

Comment Response Matrix House Mouse Eradication from the South Farallon Islands: Administrative Draft Environmental Assessment, May 2009							
#	Location of comment			Comment	Priority (1-3)	Reviewer	IC response
	Page	Line	(Section)				
	25	10	5.2.1	<i>Remove last sentence of paragraph</i>	2	JD	<i>Text revised per comment</i>
1.	20	ii	summary	Insert “likely” between would and prevent in the sentence “Eradicating house mice would prevent”	3	RB	
2.	ix	Figure1.2	Photographic credits	Photograph courtesy PRBO, not unknown	3	RB	
3.	2	6-7	1.2	While there has been a decrease in the number of Leach’s observed, and they have likely declined, I do not think we have the data to claim that the colony “may be close to extirpation.” While I think you need to stress the importance of this project to Leach’s, we cannot support that statement with data.	2	RB	
4.	4	31-34	1.3.3	While we don’t have evidence of year-round residents per se, Jim does have some data after this year of a few banded birds which hung around on SEFI or a while and then we recaptured again the next year, and hung around again. These could be “repeat visitors”. You should discuss with him for more details	1	RB	

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5.	18	24-28	2.4.1	While some of this area is accessed in the fall and winter, most of it is still off limits for the entire year. While these areas are not designated “wilderness”, we call them “wilderness areas” on SEFI. This includes all of Tower Point and all areas above North Landing, Fertilizer Flat, and Islets etc. This is a large chunk of SEFI.	2	RB	
6.	20	8	2.4.5	It should be made clear that “a large number of seabirds” could mean thousands of birds, and a sizable portion of the breeding population for some species	2	RB	
7.	26	13	2.5.6.2	Change March to late February	2	RB	
8.	26	40	2.5.6.3	Wouldn’t an average wind speed of 30 knots be way to much wind for this type of helicopter procedure. That is a near gale, and not “fairly calm”. With concerns about bait drift etc. I would have assumed something like 10 knots would be a better threshold for an operation of this magnitude, maybe I’m wrong.	1	RB	

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9.	28	5	2.5.10	Add that only the specified helicopter landing area on SEFI would be used, we don't want the helicopter landing anywhere else. You could get there within a minute or 2 of any place you would be flying as part of the operation.	2	RB	
10.	28	20	2.5.11	I've never heard anything about this radio tracking before – how much of this would be done and for how long?	1	RB	
11.	32	1	2.7.2	Maybe add “and wildlife” after “extremely toxic to humans”	3	RB	
12.	36	12	3.3.1	Results have been below levels of concern “most of the time, and any water quality issues have been quickly resolved”	2	RB	
13.	38	19	3.4.2.1	Only ASSP are still breeding after September and while we have had checks into December, this is rare and most are done by November.	2	RB	
14.	38	19	3.4.2.1	Oystercatchers do not breed on cliffs, they are found above intertidal areas on the marine terrace, islets etc.	2	RB	

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15.	39	18-20	3.4.2.1	I would suggest rewording to “Researchers have found strong relationships between years...” I will send along three other recent refs that can support this statement from recent work with CAAU and RHAU (Sydeman et al. 2006, Thayer and Sydeman 2007, Lee et al. 2007). There are others if you want them.	3	RB	
16.	39	28	3.4.2.2	I would add whimbrels and willets to plovers and turnstones	2	RB	
17.	40	13	3.4.2.2	Delete “visitant”	3	RB	
18.	41	6	3.4.2.3	Maybe add that the vagrants include “a majority of Eastern North American species”	3	RB	
19.	41	27	3.4.2.4	What’s the status on the BRPE de-list, is that close enough to change this document?	1	RB	
20.	42	2	3.4.3.1	I would just say “cormorants” as all 3 species use maritime goldfields	3	RB	
21.	42	36	3.4.3.3	While there are a couple of spring records, I would reword this to say “mostly fall(Aug-Oct)” as that is when over 95% of the bat sightings come from	2	RB	

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22.	43	38-41	3.4.3.5	While mice likely played a role in storm petrel population abundance throughout this period, can we really say they contributed to a decline? The question is did the mouse pressure increase throughout that time period 72-92. Maybe cats did keep mouse pops down, but do we have any data to support this statement.	1	RB	
23.	44	23	3.4.4	How can you have over 100% cover for these intertidal species, maybe clarify that.	2	RB	
24.	45	15-16	3.4.4	Big storms have also contributed to the loss of sand from these coves. Particularly during El Nino years.	2	RB	
25.	46	38	3.4.5.3	Be aware that this fluctuation in harbor seal abundance is very much related to tide, and total abundance is best represented by those higher numbers.	2	RB	
26.	46	42	3.4.5.3	Harbor seals pup in small numbers every year on SEFI; we have seen 1-3 per year over the last several years.	2	RB	

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27.	47	4	3.4.5.4	While fur seal numbers in censuses are highest in fall, the overall numbers are probably highest in late summer (late June-July) when the colony is at its peak. It's that we can't see the whole colony from the Lighthouse. I'm sending along the fur seal report I did last year which I think could help beef up this section with more details.	2	RB	
28.	49	36	3.5.1	Add "in specific areas" to the 300ft closure comment. Currently the closure doesn't go all the way around, it will with the new MPA.	3	RB	
29.	58	44	4.3.3.4	I would suggest quantifying the "unprecedented" increase in human activities in the closed area more. Something to the effect that there will be daily visitation and disturbance to areas which normally are visited not at all. This would mean more human disturbance to these areas than they have received in over 30 years.	2	RB	
30.	59	5	4.3.3.4	Keep in mind that plant introductions and major habitat impacts (rock falls etc.) could impact the wilderness character on the South Farallones wilderness areas.	2	RB	

