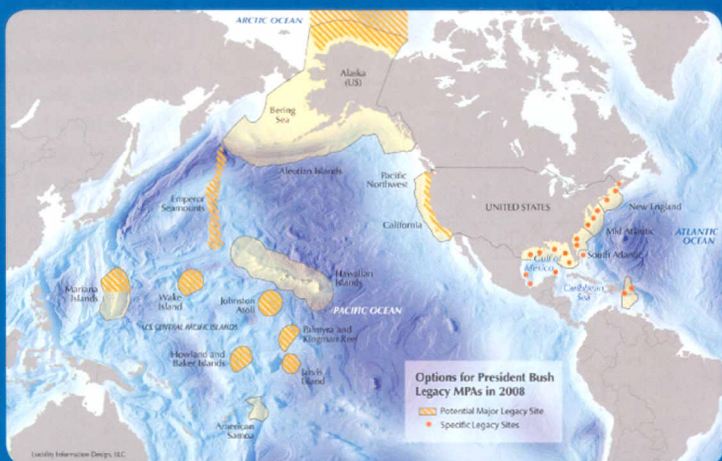


MONUMENT PROPOSALS MAY IMPACT US FISHING GROUNDS



THE PEW ENVIRONMENT GROUP'S EFFORTS TO EXPAND THE MARINE PROTECTED AREA (MPA) LEGACY FOR PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH EXTEND BEYOND TRYING TO APPROPRIATE ONE-THIRD OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS AS A NATIONAL MARINE MONUMENT. INCLUDED IN THE PRESENTATION THAT THE PEW GROUP HAS USED TO EXTOL THE VIRTUES OF THE PROPOSED MARIANA TRENCH MARINE MONUMENT IS A SLIDE THAT SHOWS ALMOST THE ENTIRE PACIFIC BASIN. HIGHLIGHTED AS POTENTIAL "LEGACY MPAs" ARE THE US EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE (EEZ) WATERS AROUND WAKE ISLAND, JOHNSTON ATOLL, HOWLAND AND BAKER ISLAND, JARVIS ISLAND, PALMYRA ATOLL AND KINGMAN REEF, COLLECTIVELY KNOWN AS THE PACIFIC REMOTE ISLAND AREAS (PRIAs). THE PRESENTATION ALSO INCLUDES THE EMPEROR SEAMOUNTS, WHICH DO NOT LIE WITHIN THE EEZ OF ANY NATION BUT ARE IN THE HIGH SEAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTIONS.

THE LOSS OF THE PRIAs WOULD BE FELT MOST KEENLY BY THE HAWAII-BASED LONGLINE FISHERY AND THE US PURSE SEINE FLEET OPERATING IN THE WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC. THE EEZ WATERS AROUND JOHNSTON ISLAND, PALMYRA ATOLL AND KINGMAN REEF HAVE BEEN IMPORTANT FISHING GROUNDS FOR THE HAWAII LONGLINE FLEET. THE FLEET FISHES UP TO A THOUSAND MILES NORTH OR SOUTH OF HAWAII, AND THE WATERS AROUND PALMYRA ATOLL AND KINGMAN REEF HAVE BEEN IMPORTANT GROUNDS FOR BIGEYE TUNA.

SIMILARLY, THE US EEZ WATERS AROUND HOWLAND AND BAKER ISLANDS HAVE CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO US PURSE SEINE CATCHES, PARTICULARLY DURING EL NINO YEARS WHEN THE SKIPJACK MOVES EASTWARDS AS THE WARMER WATERS OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC FLOW INTO THE CENTRAL PACIFIC.

IF THE PROPOSED MONUMENTS BECOME REALITY, THEY WOULD NEGATIVELY IMPACT US FISHERIES IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION AND CONTINUE INCREASING US IMPORTS OF FOREIGN SEAFOOD, WHICH NOW ACCOUNT FOR 86 PERCENT OF OUR NATIONAL SEAFOOD SUPPLY. BECAUSE US FISHERIES ARE MORE STRICTLY REGULATED AND MONITORED THAN FOREIGN FISHERIES AND BECAUSE IMPORTED FISH CREATE A BIGGER CARBON FOOTPRINT THAN DOMESTIC FISH, ON A GLOBAL SCALE THE MONUMENTS WOULD DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD TO THE ENVIRONMENT.