

# ENVIRONMENTAL BULLETIN

A collection of social media posts from the previous month and announcements for upcoming events

June 2020

## Marine Corps Base Hawaii Environmental Compliance & Protection Division (ECPD)



PC: Karen Bryan



Earth Day Every Day



## Birds and Turtles and Monk Seals, Oh My! by Karen Bryan

“Lucky we live Hawaii,” they say. And, we're even luckier to work and play at MCBH. It's fairly common to see endangered Hawaiian monk seals snoozing on the beach or Hawaiian green sea turtles foraging in the Nu'upia ponds. And the birds—they're everywhere! MCBH has four endangered waterbirds and one State-listed endangered raptor, all going about all going about their business as we go about ours. The privilege of sharing this beautiful Base with incredible wildlife comes with great responsibility. To ensure our well-being and to protect endangered animals, we have to keep a safe distance. Here's a few tips for maximizing your viewing experience while respecting wildlife:

- Keep your distance, specifically 100' from a resting monk seal. Use a high-power telephoto (zoom) lens to get close-up photos.
- Be careful not to make loud noises or sudden movements when wildlife are present.
- Never attempt to feed wildlife.

Base order P5233.2 and federal laws such as the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) prohibit feeding wild animals. Feeding wildlife alters their natural behaviour and makes them dependent on humans. It deprives young animals from learning important survival skills. If wild animals become habituated to humans, they are at risk of starvation when humans stop feeding them. Sometimes animals become sick or die from eating unnatural or indigestible food items. For example, ducks should not be fed bread because it lacks proper nutrition and is fattening to ducks, making it harder for them to escape predators.

It is indeed a privilege to have access to all of the beauty and natural resources that MCBH has to offer. As you observe the wildlife, please encourage others to respect the animals and their habitat. For more information about natural resources and wildlife at MCBH, visit: <https://www.mcbhawaii.marines.mil/Offices-Staff/S-4-Installations-Environment-Logistics/Environmental/Natural-Resources/>



PC: Karen Bryan. Note: This photo was taken with a high-powered zoom lens to respect the resting monk seal.



## May is National Bike Month

The National Bike Challenge began in May. Bicycling is a great way to get some fresh air and exercise. According to the League of American Bicyclists, short trips that could be made on bicycles are dominated by privately owned motor vehicles. Bicycling helps reduce traffic congestion and improves air quality. The National Bike Challenge continues through September. You can register online, link your fitness app, and even compete for prizes if you're serious about biking. Marine Corps Base Hawaii is registered. Check it out at:

<https://www.lovetoride.net/usa?locale=en-US>

## Inspections to Protect the Stormwater System and Help Keep the Ocean Clean

by Karen Bryan

In addition to day to day activities Base-wide which may impact the Municipal Storm Sewer system—known as an MS4, there are many construction projects in progress on MCBH that requires significant oversight to ensure compliance with environmental protection regulations. These projects not only have many of their own requirements to ensure they protect the base-wide MS4, but the MCBH stormwater team also regularly inspects all projects to ensure they are doing their best to prevent pollution from affecting our delicate ocean ecosystem. Uncontrolled stormwater runoff from construction sites can significantly impact our

ocean. Erosion and sedimentation from construction sites can lead to reduced water quality and other environmental problems. The construction process can create a significant amount of silt and sediment in a short period of time potentially leading to construction site runoff if the proper measures are not taken. The primary method to control construction site runoff is through the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs). Some examples of BMP's that you may recognize on MCBH are bio socks and dust fences. Through the inspection process, the stormwater team works diligently to ensure BMP's are maintained and functioning properly, if any issues are identified during inspections we require a speedy response from the projects to mitigate the potential for environmental impact to our sensitive ocean ecosystem. Pictured is He Xu-Sadri, Lead Environmental Engineer, as she prepares to conduct a BMP inspection. Photo by Karen Bryan.



PC: Karen Bryan

## May is clean air month by Karen Bryan

In the late 1960s, toxic smog caused by burning fossil fuels hovered over many U.S. cities. The Clean Air Act (CAA) was signed into law in 1970, and air pollution dropped by 50 % in the U.S. Clean Air Month is a time to recognize the impact that the CAA has had on the environment and our health. At MCBH, sources of air pollution include motor vehicles, aircraft engines, generators, boilers and dust from construction projects. Dust generated by construction projects is mitigated by Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are monitored by the Environmental Compliance & Protection Division. BMPs such as dust-suppression measures to cover exposed ground and dust screens—the tall black fences around construction sites—decrease the amount of particulate matter in the air. Long-

term data from the State of Hawaii Department of Health's air quality monitoring stations indicate consistently good air quality. However, riding our bicycles and carpooling whenever possible would help reduce air pollution even more. During Clean Air Month, MCBH emphasizes everyone's role in alleviating air pollution for the health of our community and the environment. Earth Day every day at MCBH. Photo: Pyramid Rock Beach taken by Karen Bryan.

## Sea Turtle Nesting Season by Karen Bryan

Have you ever seen a Hawaiian green sea turtle in the Nu‘upia Ponds or at Pali Kilo Cove? Although the majority of sea turtle nesting occurs on the secluded atolls of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, Ft. Hase, MCTAB, Pu‘uloa, and Pyramid Rock Beaches have had green and olive ridley sea turtle nests in the past few years. With the northern atolls steadily losing beaches to storms and other natural phenomenon, it is possible that we could see more nesting in the main Hawaiian Islands including on the 11 miles of coastline around MCBH.

Turtle nesting season began in May. If you see a turtle or “turtle crawls” as in the above photo in the sand on any of the MCBH beaches, please note the exact location and call the Environmental Division Natural Resource Managers at (808) 781-7636 or 285-6464, or PMO at 257-2123 right away. Another option is to report it to the NOAA stranded marine animal hotline at 888-256-9840.

For the animals’ well-being, do not use flash photography or shine lights at sea turtles. It is recommended to remain at least 100 feet away from all marine life resting or nesting on the beach. Dogs are allowed on MCBH beaches between 1000 and 1500 but must remain on a leash at all times for their safety. Photo: Hawaiian green sea turtle resting on the beach on Hawaii Island by Karen Bryan (2017).



## Announcements & Upcoming ECPD Events

Due to the covid-19 pandemic, all events were cancelled from mid-March until further notice.

For more information visit: <https://www.mcbhawaii.marines.mil/Offices-Staff/S-4-Installations-Environment-Logistics/Environmental/>