

Chapter 1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction



Aerial photo of Rose Atoll. USFWS.

Rose Atoll National Wildlife Refuge (NWR or Refuge) is located approximately 180 miles east of Tutuila in American Samoa. The next closest island to Rose is Ta'ū Island in Manu'a 78 miles away. This 1,613-acre Refuge was established on August 24, 1973 with the American Samoa Government (ASG) by a cooperative agreement (see Appendix K). It is the southernmost unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System) and shares the distinction with Jarvis Island of being one of two NWRs located south of the equator.

Originally established to conserve and protect fish and wildlife resources, the Refuge provides habitat for migratory seabirds and shorebirds, turtles, and unique marine fish, coral reefs, and other invertebrates. The focus of Refuge management is to maintain and preserve these habitats for these species with a greater understanding of ecosystem health through expanded and enhanced monitoring.



Gogosina (tern) chick. Jiny Kim, USFWS.

1.2 Significance of the Refuge



Rose Island. USFWS.

Rose Atoll is one of the smallest atolls in the world. It consists of a perimeter reef encircling a central lagoon. Rose Atoll is a nearly square geographical feature, with sides that are approximately 1.5 miles in length. Within the atoll there are two low, sandy islands—Rose and Sand—located on a coralline algal reef which surrounds the lagoon. A single channel (ava) links the lagoon to the sea surrounding the atoll. The lagoon is roughly 1.2 miles wide and 98 feet deep.

Coral communities at Rose Atoll are distinctive from reefs around the other islands in Samoa. This fringing reef gives off a striking pink hue due to the crustose coralline algae (CCA) that is the primary reef-building species at the atoll. The CCA reef plays a significant role in the atoll, stabilizing the perimeter and protecting the lagoon and islands from ocean swells.

Another rare habitat at the Refuge is its tropical *Pisonia* forest. This type of forest can provide habitat for many nesting seabird species. This forest type is declining in the Pacific due to the effects of human habitation, coconut plantings, and pests such as rats and insects.

Unlike the rest of the Samoan Archipelago where they are harvested by humans, the spectacularly colored giant clams (faisua) are found in high densities at the Refuge. Similarly, fish density is very high and species diversity moderately high when compared to other reefs in the Samoan Archipelago. The fish assemblages also differ by having a high density of planktivorous and carnivorous fishes (especially unicornfishes and snappers) and lower density of herbivorous fishes (especially parrotfishes and damselfishes).

Rose Atoll's beach strand provides important nesting sites for the threatened green turtle, which migrate between American Samoa and other Pacific Island nations. As the only terrestrial rat-free areas in American Samoa, Rose Atoll's islands are vital nesting and roosting habitat supporting 12 species of federally protected seabirds and sea turtles.



CCA. Jean Kenyon, USFWS.



