

MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION
4340 EAST-WEST HIGHWAY, ROOM 905
BETHESDA, MD 20814

28 October 2005

The Honorable Linda Lingle
Governor, State of Hawaii
Executive Chambers, State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Governor Lingle:

On behalf of the Marine Mammal Commission, I would like to commend and thank both you and the staff of the Department of Land and Natural Resources for designating the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) Marine Refuge. The NWHI and its surrounding waters form a unique and special ecosystem. The region's treasure of marine life, including the endangered Hawaiian monk seal, is enormously important, nationally as well as internationally. Under your leadership, the State of Hawaii has demonstrated great foresight and commitment in approving the strong conservation measures accompanying the Refuge designation. We applaud your intent to support similar conservation measures for the proposed NWHI national marine sanctuary and to pursue designation of the NWHI as a World Heritage Site. These actions reflect Hawaii's commitment to natural resource protection and are a model for the type of action so urgently needed on a global scale if we are to preserve our natural heritage for future generations.

Once again, thank you for the efforts leading to this important accomplishment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Cottingham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David Cottingham
Executive Director