

Proposed Mo‘omomi North Coast of Molokai Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area FAQs

With the recent submission of a Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area (CBSFA) designation proposal for Mo‘omomi and the North Coast of Moloka‘i, and upcoming public scoping meetings, the Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR), would like to address some frequently asked questions.

What is a CBSFA?

A CBSFA is a type of marine managed area established by State law for the specific purpose of “reaffirming and protecting fishing practices customarily and traditionally exercised for purposes of native Hawaiian subsistence, culture, and religion.”

Who is behind this proposal?

The proposal was submitted to DLNR by Hui Mālama o Mo‘omomi (HMM) on behalf of the Ho‘olehua Hawaiian Homesteaders.

Why is a CBSFA being proposed?

Over the past 30-40 years, community members have observed a significant decline in abundance and size of certain fish species along the north coast of Moloka‘i. This decline has been attributed to a number of factors including commercial fishing, overly efficient gear, and inappropriate harvest.

Will the area be kapu to all fishing?

No. Under the proposal, the CBSFA would be kapu only to commercial fishing, except for akule and ta‘ape. The proposal would also prohibit night diving and SCUBA spearfishing, which are not considered traditional and customary practices. The proposal also includes bag limits, size limits, seasonal closures, and gear restrictions for certain species, as well as special regulations for Kawa‘aloha Bay.

How will the area be enforced?

DLNR’s Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE) is responsible for enforcement of rules that are adopted for the CBSFA. DOCARE will patrol the area and respond to reported violations as time and resources allow. In addition, DLNR will provide training to community volunteers and any interested persons on how to properly observe, document, and report violations. DLNR does not condone the use of threatening or other criminal behaviors by any member of the public, nor does it authorize any member of the public to enforce natural resource laws.

Is this CBSFA a done deal?

No. DLNR encourages any interested person to attend the upcoming public scoping meetings on March 16 to learn more about the proposal and provide feedback and comments. Your input will be carefully considered and will help to ensure that the area remains abundant in marine resources to support traditional and customary native Hawaiian fishing and gathering practices for current and future generations.