U.S. Government outreach and consultation efforts in the region, including several concerns related to the history of and consequences of colonialism and resource exploitation, among others.

Additional concerns and suggestions expressed by one or more participants included:

- The lack of resources and poor living conditions on Pacific Islands should be a bigger priority to the U.S. Government than renaming the Monument.
- The Marshall Islands should be renamed to Rinako.
- Concern over ongoing military activity and presence in the area, including the legacy of nuclear testing and continued munitions testing.
- Feeling "stuck" between U.S. and Asian countries in this time of increased geo-political pressure.
- Perceptions of unequal treatment of Hawaiians as compared specifically to Micronesians from the Territories and Freely Associated States.
- Inequitable distribution of resources from the U.S. Government and contested lands and ocean territories.
- Opposition to the proposed sanctuary.
- That the PRIMNM has not been cared for as much as Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.
- Overfishing.

V. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Historical PRIMNM Island Names

Figure 3 below is a list of the PRIMNM’s historical and cultural names, meaning, and origin of the names. All data below obtained from NOAA’s documentation of the Pacific Remote Island Marine National Monument’s historical seascape,¹⁴ supplemented by select interview data. Note that this list is not exhaustive and likely omits traditional names from multiple Micronesian languages.

Figure 3: Historical Names for Places in the PRIMNM

United States Name	Reasoning for Name	Alternative Names	Origin of Name	Reasoning for Name
Baker Island	Named after U.S. Captain Michael Baker (1832)	Puaka’ilima	‘Ōlelo Hawai’i (Hawaiian)	Named after the ‘ilima flower in reference to the similar beauty and conditions shared with islands reminding the Hawaiian guano laborers of home (1850s).
Howland Island	Named after the ship, Minerva Smyth’s managing agent U.S. Citizen Isaac Howland, Jr. (1828). Then another captain on the ship Isabella also named it Howland Island for a member of the Howland family that sighted it (1842)	Ulukou	Hawaiian (Published in the Ke Au Okoa in 1868)	Kou tree grove. One participant referenced Puaka’ilima (Pua-ka-‘ilima) as a name for Howland and said that it is a name that many in Hawai’i recognize from Hawaiian music.
Jarvis Island	Named after the owners of the British vessel (Eliza Francis) that first sighted the island, owners Edward, Thomas, and William Jarvis. It was also called Brock, Brook, Jervis, and Bunker Island and some of these names appear on nautical charts published before 1821	Paukeaho	Hawaiian (Published in the Ka Nupepa Kuokoa newspaper, June 24, 1871)	“Out of breath/exhausted” was indicative of the difficult working conditions on the islands especially during the era of guano mining.

¹⁴ Bautista JQ, Smith S. 2018. Early Cultural and Historical Seascape of the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument. PIFSC special publication; SP-19-005. National Marine Fisheries Service; Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (U.S.). Available from <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/story-map/historical-cultural-seascape-pacific-remote-islands-marine-national-monument-story-map>

United States Name	Reasoning for Name	Alternative Names	Origin of Name	Reasoning for Name
Johnston Atoll	Named after the British ship (HMS Cornwallis) and her captain, Charles James Johnston (1807)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moku Kua'au 'o Ionatana • Kalama Island • Cornwallis Island 	Kōmike Hua'ōlelo Hou (Hawaiian Language Lexicon Committee)	Moku kua'au means "atoll" or "lagoon island" and Ionatana translates to "Johnston". In 1858, the Hawaiian schooner Kalama annexed the atoll for the Kingdom of Hawai'i and the two islets were then named Kalama Island and Cornwallis Island.
Kingman Reef	Named after the U.S. Captain W.E. Kingman (1853)	Nalukākala	Kōmike Hua'ōlelo Hou (Hawaiian Language Lexicon Committee)	Frothing surf that crests over its shallow reefs – "surf that arrives in combers".
Palmyra Atoll	Named after the U.S. vessel Palmyra by Captain Cornelius Sowle (1802)	Honuaiākea	Kōmike Hua'ōlelo Hou (Hawaiian Language Lexicon Committee)	Describes the name for the canoe from the chant in which the Hawaiian goddess Pele sailed to Hawai'i.
Wake Island and Atoll	Named after British Captain William Wake (1796)	Ānen Kio	Marshallese	Named after the plentiful orange kio flower (<i>Sida fallax</i>).

APPENDIX B: Assessment Participant List

Name	Association
Angelo Villagomez	Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) Community Group (CG); Center for American Progress
Alexander Mawyer	Director, Center for Pacific Islands Studies, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
Aulani Wilhelm	White House, United States Government
Dr. Bob Richmond	Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) Community Group (CG); Kewalo Marine Laboratory, University of Hawaii at Manoa
Cecilio Raiukiulipiy	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Navigator
Donald Mendiola	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Traditional healer and cultural expert
Floyd Masga	Advisor to the Secretary, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)
Glenn Manglona	Marianas Agupa Talkshow Host, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)
Glynnis Roberts	United States Department of State
Hōkū Pihana	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Hugh Govan (received input via e-mail)	The University of the South Pacific
J. Hau'oli Lorenzo-Elarco	Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PRMNM) Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group (CWG)
James D. Sellmann (received input via e-mail)	University of Guam
Joe Quinata	Guam Preservation Trust
Josepha Maddison	Marshall Islands Commission, Chairperson
Kate Brown	Global Island Partnership
Katerina Teaiwa	Australian National University
Kawika Winter	University of Hawai'i at Mānoa He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve
Dr. Keao NeSmith	Researcher and Consultant
Kitlang Kabua	Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority
Lance Morgan	Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) Community Group (CG); Marine Conservation Institute
H. Larry Raigetel	University of Guam, Assistant Professor at the Micronesian Area Research Center; Waa'gey (FSM) Navigator
Dr. Laura M. Torres Souder, Gé'helo'	Kumisión I Fino' Chamoru, Yan i Fina'nā'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Taotao Tāno'
Leo Pangelinan	Northern Marianas Humanities Council, Executive Director
Lucky Lucky	Marshall Islands Commissioner
Mark Rauzon	Geography Professor at Laney College and Author of "Isles of Amensia"