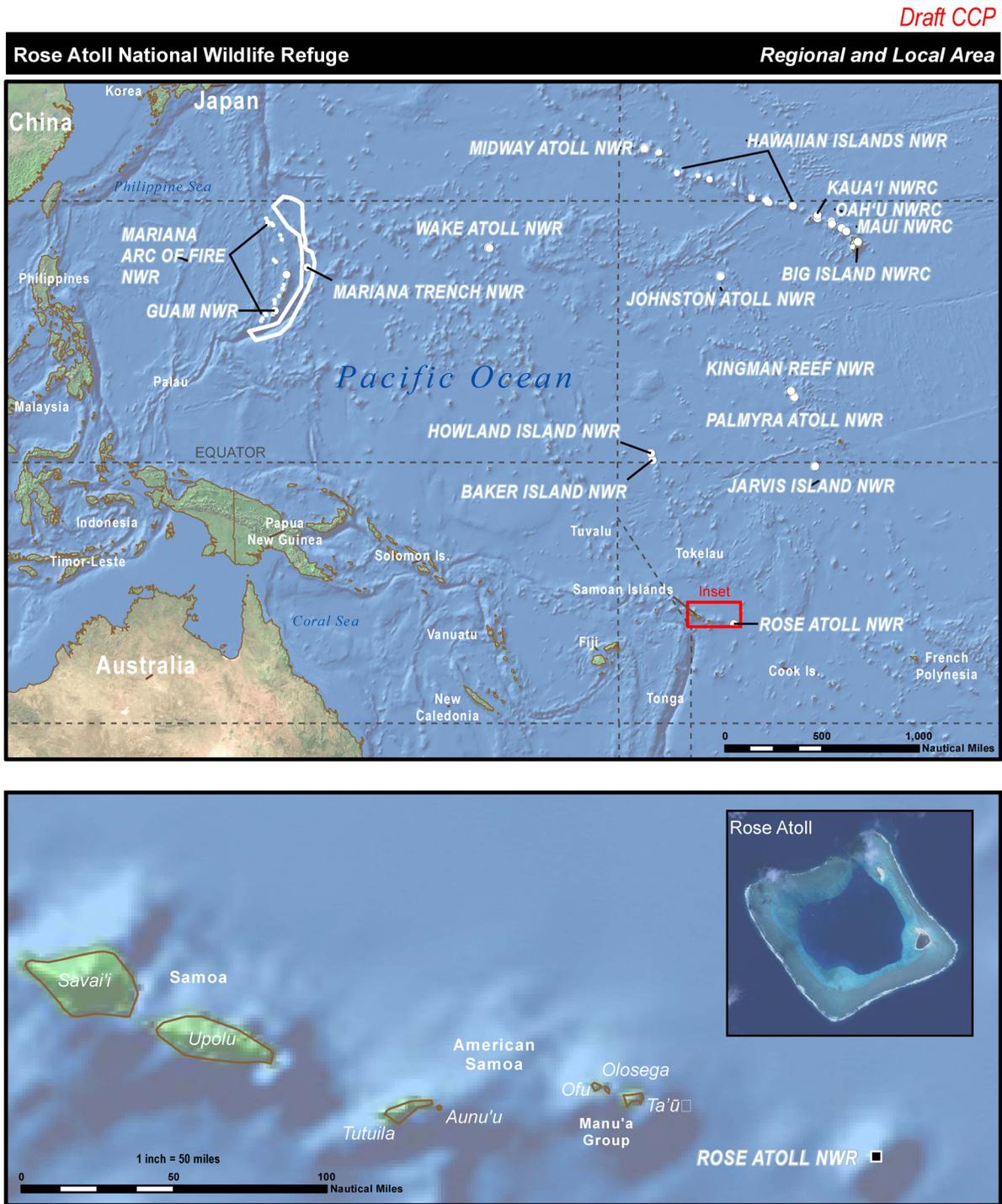
Faisua. Jean Kenyon, USFWS.



Beach strand. USFWS.

Further information (e.g., biology, cultural/historic resources, etc.) can be found in Chapters 3-5.

Figure 1-1. Regional and local area.



Produced by USFWS Region 1
 Refuge Information Branch
 Portland, Oregon



Map Date: 7/23/2012 File: 11-088-10.mxd

The back sides of maps are blank to improve readability.

1.3 Proposed Action

We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), manage national wildlife refuges as part of the Refuge System. We propose to adopt and implement a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for Rose Atoll NWR. This document is the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment (Draft CCP/EA). A CCP sets forth management guidance for a refuge for a period of 15 years, as required by the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 688dd-688ee, *et seq.*) (Administration Act) as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (Pub. Law 105-57) (Improvement Act). The Improvement Act requires CCPs to identify and describe:

- The purposes of the refuge;
- The fish, wildlife, and plant populations, their habitats, and the archaeological and cultural values of the refuge;
- Significant problems that may adversely affect wildlife populations and habitats and ways to correct or mitigate those problems;
- Areas suitable for administrative sites or visitor facilities; and
- Opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation.

The proposed action in the CCP is to implement Alternative B, which has been identified as the Service's preferred alternative. The Service has developed and examined a total of two alternatives for future management and discloses anticipated effects for each alternative, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321-4347). The goals, objectives, and strategies under Alternative B best achieve the purpose and need for the CCP and integrate the varied management needs and programs. It represents the most balanced approach for: achieving the Refuge purposes, vision, and goals; contributing to the Refuge System mission; addressing relevant issues and mandates; and managing the Refuge consistently with the sound principles of fish and wildlife management.

The preferred alternative may be modified between the draft and final document depending upon comments received from the public or other agencies and organizations. The Service's Regional Director for Region 1 will decide which alternative will be implemented. For details on the specific components and actions comprising the range of alternatives see Chapter 2.