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31.	61	44	4.4.3.2.1	Again, you can check in with Jim about some of those banded owls which appear to have shown up in 2 consecutive years. Though most that stay probably do die.	1	RB	
32.	63	16	4.4.3.3.1	Change breeding success range to 40-75% and add PRBO unpublished data as another reference.	2	RB	
33.	63	29	4.4.3.3.1	While it is true that BUOW predation is more extensive than previously thought, our data shows gulls still do more predation than BUOW.	2	RB	
34.	63	34	4.4.3.3.1	Again, while BUOW are a large threat to Leach's can we really say BUOW predation (as opposed to gull predation and other factors) threatens the existence of this population?	1	RB	
35.	67	43	4.4.4.1.2	Something to think about and include, how much effort/visitation would be required, and would this increase the on the ground disturbance to areas (Wilderness areas too?) under alternative B?	2	RB	
36.	70		Table 4.1	Omnivorous should include shorebirds instead of just turnstones, and maybe oystercatchers as well.	2	RB	

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37.	71	43	4.4.4.2.2	Oystercatchers would be included in this group, as it would be good to mention somewhere that they do feed on large beetles up on the marine terrace.	2	RB	
38.	72	30	4.4.4.2.2	Maybe include a brief statement referencing where these numbers come from (Richardson etc.)	3	RB	
39.	74	12	4.4.4.2.2	This statement is incorrect, Western Gulls are not the most numerous breeding species, Common Murres outnumber them by ~10x.	2	RB	
40.	74	18-23	4.4.4.2.2	There is no inclusion of the new data on gull counts from last fall/winter to try and come up with better WEGU estimates. I thought Gerry would have passed that data onto Jacob. Wasn't that the point of doing that work last year – shouldn't that be included here?	1	RB	
41.	74	28	4.4.4.2.2	Recent data has shown large increases in the numbers of California Gulls in summer and fall, though I don't know how this translates to winter. Again the new gull data could be useful here.	2	RB	
42.	75	3	4.4.4.2.2	If it is true that one mouse could be lethal, then gull impacts could be much larger than predicted	1	RB	

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43.	75	40	4.4.4.2.2	Again, do we want to use new data here for “best estimates”? I’m fully aware that this is just a guess and any number is going to have its issues.	2	RB	
44.	81	35	4.4.4.3.2	Somewhere is there a quantitative evaluation of the relative risk to gulls of lower risk present for longer time (Alternative C) or higher risk for shorter time (Alternative B)	2	RB	
45.	82	44	4.4.4.3.2	Is there a reason why you say impacts for 2 breeding seasons, would traps need to be checked to that long – it seems a bit excessive.	2	RB	
46.	84	15	4.4.4.3.3	Isn’t this whole paragraph a repeat from a previous section is this necessary – it happens a few times?	2	RB	
47.	85	32, 36	4.4.5.1.2	Again more disturbances – from soil anchors and bait station visits. Can we have some estimate somewhere of the # of additional visits/disturbance from this alternative (i.e. Under Alternative C there will be X amount of visits to closed areas). I just want to see some kind of a summary of the addition human and habitat disturbance that this alternative would cause.	2	RB	

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48.	86	15	4.4.5.2.1	Suggest rewording fitness to “affecting the behavior” of individual animals	3	RB	
49.	86	22	4.4.5.2.1	Suggest dropping “energy balance and fitness” (too wordy and not appropriate) and changing to the level of disturbance is not anticipated to have major effects on any individuals	3	RB	
50.	87	21	4.4.5.2.2	Is this dry run flight still at 50m? If so nothing about a flushing event would likely be controlled with something that low and loud.	2	RB	
51.	90	14-17	4.4.5.2.4	This section is another repeat using the exact same language for Alternative B, it seems redundant to me, but maybe this is the way it’s done. There are others like this but I won’t bring them up anymore.	2	RB	
52.	93	3	4.4.7.1	You can drop likely, if you fly a helicopter at 50m all over the island, there will be at least some Steller’s take.	2	RB	
53.	98	5	4.6.1	I would add fisheries bycatch to this list	3	RB	
54.	A-23		Appendix E	Add the slopes to East of Shell Beach (West End Head) to the Brown Pelican sites – see attached map	2	RB	
55.	A-24		Appendix F	Add BLOY Sites to map, see attached file	2	RB	

Instructions

For each comment, list Page and Line number (Section number optional).

For awkward or inaccurate language, provide an example of alternative or more accurate language.

For spelling or grammar errors, enter the correct grammar/spelling for the relevant line(s) in the matrix when possible.

If appropriate, mark your comments with a Priority level:

- *Priority 1*: For major issues that may require discussion
- *Priority 2*: For factual errors, spelling errors, or other substantive issues that need to be changed
- *Priority 3*: For editorial suggestions

To add a line, place cursor in the bottom row and choose “Insert row below”.

Thanks!