

*On 11/15/2002, Maui's County Council voted to ban captive dolphins owing to "more public support than any other matter in the history of Maui at the time"
Please help stop this USN request to transport captive dolphins to Hawai'i!*

**ALERT - US Navy seeks HDOA approval Tuesday
to import captive bottlenose dolphins for military training!**

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Date: Fri, 20 Feb 2015

**PLEASE FORWARD TESTIMONY TO THE HDOA
BY MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD**

Fax the BOA Chairperson at (808) 973-9613
or e-mail to HDOA.BOARD.TESTIMONY@HAWAII.GOV.
Please include the word "testimony" and subject matter following the address line.



At 9AM this coming Tuesday (2/24/15), the Hawaii Board of Agriculture will decide if the Navy will be allowed to bring up to ten (10) dolphins to Hawai'i for further training to identify and mark underwater mines. In HDOA's preliminary advisory subcommittee review, the majority voted to approve the Navy's request, thus making this effort very time sensitive now in advance of Tuesday's final vote!

We strongly disapprove of BOTH the Navy's use of dolphins in this capacity AND of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture's consideration of this request since bottlenose dolphins (*T.truncatus*) are on the List of Restricted Animals (Part B), chapter 4-71 of Hawaii Administrative Rules and the Navy's use of the dolphins in this endeavor does NOT comply with these Rules.

While species listed in Part B of the Restricted List may be imported for private and commercial use, zoological parks, aquaculture production, research by universities or government agencies, exhibition in municipal zoos or government-affiliated aquariums, or other institutions for medical or scientific purposes as determined by the Board of Agriculture – the truth is, these dolphins are NOT being brought to HI for “scientific purposes” as posited by the USN.

INDEED, as clearly stated in the Navy's permit application:

“The bottlenose dolphins will be shipped aboard U.S. Navy aircraft to the JBPHH on Oahu “for military training' in March 2015!” Military training is not scientific research.

Further on we read, “In the fleet's Marine Mammal System (MMS), the Navy employs dolphins to find and mark the location of underwater objects. ... There are four marine mammal “training” systems or modules. For this current application, we [the USN] are requesting to import dolphins specialized in the MK7 systems.

“MK7 is a mine hunting system ... assigned to Explosive Ordinance Disposal Unit Mobile Unit (EODMU ONE). ... In the MK7 system, dolphins are conditioned to detect and/or mark mines sitting on the ocean bottom or buried in sediment.”

If the HDOA approves this permit it appears they would be violating Hawaii's own Administrative Rules as the dolphins will not be used for scientific research and therefore their use does not meet importation requirements stated in Hawaii Administrative Rules.

The Navy further states that the dolphins would be flown in March from the Navy Marine Mammal Program (NMMP) in San Diego CA by U.S. Navy aircraft to Joint Base Pearl Harbor (MBPHH) – a trip that is an extremely stressful experience for a dolphin. Once in Hawaii, they would be caged in “floating pens” 20' x 20' x 8' deep unless they were on a training mission. Both the long flight and small holding pens that allowing for little movement will create significant stress for these dolphins as they innately swim vast distances each day.

Additionally, according to the permit application, “on work days the dolphins will beach into boats” to be transported to the “work site” where the dolphin is slid into the ocean. “Beaching”, sometimes called “stranding,” is also very stressful to dolphins.

The NAVY also confirmed in the preliminary meeting that the dolphins are to be fitted with anti-foraging devices that prohibit them from catching food. They will also be wearing a harness with an attached “pinger” providing an underwater acoustic beacon indicating the dolphin’s location during training sessions. The harnesses will also have a satellite transmitting tag to give specific GPS data on the location of each dolphin. The fact remains, however, that if for some reason the dolphins do not return to their trainers or cannot be recaptured, despite the technology and tactics employed to locate them, they will die of starvation.

Since the USN permit request would be used for military training and NOT scientific research, we therefore request the HDOA respect and adhere to Hawaii’s Administrative Rules by denying the permit.

Thank you!

ANNOUNCED AGENDA FOR TUESDAY’S BOARD OF AGRICULTURE MEETING

Date: February 24, 2015

Time: 9:00 AM

Location: Plant Quarantine Conference Room, 1849 Auiki Street, Honolulu, HI 96819

Request to: (1) Allow the Importation of Bottlenose Dolphin, *Tursiops truncatus*, an Animal on the List of Restricted Animals (Part B), by Permit, for Scientific Research by the U.S. Navy Marine Mammal Program, Spawar Systems Center Pacific; and (2) Establish Permit Conditions for the Importation of Bottlenose Dolphin, *Tursiops truncatus*, an Animal on the List of Restricted Animals (Part B), by Permit, for Scientific Research by the U.S. Navy Marine Mammal Program, Spawar Systems Center Pacific.

Those persons desiring to submit written testimony may do so via postal mail to the BOA Chairperson’s Office at 1428 S. King Street, Honolulu, HI 96814-2512; via fax to the BOA Chairperson at (808) 973-9613 or via e-mail to: HBOA.BOARD.TESTIMONY@HAWAII.GOV.

Please include the word “testimony” and the subject matter following the address line. Those persons desiring to present oral testimony at the BOA meeting are requested to register with staff prior to the convening of the meeting. If possible, submit 14 copies of the written testimony to staff prior to the meeting.

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