

State of Hawaii  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
Division of Aquatic Resources  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

March 22, 2019

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

**SUBJECT:** Request Approval to Add Funding and Extend Through FY20 an Existing Federally-Funded Project Agreement between the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii (RCUH) for the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) Research Project Entitled "Hawaii Marine Recreational Fishing Survey."

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Approval is sought for Amendment No. 2 of Contract No. 67351 to add funding to the existing FY19 "Hawaii Marine Recreational Fishing Survey" Project Agreement to be conducted with RCUH for a FY20 extension through June 30, 2020 in the approximate amount of \$680,000.

Project Objectives

1. Collect baseline data on marine recreational catch to assist fisheries resource management decisions.
2. Estimate fishing pressure and total landings of Hawaii's various marine recreational fisheries by integrating catch, effort and U.S. Census data
3. Fulfill mandatory Federal requirement for all U.S. coastal states to provide recreational catch and effort data to NOAA.

Duration

The existing Project Agreement (Contract No. 67351, Amendment No. 1) is scheduled to run through June 30, 2019. This Amendment No. 2 will extend the project for one year from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

Funding Source

Amendment No. 2 will include a combination of funds listed below in the total amount of \$680,000:

- 1) Federal funds (\$580,000): \$280,000 from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and \$300,000 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Sport Fish Restoration Program.
- 2) State funds (\$100,000): \$100,000 from LNR 153 Commercial Fisheries Special Fund as required State match.

HRS Chapter 343 - Compliance with Environmental Law:

Contract No. 67351, Amendment No. 2 will continue to involve the use of state lands (submerged lands zoned in the Conservation District, Resource subzone) and use of state funds.

The Department has determined that the actions to be conducted under the funding and time extension for this ongoing project will have little or no significant effect on the environment and are exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment. See the Division's proposed Determination of Exemption from the preparation of an environmental assessment (attached).

### REMARKS

Fisher surveys compile marine recreational fishing catch and effort data relevant to all DAR programs. Unlike mandatory catch reporting by commercial fisheries, marine recreational fishing information has been largely unaccounted, yet believed to have a substantial impact on Hawaii's fishery resources due to its widespread popularity, cultural significance, and importance as a food source for the people of Hawaii.

By conducting routine interviews with both shoreline and private boat fishers statewide, the project provides both State and Federal agencies with baseline data that is vital to responsible management of Hawaii's fishery resources. Catch data (e.g., species, numbers, length, weight and disposition of catch), effort data (e.g., hours fished, areas fished, target species, gear types and methods used) and U.S. Census data, are to be integrated as fisheries statistics to estimate fishing pressure and total landings in Hawaii's various marine recreational fisheries for eventual public posting on a NOAA Fisheries website. Under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended and reauthorized, all U.S. coastal states are required to provide recreational catch and effort data to NOAA Fisheries.

Approval to amend and extend the existing Project Agreement (Contract No. 67351) is being requested concurrently from the Governor, through the Department of Budget and Finance. Also, the Project Agreement Amendment No. 2 is being prepared for submission to the Attorney General's Office for preliminary approval as to form. DAR is aware implementation of this Project Agreement Amendment is dependent upon receipt of all required approvals as well as the availability of funds and that funding restrictions may occur at any time.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above discussion, the Division of Aquatic Resources requests:

1. That the Board, based on the attached proposed declaration of exemption prepared after consultation with and on advice of those having similar expertise in exemption determinations for the proposed actions under the Project Agreement Amendment, declare that the actions which are anticipated to be undertaken under this Project Agreement Amendment will have little or no significant effect on the environment and are therefore exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment.

2. That the Board authorize the Chairperson to approve and execute the Division of Aquatic Resources' Project Agreement Amendment no. 2 to Contract No. 67351 entitled "Hawaii Marine Recreational Fishing Survey," with the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii, subject to approval as to form and content by the Department of the Attorney General.

Respectfully submitted,



BRIAN J. NEILSON  
Acting Administrator

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL:



SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson

Attachment

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**DIVISION OF AQUATIC RESOURCES**  
1151 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 330  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

SUZANNE D. CASE  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA  
FIRST DEPUTY

KALEO L. MANUEL  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

March 22, 2019

TO: Division of Aquatic Resources File

THROUGH: Suzanne D. Case, Chairperson *blc*

FROM: Brian J. Neilson, Acting Administrator *BN*  
Division of Aquatic Resources

SUBJECT: Declaration of Exemption from the Preparation of an Environmental Assessment under the Authority of Chapter 343, HRS, and Chapter 11-200, HAR, for a Request to Add Funding and Extend Through FY20 an Existing Federally-Funded Project Agreement between the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii (RCUH) for the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) Research Project Entitled "Hawaii Marine Recreational Fishing Survey."

The following Project Agreement activities are found to be exempted from preparation of an environmental assessment under the authority of Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) and Chapter 11-200, Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR):

Project Title: Hawaii Marine Recreational Fishing Survey

Project Description: Fisher surveys compile marine recreational fishing catch and effort data relevant to all DAR programs. Unlike mandatory catch reporting by commercial fisheries, marine recreational fishing information has been largely unaccounted, yet believed to have a substantial impact on Hawaii's fishery resources due to its widespread popularity, cultural significance, and importance as a food source for the people of Hawaii.

By conducting routine interviews with both shoreline and private boat fishers statewide, the project provides both State and Federal agencies with baseline data that is vital to responsible management of Hawaii's fishery resources. Catch data (e.g., species, numbers, length, weight and disposition of catch), effort data (e.g., hours fished, areas fished, target species, gear types and methods used) and U.S. Census data, are to be integrated as fisheries statistics to estimate fishing pressure and total landings in Hawaii's various marine recreational fisheries for eventual public posting on a NOAA Fisheries website.

cumulative effect of the action, and the sum effects of an action on the quality of the environment.  
§11-200-12, HAR.

Significant cumulative impacts are not anticipated as a result of this assessment and data gathering activity, and numerous safeguards further ensure that the potentially sensitive environment of the project area will not be significantly affected. All assessment and data integrative activities will be conducted in a manner that does not diminish marine resources, qualities, and ecological integrity, or have any indirect, secondary, cultural, or cumulative effects.

Since no significant cumulative impacts or significant impacts with respect to any particularly sensitive aspect of the project area are anticipated, the categorical exemptions identified above should remain applicable.

4. Overall Impacts Will Probably have No Significant Effect on the Environment. Any foreseeable impacts from the proposed activity will be further mitigated by general and specific conditions attached to the Project Agreement. Specifically, all research activities covered by this Project Agreement will be carried out with strict safeguards for the natural, historic, and cultural resources, other applicable law and agency policies and standard operating procedures.

Conclusion: Upon consideration of the Project Agreement Amendment No. 2 of Contract No. 67351 to be approved by the Chairperson, being delegated signatory authority on behalf of the Board of Land and Natural Resources at its meeting of March 22, 2019, the potential effects of the above listed project as provided by Chapter 343, HRS, and Chapter 11-200, HAR, have been determined to be of no significant effect on the environment and exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment.