

| Topic | Public Questions | Agency Response |
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| Public Outreach | <i>It's been almost 10-years since the initial public comment period. When will the current public be allowed to provide input via oral comments?</i> | We encourage anyone who would like to provide oral comments to speak directly to the Superintendent or to request a special accommodation for assistance in submitting your comment, please contact Tammy Summers (671) 687-4203. Public insight and improvements on the current draft plan are welcome. |
| | <i>Why is the MTMNM draft management plan not included on the USFWS NWRS planning webpage at fws.gov/pacific/planning?</i> | That webpage is obsolete and is no longer managed. The USFWS is in the process of updating all the agency webpages. Eventually pages with obsolete content should return a response code indicating that access to the target resource is no longer available. |
| | <i>How will the public be involved in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the management plan and associated actions? Please advise how to do so.</i> | The public will have multiple opportunities to participate in Action Plan activities through outreach events, teacher workshops, partnering groups, and the Friends of the Mariana Trench. Attendees are asked to share their evaluation and ideas with event coordinators to help improve the programs. A number of the proposed activities include soliciting advice from public groups, such as cultural groups on traditional knowledge pertaining to management of marine resources. Public comment will be sought during public outreach sessions conducted immediately after in-person MTMAC meetings. You may contact the Superintendent directly as well. |
| | <i>Will the proposed (Monument) Management Coordination Team (MMCT) have a standing stakeholders subcommittee to help with communication of issues to local entities?</i> | The MMCT includes only the three monument management officials and will not have subcommittees. |
| | <i>The management plan indicates that there is an NWRS office and staff in Saipan. Who is the staff?</i> | Two new permanent staff positions for the Monument (Deputy Superintendent and Park Ranger) have been advertised this year to work at the Visitor Contact Station located at American Memorial Park in Garapan. Superintendent Tammy Summers has offices on Saipan and Guam. USFWS also has a dedicated Ecological Services employee on Saipan for the Brown Tree Snake program. Our <i>Friends of the Mariana Trench</i> FWS friends group continues to grow in support of local outreach and education and will help staff the Visitor Contact Station. NOAA's Saipan and Guam Field Office staff help with outreach and education activities. |

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| Research | <i>Why has recent research not been incorporated into the management plan?</i> | We intend to add more recent exploration and research discoveries (i.e. the <i>Okeanos Explorer</i> Deep Water Marianas Expedition) and others in the final management plan. These updates were not completed prior to publishing the draft. Also, the NOAA Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center is soon to publish <i>An Overview of Marine Research in the Mariana Archipelago: 1900 – 2018</i> and relevant sections will be incorporated into the final plan. |
| Traditional and Cultural Access | <i>What impact does military training have on Goal 2: Provide for traditional access to the Monument by the indigenous people of CNMI & Guam for culturally significant, subsistence, and religious uses?</i> | Traditional access to the Monument should not be impacted by military training. To date, we are unaware of any impacts to traditional access due to military exercises or training. The USCG publishes and broadcasts notices to mariners with location, activity, and duration information regarding military training activities. Mariners are requested to read and adhere to the published notices. |
| MTMAC | <i>Please explain how the CNMI public has representation on the MTMAC?</i> | The MTMAC is an intergovernmental advisory body. In the DMMP, <i>Appendix G. Mariana Trench Monument Advisory Council</i> includes specifics about the MTMAC mission, operating procedures, and by-laws. The goal is to hold an annual meeting in CNMI to facilitate public participation. Public comment will be sought during outreach sessions conducted immediately after those meetings. |
| | <i>Will any MTMAC meeting minutes be available to the public and posted on the MTMNM websites?</i> | MTMAC members select a Secretary among themselves to ensure that each meeting is properly documented and publically available. USFWS hosts the MTMAC webpage where meeting minutes will be posted. |
| | <i>What month is the MTMAC expected to hold its first meeting?</i> | The 5 nominees for Term 3 of the MTMAC have been submitted for review and appointment by the Secretaries of Interior and Commerce. We do not have an appointment date at this time. |
| General | Please briefly touch on the Monument's history and the overall goals for managing it. | NOAA and partners' "Ring of Fire" expeditions in the early 2000's made many discoveries about the Trench's hydro-acoustics, volcanism, and vent chemistry, which led to the "Global Ocean Project" in 2008. The goal was to work with local citizens and governments to secure designation of three to five very large, world-class, no-take marine reserves to provide ecosystem-scale benefits and help conserve our global marine heritage. In cooperation with the CNMI Government, President George W. Bush designated the Marianas Trench, Pacific Remote Islands, and Rose Atoll Marine National Monuments in 2009. The goals for managing the Marianas Trench Monument are on page 15 of the draft management plan. |