1.4 Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of developing the CCP is to provide the refuge manager with a 15-year management plan for the conservation of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their related habitats, while providing opportunities for compatible, wildlife-dependent recreational uses. The CCP, when fully implemented, should achieve refuge purposes; help fulfill the Refuge System mission; maintain and, where appropriate, restore the biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health (BIDEH) of each refuge and the Refuge System; help achieve the goals of the National Wilderness Preservation System; and meet other mandates. The CCP must be specific to the planning unit and identify the overarching wildlife, public use, or management needs for the refuge (602 FW 3.4C1d).

The need for action at Rose Atoll NWR includes:

- Identify and anticipate negative effects of climate change most likely to influence biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health at Rose Atoll and formulate response and mitigation plans;
- Contribute to the protection and conservation of fish, wildlife, and plants at the Refuge;
- Evaluate the role of Rose Atoll NWR in the context of other marine protected areas (MPA) and seabird colonies in the Southern part of the Central tropical Pacific Islands to identify species and ecological processes for which to manage;
- Identify ecological restoration actions needed at Rose Atoll that can be achieved by direct management intervention;
- Improve capacity to protect resources, make them more accessible to the public, and study the ecosystem at Rose Atoll using remote technologies; and
- Identify and evaluate the Refuge’s Samoan cultural resources and facilitate, where appropriate, compatible cultural practices.

1.5 Legal and Policy Guidance

1.5.1 The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

All refuges are managed by the Service, an agency within the Department of the Interior. The Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing the Nation’s fish and wildlife populations, and their habitats.

The mission of the Service is “working with others, to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.” Although we share this responsibility with other Federal, State/Territorial, tribal, local, and private entities, the Service has specific trust responsibilities for migratory birds, certain endangered and threatened species, and certain anadromous fish and marine mammals. The Service has similar trust responsibilities for the lands and waters we administer to support the conservation and enhancement of fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats. The Service also enforces Federal wildlife laws and international treaties for importing and exporting wildlife, assists with State/Territorial fish and wildlife programs, and helps other countries develop wildlife conservation programs.

1.5.2 National Wildlife Refuge System

A refuge is managed as part of the Refuge System within a framework provided by legal and policy guidelines. The Refuge System is the world’s largest network of public lands and waters set aside specifically for conserving wildlife and protecting ecosystems.

The needs of wildlife and their habitats come first on refuges, in contrast to other public lands that are managed for multiple uses. Refuges are guided by various Federal laws and Executive orders, Service policies, and international treaties. Fundamental are the mission and goals of the Refuge System and the designated purpose(s) of the refuge unit as described in establishing legislation, Executive orders, or other documents establishing, authorizing, or expanding a refuge.

Key concepts and guidance of the Refuge System derive from the Administration Act, the Refuge Recreation Act of 1962 (16 U.S.C. 460k-460k-4), as amended, Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), and the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual. The Administration Act is

implemented through regulations covering the Refuge System, published in Title 50, subchapter C of the CFR. These regulations govern general administration of units of the Refuge System.

1.5.2.1 National Wildlife Refuge System Mission and Goals

The mission of the Refuge System is: “to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans” (Administration Act).

The goals of the Refuge System, as articulated in the National Wildlife Refuge System Mission and Goals and Refuge Purposes Policy (601 FW 1) are:

- Conserve a diversity of fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats, including species that are endangered or threatened with becoming endangered;
- Develop and maintain a network of habitats for migratory birds, anadromous and inter-jurisdictional fish, and marine mammal populations that is strategically distributed and carefully managed to meet important life-history needs of these species across their ranges;
- Conserve those ecosystems, plant communities, wetlands of national or international significance, and landscapes and seascapes that are unique, rare, declining, or underrepresented in existing protection efforts;
- Provide and enhance opportunities to participate in compatible wildlife-dependent recreation (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation); and
- Foster understanding and instill appreciation of the diversity and interconnectedness of fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats.

1.5.2.2 National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act

Of all the laws governing activities on NWRs, the Administration Act exerts the greatest influence. The Improvement Act amended the Administration Act in 1997 by including a unifying mission for all national wildlife refuges as a system, a new process for determining compatible uses on refuges, and a requirement that each refuge will be managed under a CCP developed in an open public process.

