

## Letters to the Editor

# Conservation of

# northern isles a must

I've written many letters about the proposed marine monument and I think it's not a wise idea for the CNMI. The CNMI does have to ask what the other options are for the Northern Islands, and right now there is really no plan at all. That's not acceptable.

Mr. Pellegrino writes that we have to ask where our ship, so to speak, is headed—and he is absolutely correct. I and most everyone agree that conservation of the northern islands is a must. How we go about that is the real question. How can we effectively utilize the isles for the greater good of the CNMI without causing harm to them? The answer right now is no one has proposed any ideas that have both widespread support and are feasible. Many of the points the supporters of the marine monument raised are valid: it's a special environment; it's a setting ripe for scientific study; it needs protecting, among a few.

I encourage all citizens of the CNMI to put forth ideas that could benefit the CNMI with regards to the NMI. Diawa Corp. used to have a recreational sport fishing operation that employed locals and added value to the economy. They withdrew and sold the vessels after one of the managers was murdered, and the local *Challenger* captain was found out to have falsified his U.S. Coast Guard license. I had worked for them part time. I hope the elected officials could create a think tank, a web site, a committee, a group of people that will put their heads together and come up with ideas and ways the CNMI can profit and prosper utilizing the NMI. If they don't do so, then it's up to the people to do so. While for many reasons the marine monument is not the vehicle to do so, that does not mean it cannot be done.

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