Michael Roman	University of Cincinnati
Niniau Kawaihae	Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Noelle Kahanu	Hui Panalā'au descendant; University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
Dr. Ron Vave	East Carolina University
Sam 'Olu Gon	The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i & Palmyra
Sean Macduff	Mariana Trench Marine National Monument, United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Sharleen Q. Santos-Bamba, Ph.D.	Senior Vice President & Provost, University of Guam
Sheila Babauta	Friends of the Mariana Trench
Sheila Sarhangi	Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) Community Group (CG); Pacific Remote Islands Coalition
Sol Kaho'ohalahala	Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) Community Group (CG); Pacific Remote Islands Coalition
Stacy Jupiter	Wildlife Conservation Society
Sylvan Igisomar	Secretary of Lands and Natural Resources, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)
Dr. Todd Ames	Associate Professor of Sociology and Micronesian Studies University of Guam
Wilson Note	Marshall Islands Commissioner
Yimnang Golbuu	The Nature Conservancy, Micronesia and Polynesia
David Taim	The Pacific Community (SPC) Pacific Ministers for Culture, Pacific Regional Culture Strategy Working Group
Ellen Lekka	
Emile Kairua	
Falakika Taofifenua	
Frances Vaka'uta	
Hae Katrawi	
Jarvis Teauroa	
Luisa Mavoia	
Ngarangi Teio	
Paefou Panapa	
Pulupaki Ika	
Vereniki Nalio	
Charles Ka'ai'ai (Ret.)	Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council
Craig Severance	
Felix Penalosa	
Felix Reyes	
Joshua DeMello	
Kitty M. Simonds	
Taotasi Archie Soliai	
Taulapapa William Sword	
Zach Yamada	
Anonymous Participant	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)

Anonymous Participant	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)
Anonymous Participant	Non-Governmental Organization
Anonymous Participant	Palau

APPENDIX C: PRIMNM Renaming Assessment Discussion Questions

Phase One – Questions for Agency Staff

1. The target populations for this assessment includes groups and individuals with a current or historic cultural connection or stated interest in the management of the PRIMNM. Given this, what groups do you think should be consulted with regarding a proposed name for the Monument and why? Are there any cultural norms we should be aware of before reaching out to those groups?
2. Are there any existing names that are/were used for features/islands/currents in the Monument that we should be aware of? Or names that people are using to refer to that geographic location?
3. Are there any informational resources that the DOI Renaming Commission should be aware of?
4. Is there anything else that you would like to add that we have not discussed?

Phase One – Questions for Agency Associates and PRIMNM Community Group Members

1. What is your opinion of the current monument name?
2. What should the Department of Interior consider in any process for renaming the Monument?
3. What groups should be consulted with regarding a proposed name for the Monument and why?
 - a. Are there any cultural sensitivities or cultural norms we should be aware of before reaching out to those groups?
4. What elements do you think should be represented in any proposed names that are considered by the Renaming Commission?
5. Are there any elements that you feel *should not* be included in a proposed Monument name?
6. How important would it be for the proposed name to be a traditional/cultural name? Would a traditional/cultural name be more important to choose than a contemporary name?
7. For naming of future monuments or features, what is the best way to seek input from your cultural group?
8. Are there any existing names for features/islands/currents in the Monument that you are aware of?

9. If there is more than one alternative name for the Monument, how would you recommend resolution for the different groups? Do you have any recommendations for criteria for resolving multiple names?
10. Is there anything else that you would like to add that we have not discussed?

Phase Two – Questions for All Other Participants

1. What is your opinion of the current monument name: the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument?
2. What groups should be consulted with regarding a proposed name for the Monument? Are you aware of any naming commissions or cultural practice bodies that we should speak with?
3. We've talked to several groups who are known to have cultural connections to this place, and many of them relay that they often consider the natural features, history, cultural background of an area in a name.
 - a. What do you think should be considered in renaming the Monument?
 - b. What elements, principles, or features would you like to see represented in any new name?
4. If you were to propose a name to the Monument or something within the Monument, what would it be and what would you consider?
 - a. If you are comfortable sharing, can you please share the meaning or story behind the name?
 - b. If you are comfortable sharing, is there an existing name for the broader ocean area?
5. Are there any elements that you feel *should not* be included in a new Monument name?
6. We know these areas have historically been used by groups including voyagers for thousands of years. Is there a way to honor this history and traditions, including traditional practices, in the renaming of the Monument or places in the Monument?
7. What are your thoughts on how to appropriately recognize cultural groups who have a historical connection to the area? For example, the Hui Panalā'au, Wake Island Defenders, and others who have a connection to the area.
8. Individual National Wildlife Refuges, islands, atolls, reefs, and other natural features within the Monument may also be renamed as part of this process or in the future. If you are comfortable sharing with us, are there any existing names for features, islands, currents in the Monument that you are aware of that should be considered in the renaming process?
9. If there is more than one option for a new name for the Monument, do you have any recommendations or criteria for resolution?
10. For naming future monuments or features in this region, what is the best way to seek input from the group or individuals you represent?
11. Is there anything else that you would like to add that we have not discussed?