



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
**NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE**  
Southwest Fisheries Center Honolulu Laboratory  
2570 Dole St. • Honolulu, Hawaii 96822-2396

July 23, 1986

F/SWC2:GHB

Mr. David Pelto  
Judith Anderegg  
P. O. Box 1472  
Palmer, AK 99645

Dear David and Judith,

I appreciated having the opportunity to speak with you by telephone on July 16th. The situation you witnessed involving the taking of a large sea turtle at Punaluu on the Big Island is indeed regrettable. All sea turtles in Hawaii are presently protected under both State law and the U.S. Endangered Species Act. I understand from Agent Eugene Witham of our enforcement branch that an investigation is being pursued based on the evidence you supplied. I hope that his inquiries into this case will help to increase the awareness of people living near Punaluu that it is illegal to harm or kill sea turtles. I am especially concerned about Punaluu because it is one of my long-term study areas for tagging turtles. Turtles that come into this small shallow bay to feed are exceedingly vulnerable to capture. Ideally, this important site should be given added emphasis by making it into some sort of habitat preserve for sea turtles.

I have enclosed an assortment of literature about sea turtles which you may find interesting. Since Judith is a school teacher, I am sending some educational material suitable for use in the classroom.

Again, many thanks for taking the time to report this incident.

Sincerely,

George H. Balazs  
Zoologist

Enclosure

cc: Recovery Team members

