

From: [leslee cook](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please do not lift the ban for the SAP for Monterey Bay Aquarium
Date: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 6:05:50 PM

Aloha Honorable Members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

I am referring to Agenda F-1 or the SAP, which DAR has submitted. I moved here from California over 6 years ago. I have paid the hefty fee to buy my ticket to view MBA's wonderful Jellyfish and Sea Horse exhibit. I question MBA's husbandry abilities to keep these aquatic lives thriving and procreating, from when they had last harvested from our limited stock in our ocean. If MBA's advanced husbandry skills can't seem to figure out how to make a normal enough Hawaiian ocean ecosystem for them to survive their filtering system, then they don't deserve to harvest again only for them to die as well. Even if they only take what goes past their out stretched arms it doesn't matter, they can't seem to enable them to reproduce once in captivity or not enough of them anyway.

This ban on any further harvesting was set up for a good reason and there still is not an abundance of vibrant sea life. When was the last time you went snorkeling? We hardly have any beautiful sea life for us snorkelers and scuba divers to view. Our tourism industry depends on families coming to swim and view our sea life. Without much aquatic life to see, why would mainlanders fly all the way over here, just to drink and buy souvenirs? They would go to Mexico instead it's much closer and cheaper. We have so few reef fish to feed our native Hawaiians who depend on them for their foods. We deplore you to vote to save our Hawaiian oceans for us and our visitors and not allow this SAP for Monterey Bay Aquarium.

Here's a suggestion for MBA, why not to create a **Virtual Reality** Jellyfish, Sea Horse, Octopi, Honu, Whale exhibit. Teaching the visitors from around the world about the life styles and social habits of Hawaiian sea life without sacrificing the sea life for their exhibits. This VR Hawaiian Ocean exhibit can continue forever and their profits will soar as well. No other aquarium has dared to think so creatively.

I know it's hard to vote against what DAR is suggesting, but this is why you have chosen to be on this board to care for the Aina and moana, kai.

Mahalo for listening to us who live here, we trust you will turn down this Special Application Permit.

Respectfully yours,
Leslee Cook

Board of Land and Natural Resources

Request for Approval of Special Activity Permit to Collect, Possess or Transport Organisms in
Offshore Waters of West Hawaii for the Purposes of Educational Live Display and Associated Research
At Monterey Bay Aquarium

RE: Opposition to Special Activity Permit in West Hawai'i

August 9, 2024

The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement writes in **strong opposition** of a Special Activity Permit to access regulated and non-regulated areas in West Hawai'i. Hawai'i is infamously known as the "extinction capital of the world," a nickname coined and promulgated in response to the State's habitual failure to regulate and protect many of Hawai'i's endemic flora and fauna. In order to protect the limited resources remaining in Hawai'i, BLNR must deny this request.

As a Native Hawaiian organization, we deeply understand the importance of land, particularly when there is an ancestral or familial connection to it. The West Hawai'i Fishery Management Area (WHFMA) ranges from 'Upolu in North Kohala to Ka Lae in Ka'u. All along this wide stretch of land are families and communities who have subsisted off those waters for generations. Perhaps most well-known among these communities is Miloli'i, most famously known as "Hawai'i's last fishing village." For places like Miloli'i, the waters of West Hawai'i serve as their refrigerator and supermarket. Many families and communities rely on these waters for the majority of their food. Allowing anyone, particularly non-residents, to be able to take literal tons of fish away from these islands for their own commercial gain, with little to no profit returning to the community, is simply *hewa*.

From 1976-2018, 8.6 million fish were taken from these waters, sedated, starved, and sent around the world to be displayed in aquariums. Despite the court-issued injunction in 2017 that halted the commercial aquarium fishing in West Hawai'i, a loophole had been exploited up until 2020, allowing permits to be issued absent an environmental review.

As stewards of this place, we all have a kuleana to protect and preserve the cultural, historical, and biological significance of Hawai'i. Hawai'i has lost many of its endemic species in the past few decades, however, all is not yet lost. To ensure a brighter future for Hawai'i, exploitative commercial practices like commercial aquarium fishing should not be allowed in such critical areas.

We humbly ask that you **DENY THE PROPOSITION FOR A SPECIAL ACTIVITY PERMIT IN WEST HAWAI'I** and endeavor to protect Hawai'i the way it deserves to be protected.

Mālama pono,



Madelyn McKeague

Director of Advocacy, CNHA

From: [Robert Wintner](#)
To: [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)
Cc: lgluke@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item F1: Monterey Bay Aquarium request to extract Hawaiian Seahorses. August 9, 2024 meeting
Date: Thursday, August 8, 2024 2:23:55 PM

Agenda Item F1: a request from the Monterey Bay Aquarium to extract exotic reef wildlife from Hawaii for transport out of Hawaii with no return. Hawaiian Seahorses—Hippocampus Fieri—are on that reef wildlife list for extraction and removal from Hawaii.

Monterey Bay Aquarium would then sell tickets to see Hawaii reef wildlife as it has in the past with Maui manta rays on a survival rate of 6-8 months,

PLEASE NOTE:

All 3 Hawaiian seahorse species are listed on CITES APPENDIX 2 (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) as “vulnerable to extinction.”

HAWAII DLNR HAS AN BAD HISTORY OF DEFENDING AND PROMOTING REEF WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING IN THE AQUARIUM TRADE. The vast majority of Hawaii people want no aquarium activity in Hawaii, yet DLNR/BLNR ignores this responsibility by design. A former DLNR director, William Aila, was a licensed aquarium collector who defended and promoted the aquarium trade in the legislature. Another former DLNR director, Suzanne Case, promoted and defended the aquarium trade in Hawaii on the basis of sustainability but never defined sustainability. Case scofflawed the Hawaii Supreme Court ruling on injunctive relief with her own ruling that aquarium permits are no longer required, all in deference to her true loyalty.

The current DLNR director chaired an approval session to lease Honolulu prime warehouse space to the biggest aquarium exporter in Hawaii. Reef wildlife trafficking through that state-owned property includes transshipments from Indonesia, Phillipine, Fiji and other reef systems, where dynamite and cyanide stun reef wildlife for aquairum capture.

The 3 Hawaiian seahorse species listed on CITES Appendix 2 as “vulnerable to extinction” are protected from international trade but not from Hawaii State Government conflict of interest and malfeasance. The only reason given for no protection in Hawaii: “We have no evidence.” It’s time for YOU to protect Hawaii’s public reef trust and not the aquarium trade. Superficial aloha cannot make up for failed kuleana. You will deny Monterey Bay Aquarium if you can.

Robert Wintner
Maui



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