The Administration Act states that the Secretary shall provide for the conservation of fish, wildlife and plants, and their habitats within the Refuge System as well as ensure that the biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health of the Refuge System are maintained. House Report 105–106 accompanying the Improvement Act states “... the fundamental mission of our System is wildlife conservation: wildlife and wildlife conservation must come first.” Biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health are critical components of wildlife conservation. As later made clear in the BIDEH policy (601 FW 3) “the highest measure of biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health is viewed as those intact and self-sustaining habitats and wildlife populations that existed during historic conditions.”

Under the Administration Act, each refuge must be managed to fulfill the Refuge System mission as well as the specific purpose(s) for which it was established. The Administration Act requires the Service to monitor the status and trends of fish, wildlife, and plants in each refuge.

Additionally, the Administration Act identifies six wildlife-dependent recreational uses for the Refuge System. These uses are hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation. Under the Administration Act, the Service is to grant these six wildlife-dependent public uses, when compatible, special consideration in the planning for, management of, and establishment and expansion of units of the Refuge System. The overarching goal of the wildlife-dependent public use programs is to enhance opportunities and access to quality wildlife-dependent visitor experiences on refuges while managing refuges to conserve fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats. When determined compatible on a refuge-specific basis, these six uses assume priority status among all uses of the refuge in question. The Service is to make extra efforts to facilitate priority wildlife-dependent public use opportunities.

When preparing a CCP, refuge managers must re-evaluate all general public, recreational, and economic uses (even those occurring to further refuge habitat management goals) proposed or occurring on a refuge for appropriateness and compatibility. No refuge use may be allowed or continued unless it is determined to be appropriate and compatible. Generally, an appropriate use is one that contributes to fulfilling the refuge purposes, the Refuge System mission, or goals or objectives described in an approved refuge management plan. A compatible use is a use that, in the sound professional judgment of the refuge manager, will not materially interfere with or detract from the purpose(s) of the refuge or the fulfillment of the Refuge System. Updated appropriate use findings and compatibility determinations for existing and proposed uses for Rose Atoll NWR are in Appendices B and C of this Draft CCP/EA, respectively.

The Administration Act also requires that, in addition to formally established guidance, the CCP must be developed with the participation of the public. Issues and concerns articulated by the public play a role in guiding alternatives considered during the development of the CCP, and together with the formal guidance, can play a role in selection of the preferred alternative. It is Service policy that CCPs are developed in an open public process and that the Service is committed to securing public input throughout the process. Appendix J of the Draft CCP/EA details public involvement that has been undertaken during this CCP process.

1.5.3 Presidential Proclamation 8337

On January 6, 2009, President George W. Bush signed Presidential Proclamation 8337, designating the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument (Monument) which included the Rose Atoll NWR. The President directed that the Secretary of the Interior shall have management responsibility for the Monument, including the Refuge, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, except that the Secretary of Commerce, through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), shall have the primary management responsibility regarding the management of the marine areas of the Monument seaward of mean low water, with respect to fishery-related activities regulated pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), and any other applicable authorities. Then on January 16, 2009, Secretary of the Interior Kempthorne issued Secretarial Order 3284, delegating all his responsibilities for the Monument to the Service Director, and directed that the Refuge continue to be managed consistent with the Proclamation and within boundaries set forth in the Notice of Establishment, 71 FR 13183 (April 5, 1974).

Additionally, in Proclamation 8337 the President directed the Secretary of Commerce to initiate the process to add the marine areas of the Monument to the Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary in accordance with the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (16 U.S.C. 1431 *et seq.*). This process is now

underway by the Sanctuary with the release of the final management plan and final environmental impact statement on June 2, 2012. Within the Department of Commerce, NOAA is leading that process. This Rose Atoll NWR CCP is a separate plan for the conservation of the Refuge area only.

1.5.4 Other Laws and Mandates

Many other Federal laws, Executive orders, Service policies, and international treaties govern the Service and Refuge System. Examples include the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA), Refuge Recreation Act of 1962, National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA). For additional information on laws and other mandates, a list and brief description of Federal laws of interest to the Service can be found in the Laws Digest at <http://www.fws.gov/laws/Lawsdigest.html>.

