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Notes and News

Correction Last month's issue ([MPA News 3:6](#)) incorrectly reported the date by which a draft operations plan for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve would be available for public comment. The draft operations plan is expected to be available in February 2002. Also in February, the US National Marine Sanctuary Program is expected to begin a scoping process to solicit public input on designating the reserve as a national marine sanctuary. For more information, go to the official website of the reserve at <http://hawaiiireef.noaa.gov>.

Representative Areas Program The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), which oversees Australia's Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, is in the process of zoning a network of no-take areas to protect representative examples of habitats and communities within the park. The Representative Areas Program is a multi-phase process; the initial phase identified 70 distinct bioregions in the park. At present, 4.6% of the marine park is off-limits to all extractive activity. For an update on how the program is proceeding, with maps and descriptions of the bioregions, go to http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/key_issues/conservation/rep_areas/updates.html.

Update on Channel Islands The process to designate a network of no-take marine reserves within the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (US) continues. The State of California Department of Fish and Game released in January a suite of six alternatives for a reserve network within the sanctuary, ranging in size from 12% to 34% of the sanctuary's waters. The preferred alternative of both the department and sanctuary management would set aside 25% of the sanctuary as no-take. The six alternatives are now open to public comment, and are expected to be voted on in August of this year by the California Fish and Game Commission. Information on the reserve network alternatives is available on the web at http://www.cinms.nos.noaa.gov/dfg_isor.html.

British Columbia poll shows support for MPAs In a poll of residents in the Canadian province of British Columbia, 75% of respondents supported the concept of setting aside some territorial waters as off-limits to activities that would "seriously deplete fish or marine life" or damage important underwater habitat. The poll was commissioned by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society -- British Columbia Chapter (CPAWS-BC). For more information, contact CPAWS-BC, 502-475 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC V6C 2B3, Canada. Tel: +1 604 685 7445; E-mail: info@cpawsbc.org.

Source URL: <https://www.openchannels.org/news/mpa-news/notes-and-news-2>