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| Permits | <i>Clarify why 3 permits per year for scientific research and 3 for filming was chosen in the compatibility determination (CD). Are new CDs needed for each permit that exceeds the expected 3/year?</i> | USFWS is required to complete a Compatibility Determination before a new proposed activity is permitted. The “availability of resources” refers to the ability to manage the use with existing staff. To estimate how much staff time would be required to administer these activities, we estimated 3 per year based on the number of applications to date. We currently do not have a set limit on the number of permits that will be issued for any given activity. |
| | <i>Who collects the permit fees and how are the funds used?</i> | The USFWS is charged with recovering the costs of administering permits. Permit fees are returned to the Monument to help fund public outreach activities. A permit fee schedule may be negotiated by the MMCT members concurrent with the development of the Joint Monument Permit. NOAA is authorized under the MSFCA to collect a fee to cover the administrative costs incurred in issuing fishing permits. |
| National Security | <i>President Bush stated “the policy of the US shall be to continue measures established in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument to protect the training, readiness, mobility of the US armed forces”. How is the MTMNM different from that national monument?</i> | Both the PMNM and MTMNM establishing proclamations include the same stipulations for Armed Forces Actions: “The prohibitions required by this proclamation shall not apply to activities and exercises of the Armed Forces (including those carried out by the USCG).” |
| | <i>How do we ensure the measures (that the DOD adopts to minimize impacts on natural resources within the Monument) are adequate?</i> | The MTMAC includes one representative each from the DOD and the USCG to facilitate communications and information sharing. In addition to the Navy, all three MTMNM managing agencies collaborate on marine species research and monitoring efforts. Also, the Proclamation states that in the event the Armed Forces threaten or cause destruction of loss of or injury to living marine resources in the monument, they will respond to and mitigate any actual harm and, or if possible, restore or replace the monument resource or quality. |
| | <i>The US military has not finalized the EIS for CNMI joint military training. Is your team a part of the process? How can we ensure the increase in military activities in our region does not harm the very resources we are trying to protect?</i> | We have people in NOAA collaborating with the military planners so the training operations are in compliance with environmental laws and do not adversely impact the resources. In addition, we have a direct line of communication regarding any activities that may affect the Monument through the DOD MTMAC representative. |

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| Management | <i>Why are commercial fishing, deep-sea mining, right-of-way permits, and environmental assessments to install submarine fiber optic telecommunications cables specifically excluded from the management plan?</i> | The Proclamation prohibits commercial fishing as well as any mineral extraction from the Monument so these issues will not be addressed in the management plan. Submarine telecommunications cables are regulated by international treaties; Each new cable installation project requires its own comprehensive Environmental Assessment and engineering analysis specific to the proposed project prior to right-of-way permit issuance. |
| | <i>If deep sea mining activities were to be proposed, would they be addressed within this plan?</i> | Deep-sea mining is prohibited within the boundaries of the Monument. The Superintendent would stipulate that deep-sea mining is not an appropriate use in the Monument if a mining proposal is received. The State Department, in coordination with FWS and NOAA, has recently denied international requests to conduct minerals exploration and sampling in and adjacent to the Monument. |
| | <i>Aren't management plans intended to be comprehensive and include all foreseeable activities?</i> | This management plan is primarily for strategic planning and program prioritization purposes. This plan addresses coordination of management between USFWS, NOAA, and CNMI; proposed activities; and conservation priorities within the Monument boundaries that are subject to the management agencies' programs and the authorities and enforceable policies of the respective management agencies. |
| | <i>How will the MMCT function if the CNMI representative does not have the capacity to participate in a timely fashion?</i> | We will develop a meeting schedule in cooperation with the CNMI representative. The MMCT will meet on a regular schedule to promote communication and coordination between the agencies. USFWS will lead a coordinated review process with NOAA and CNMI. |
| | <i>What proposed rules/regulations would have to be promulgated in addition to the publication of the final management plan?</i> | The Management Plan is a planning document that sets forth the vision and management activities for the next 15 years. There will be ongoing discussions with the CNMI government as to whether new proposed rules or regulations should be promulgated. |
| | <i>What is the anticipated timeline for publishing the final management plan?</i> | Agency staff will review and analyze all comments received from the public on the DMMP/EA and modify the document as appropriate. We intend to work toward completing the final document as expeditiously as possible. We will continue to fund and support activities in accordance with the existing draft plan until the final management plan is published. |