In addition, over the last few years, the Service has developed or revised numerous policies and Director's Orders to implement the mandates and intent of the Improvement Act. Some of these key policies include the BIDEH; Refuge Compatibility (603 FW 2); Comprehensive Conservation Planning (602 FW 3); Mission and Goals and Refuge Purposes (601 FW 1), Appropriate Refuge Uses (603 FW 1); Wildlife-Dependent Public Uses (605 FW 1-8); Wilderness Stewardship policies (610 FW 1-5), and the Director's Order for Coordination and Cooperative Work with State/Territorial Fish and Wildlife Agency representatives on management of the Refuge System. These policies and others in draft or under development can be found at: <http://refuges.fws.gov/policymakers/nwrpolicies.html>.

In developing a CCP, we must consider these broader laws and policies as well as Refuge System and ecosystem goals and vision. The CCP must be consistent with these and also with the refuge purpose(s). For Rose Atoll NWR, specific examples of these broader laws include:

- ESA;
- MBTA;
- Clean Water Act;
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act; and the
- Magnuson-Stevens Act (Essential Fish Habitat – which Rose Atoll is identified).

1.6 Refuge Establishment and Purposes

1.6.1 Legal Significance of the Refuge Purpose(s)

The purpose(s) for which a refuge was established or acquired is of key importance in refuge planning. Purposes must form the foundation for management decisions. Refuge purposes are the driving force in the development of the refuge vision statement, goals, objectives, and strategies in a CCP and are critical to determining the appropriateness and compatibility of existing and proposed refuge uses.

The purpose(s) of a refuge are specified in or derived from the law, proclamation, Executive order, agreement, public land order, donation document, or administrative memorandum establishing, authorizing, or expanding a refuge, refuge unit, or refuge subunit.

Unless the establishing law, order, or other document indicates otherwise, purposes dealing with the conservation, management, and restoration of fish, wildlife, and plants, and the habitats on which they depend take precedence over other purposes in the management and administration of any unit. Where a refuge has multiple purposes related to fish, wildlife, and plant conservation, the more specific purpose will take precedence in instances of conflict. When an additional unit is acquired under an authority different from the authority used to establish the original unit, the addition takes on the purpose(s) of the original unit, but the original unit does not take on the purpose(s) of the newer addition. When a conflict exists between the Refuge System mission and the purpose(s) of an individual refuge, the refuge purpose(s) supersedes the mission.

1.6.2 Purpose and History of Refuge Establishment

The establishment authority for the Refuge is the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, as amended.

The purposes for Rose Atoll NWR are:

- “... for the development, advancement, management, conservation, and protection of fish and wildlife resources ...” 16 U.S.C. § 742f(a)(4);
- “... for the benefit of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, in performing its activities and services. Such acceptance may be subject to the terms of any restrictive or affirmative covenant, or condition of servitude ...” 16 U.S.C. § 742f(b)(1) (Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, 16 U.S.C. §742(a)-754, as amended).

