

**Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR)  
Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR)**

**Herbivore Scoping Meeting Notes**

December 13, 2021, 12:00-1:45 pm via Zoom: 51 attendees

**Purpose of Meeting**

Statewide meetings were held to listen and collect public input on proposed changes to the Statewide Herbivore Management Strategy, which included amendments to existing regulations and new proposed regulations. DAR addressed the degradation of our nearshore coastal areas and reefs, and emphasized the importance of abundant herbivore populations for both the people of Hawai'i and the health of coral reefs. The proposed amendments to herbivorous fish species included kala (Bluespine unicornfish, *Naso unicornis*), several species of uhu (parrotfish), kole (Goldring surgeonfish, *Ctenochaetus strigosus*), and manini (Convict tang, *Acanthurus triostegus*).

**General Comments**

Several participants felt that these proposed regulations take away Native Hawaiian customary and traditional gathering rights, as fishing for subsistence and as a part of culture is different than recreational or commercial fishing. A few participants expressed the need and opportunity to educate fishers and the younger generation on pono and sustainable fishing practices. Some commented that size limits promote wasteful practices such as throwing away undersized dead fish just to avoid citations. There were also suggestions to improve collaboration between DAR and other state agencies such as the Department of Health to address land-based pollution and water quality issues, as declines in fish populations and coral reef health may not necessarily be solely due to fishing pressure. Overall the majority of participants supported some type of regulation on the proposed species, whether it be bag and/or size limits, or banning the take of uhu at night. However, some expressed concern that most rules are not a one-size-fits-all solution, and that different places or islands need specific place-based regulations. Questions were also raised regarding whether gear restrictions would be used, if these proposed regulations would be permanent, if artificial reefs could be used to create new habitats for fish, and how long it would take to see the effects of these new management strategies. Please refer the FAQ document posted on the Holomua: Marine 30x30 website [here](#) for responses to these questions and more details.

## Kala

DAR proposed a minimum harvest size limit of 15 inches and a bag limit of 2. The size limit proposed is an increase from the current minimum size limit of 14 inches.

It was mentioned that kala is one of the top species cited for undersized catch violations, and there was concern voiced about the efficacy of a minimum size limit when there is a lack of compliance and/or enforcement. Questions were raised about how a bag limit would affect commercial fishers and whether a slot limit (having a minimum and maximum size limit) would be more effective. There were also suggestions to change the minimum size limit to match the current regulations for ‘ōpelu kala (16”).

## Uhu

DAR proposed to align statewide regulations with the current Maui regulations for uhu. This includes increasing the minimum harvest size limit for large-bodied species from 12 inches to 14 inches (please refer to the table below for a species list) and a ban on the take of blue large-bodied uhu. A decrease in the minimum harvest size limit for small-bodied uhu from 12 inches (current statewide minimum) to 10 inches was also proposed, and a bag limit of 2 which would apply to all species combined.

Suggestions provided for uhu included an increase in educational and outreach efforts, especially with identification of the different species and life stages. Prohibiting the take of uhu at night was also brought up, and banning spearfishing for uhu. There was also conversation about ways to reduce illegal commercial catch and sales, such as looking for puncture wounds at markets. Several also commented that the difference in size limits are impractical and that stronger enforcement is needed.

	Hawaiian Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
Large-bodied uhu	Uhu ‘ele‘ele (male) or pālupaluka (female)	Redlip parrotfish	<i>Scarus rubroviolaceus</i>
	Uhu uliuli (male) or ‘ahu‘ula (female)	Spectacled parrotfish	<i>Chlorurus perspicillatus</i>
Small-bodied uhu	Pōnahunuhu	Star-eye parrotfish	<i>Calotomus carolinus</i>
	Uhu	Yellowbar parrotfish	<i>Calotomus zonarchus</i>
	Uhu	Bullethead parrotfish	<i>Chlorurus spilurus</i>
	Lauia	Regal parrotfish	<i>Scarus dubius</i>
	Uhu	Palenose parrotfish	<i>Scarus psittacus</i>

### **Manini**

DAR proposed raising the minimum harvest size limit from 5 inches to 6 inches, based on updated life history information on the size at maturity. DAR is not currently proposing a statewide bag limit for this species; this will be reassessed once a stock assessment is completed.

Based on observations, a participant shared that the majority of manini caught are about seven inches, which would be over the minimum size limit proposed and therefore would not be a concern. Some participants asked why bag limits were not proposed for manini. Please refer to the [FAQ](#) for more information.

### **Kole**

DAR proposed a minimum harvest size limit of 5 inches for kole. DAR is not currently proposing a statewide bag limit; this will be reassessed once a stock assessment is completed.

Questions were raised regarding why bag limits were not proposed for kole, and why DAR is proposing new rules on this previously unregulated species. Please refer to the [FAQ](#) for more information.

For more species specific information such as life history traits, spawning periods, and other details for kala, uhu, manini, and kole, please visit the Holomua Marine 30x30 [Importance of Herbivores](#) webpage.