

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Aquatic Resources
Honolulu, Hawaii

December 19, 2018

Board of Land and Natural Resources
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO ENTER INTO A GRANT-IN-AID CONTRACT AGREEMENT
(\$100,000 STATE OPERATING BUDGET) BETWEEN THE BOARD OF LAND AND
NATURAL RESOURCES (BLNR) AND BIG ISLAND RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (BIRC) AS FISCAL SPONSOR FOR THE MARINE MAMMAL
CENTER TO PROVIDE MARINE SCIENCE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO MIDDLE-
SCHOOL STUDENTS AND TEACHERS THROUGH THEIR MARINE SCIENCE AND OCEAN
CONSERVATION PROGRAM, NA KOKUA O KE KAI

Submitted for your consideration and approval is a request to enter into contract agreement between the BLNR and BIRC, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization under the laws of the State of Hawaii, as Fiscal Sponsor for The Marine Mammal Center to provide marine science educational opportunities to middle-school students and teachers. Funding for the project, \$100,000 in State Operating Budget Funds, was authorized by Act 49, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017, amended 2018.

BACKGROUND:

The Marine Mammal Center has been contributing to ocean conservation through marine mammal rescue, science, and education. We bring our decades of experience to the conservation of endangered species, including the Hawaiian monk seal. In 2014, we opened Ke Kai Ola in Kona dedicated to saving this seal, found only in Hawaii's waters, from extinction. With the support of the community, the Center responds to more stranded marine mammals each year than any other organization in the world.

Aligning our conservation work with our education programs is essential to ensuring that the next generation grows up to care for the oceans and the environment. The Center engages over 100,000 individuals annually, inspiring environmental stewardship and action. We educate the public at our headquarters, satellite facilities, and in the community, and we provide formal and informal education programs for 40,000 school children a year.

The goal of our middle-school marine science and ocean conservation program, Na Kokua o ke Kai, is to increase knowledge of and interest in science, with a special emphasis on the biodiversity, natural history, and unique conservation challenges of Hawaii's marine wildlife and ecosystems, and inspire efforts to protect them. Through Na Kokua o ke Kai, the Center aims to support teachers and

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help them inspire the next generation of informed and engaged citizens who will care for the health of the oceans and environment.

The intended outcomes for middle-school students are that they will:

- Learn marine, ocean, and environmental science concepts, principles
- Discover and consider STEM career opportunities
- Develop connections to science and appreciation for the relevance of science to everyday life through authentic and culturally-relevant marine science experiences activities
- Learn to apply scientific inquiry, conduct observations, collect and analyze data, discuss results with peers, and propose explanations/share discoveries in line with the inquiry skills identified in the National Science Education Standards
- Develop an understanding of the challenges and solutions related to ocean health and be inspired to take personal action to positively impact the health of the ocean and coastal ecosystem, including Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and other marine sanctuaries.

The intended outcomes for middle-school teachers are that they will:

- Build confidence in teaching science concepts and content and using authentic science practices, resources, and data
- Apply the skills learned in our program to their science teaching more broadly
- Develop connections to a peer group of educators and science experts
- Act as ocean stewards themselves, demonstrating kuleana for the environment from mauka to Makai.

A request to allot and expend a grant pursuant to Chapter 42F-103, will be requested from Governor David Ige, through the Department of Budget and Finance. In addition, the contract agreement will be prepared for submission to the Attorney General's Office for approval as to form pending Board approval. The Department is aware implementation of the contract is dependent upon receipt of all required approvals, as well as availability of funds, and that additional funding restrictions may occur at any time.

CHAPTER 343 – ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

In accordance with the Hawaii Administrative Rules Sections §11-200-8 and the Exemption List for the Department of Land and Natural Resources concurred with by the Environmental Council and dated June 5, 2015, the subject request is exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment pursuant to Exemption Class No. 10, item 5, "Training, environmental interpretation, public safety efforts and other educational activities". **See Exhibit A.**

RECOMMENDATION:

The Board finds that the project will have a beneficial effect on the environment and is presumed to be exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment.

Respectfully Submitted,



BRIAN J. NEILSON
Acting Administrator

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL:



SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

EXHIBIT A

EXEMPTION NOTIFICATION

Regarding the preparation of an environmental assessment pursuant to Chapter 343, HRS and Chapter 11-200, HAR

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| Project Title | Request for Approval to enter into a Grant-In-Aid Contract Agreement (\$100,000 State Operating Budget) Between the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) and Big Island Resource Conservation and Development Council as Fiscal Sponsor for the Marine and Mammal Center |
| Project/Reference No.: | Not applicable |
| Project Location: | various locations on Hawaii Island. |
| Project Description | Provide Marine Science Educational Opportunities to Middle-School Students and Teacher Through Their Marine Science and Ocean Conservation Program, Na Kokuao Ke Kai. |
| Chapter 343 Triggers | Use of State Land |
| Exemption Class No.: | <p>In accordance with Hawaii Administrative Rules 11-200-8 and the Exemption List for the Department of Land and Natural Resources concurred with by the Environmental Council and dated June 5, 2015, the subject request is exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment pursuant to Exemption Class No. 10, item 5, "Training, environmental interpretation, public safety efforts and other educational activities"</p> <p>The subject request is necessary to align The Marine Mammal Center's education programs with their conservation work to ensure that the next generation grows up to care for the oceans and the environment.</p> |
| Consulted Parties | None |
| Recommendation | The Board finds that the project will have a beneficial effect on the environment and is presumed to be exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment. |