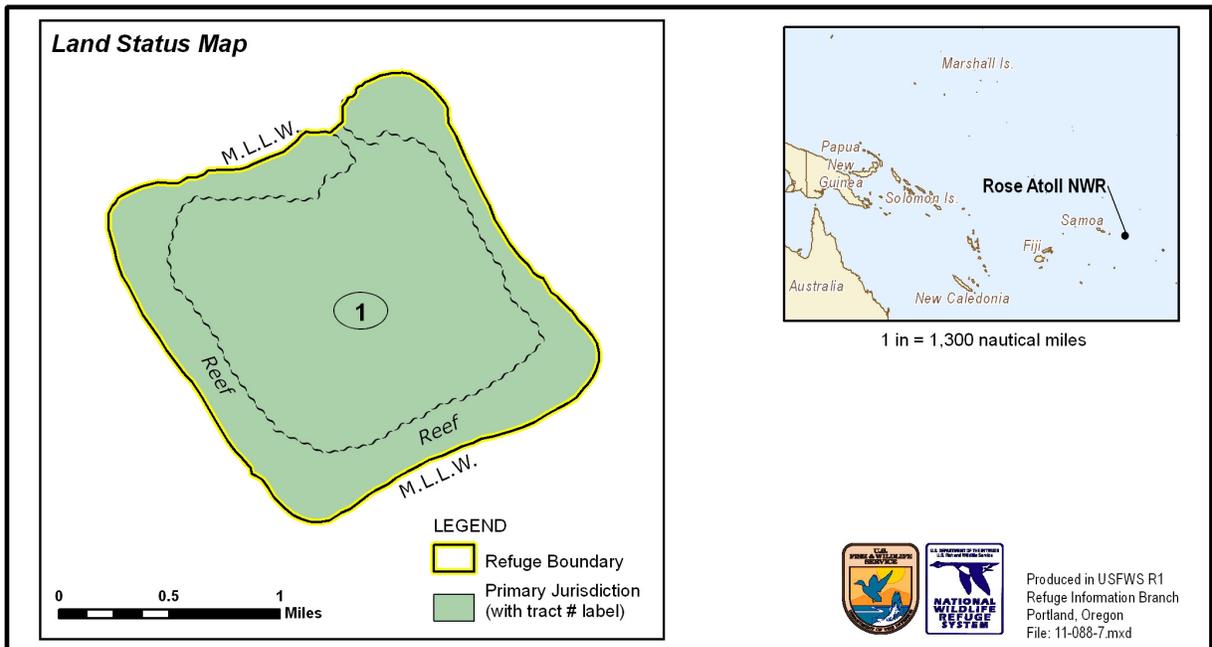
1.6.3 Land Status and Ownership

Rose Atoll is managed by the Service in cooperation with the American Samoa government as a National Wildlife Refuge under a cooperative agreement with the Government of American Samoa (see Appendix K). Per Presidential Proclamation 4347, the U.S. government maintains jurisdiction over the submerged lands and waters of the atoll and surrounding territorial seas.

The exterior boundary of the Refuge is the extreme low waterline outside the perimeter reef, except at the entrance channel where the boundary is a line extended between the extreme low waterlines on each side of the entrance channel.

Figure 1-2. Refuge overview and land status.

Draft CCP



Map Date: 5/29/2012
 Data: USFWS Land Status, 2012; GeoEye imagery, 9/16/11

The back sides of maps are blank to improve readability.

1.7 Relationship to Other Planning Efforts

When developing a CCP, the Service considers the goals and objectives of existing national, regional, State/Territorial, and ecosystem plans and/or assessments. The CCP is expected to be consistent, as much as possible, with existing plans and assist in meeting their conservation goals and objectives (602 FW 3). This section summarizes some of the key plans reviewed by members of the core team while developing this CCP.

1.7.1 Relationship to Refuge Plans

1.7.1.1 Rose Atoll NWR

- Final Restoration Plan for Rose Atoll National Wildlife Refuge (USFWS and DMWR 2001).

Step-down management plans (SDMPs) have been identified for development and are as follows (implementation schedule can be found in Appendix D):

- Inventory and Monitoring Plan; and
- Biological Review/Habitat Management Plan.

1.7.2 Other Plans and Assessments

Recovery Plan for U.S. Pacific Populations of the Green Turtle (Chelonia mydas) (NMFS and USFWS 1998a). The green turtle is listed as threatened throughout its Pacific Range, except for the endangered population nesting on the Pacific coast of Mexico, which is covered under the Recovery Plan for the East Pacific green turtle. By far, the most serious threat to these green turtles is from direct take of turtles and eggs, both within U.S. jurisdiction and on shared stocks that are killed when they migrate out of U.S. jurisdiction. Human development is also having an increasingly serious impact on nesting beaches.

Recovery Plan for U.S. Pacific Populations of the Hawksbill Turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata) (NMFS and USFWS 1998b). The Hawksbill turtle is listed as endangered throughout its range. Threats to these turtles include harvest of species for meat, eggs, and the tortoiseshell and stuffed curio trade and increasing human populations and subsequent destruction of habitat. Actions identified to recover the species include addressing harvesting and development threats, reducing incidental mortalities by commercial and artisanal fisheries, better surveying and monitoring, supporting management in areas that have existing populations, identifying stock home ranges and primary nesting and foraging areas, and controlling non-native predators.

U.S. Pacific Islands Regional Shorebird Conservation Plan (Engilis and Naughton 2004). Conservation and restoration of shorebird habitats is essential for the protection of endangered and declining shorebird populations. Wetlands, beach strand, coastal forests, and mangrove habitats are particularly vulnerable on Pacific Islands due to increasing development pressures and already limited acreage. Monitoring and research needs include assessment of population sizes and trends; assessment of the timing and abundance of birds at key wintering and migration stop-over sites; assessment of habitat use and requirements at wintering and migration areas; exploration of the geographic linkages between wintering, stop-over, and breeding areas; and evaluation of habitat restoration and management techniques to meet the needs of resident and migratory species.

Education and public outreach are critical components of this plan. Resource management agencies of Federal, Territorial, Commonwealth, and State governments will need to work together with military agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the scientific community. On a larger scale, coordination at the international level will be essential to the conservation of vulnerable species, both migratory and resident.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Seabird Conservation Plan (USFWS 2005). The most serious threats to seabirds identified in this regional plan involve invasive (non-native) species, interactions with fisheries, oil and other pollution, habitat loss and degradation, disturbance, and global climate change. Priorities for seabird management include habitat management (maintenance, protection, enhancement, and restoration), threat management, inventory and monitoring, research for informed decision-making, outreach and education, and planning and coordination.

1.8 Special Designation Lands

The Refuge is also included in the National List of MPAs under the “Pacific Islands” heading. The National MPA List was developed in accordance with Executive Order 13158 on MPAs that was signed by President Clinton on May 26, 2000.

1.9 Planning Process and Issue Identification

The core planning team evaluated the issues and concerns raised both by staff and the public during public scoping as well as throughout the multi-year planning process. Issues are defined as matters of controversy, dispute, or general concern over resource management activities, the environment, land uses, or public use activities. Issues are important to the planning process because they identify topics to be addressed in the CCP, pinpoint the types of information to gather, and help define alternatives for the CCP. It is the Service’s responsibility to focus planning and analysis on the major issues. Major issues typically suggest different actions or alternative solutions, are within the Refuge’s jurisdiction, and have a positive or negative effect on the resource. Major issues will influence the decisions proposed in the Draft CCP/EA. Key issues to be considered are presented below.

1.9.1 Planning Process

The core planning team for Rose Atoll NWR consists of the project leader for the Pacific Reefs NWRC, Refuge/Monument Manager, biologists, and natural resource planner. The full list of core and extended team members and their roles is provided in Appendix J. The extended team assisted in the development of this Draft CCP/EA, particularly in providing comments at key milestones.

The initial CCP planning process for the Refuge began in 2005. However, due to staff turnover and change in management, efforts did not truly get underway again until 2009. Public scoping began in the fall of 2009 with a notice in the *Federal Register* (November 9, 2009) and a total of three public meetings held in November 2009 on the Manu’a Islands and on the Island of Tutuila. In all, over 60 people participated. Public input was also solicited through distribution of planning updates to our mailing list. Additionally, meetings with local, Territorial, and Federal agencies and elected officials, community groups, non-governmental organizations, and others were also held. The comments and suggestions made through this process helped further develop and refine the management alternatives for the CCP, including the preferred alternative. It also helped to identify the top priority species,

groups, and communities for the Refuge. These priorities are also called conservation targets and most of the biological emphasis of the CCP is focused on protecting and restoring these species.

This Draft CCP/EA will result in additional comments, which will be evaluated by the planning team. More information on public involvement can be found in Appendix J.

1.9.2 Key Issues Addressed in the CCP

Wildlife and habitats. How can habitat and species management be improved? How can we maximize the ability of habitats and species to adapt and resist effects of climate change and ocean acidification? What are our priority research and survey needs to support management?

Cultural/historic resources. How is Rose Atoll connected to Samoan cultural and what is its significance? How can we facilitate and support cultural connections to Rose Atoll? How can they be woven together with public interpretation? How can historic resources management be enhanced?

Visitor services and wildlife-dependent recreation. What are appropriate and compatible uses in relations to on-site levels of environmental education and interpretation?

Law enforcement. How can trespass, illegal activity, and human-caused disturbance to wildlife be managed more effectively given limited personnel and remoteness of the Refuge?

1.9.3 Issues outside the Scope of the CCP

While CCPs are very comprehensive plans, no single plan can cover all issues. The planning team has identified management of the Monument to be outside the scope of this CCP.

Management of the Monument is complex, with three Federal and two Territorial agencies working together. The Secretary of the Interior through the Service has overall management responsibility for the Monument, including Rose Atoll NWR. However, the Secretary of Commerce, through the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has primary management responsibility regarding the management of the marine areas of the Monument seaward of mean low water, with respect to fishery-related activities. The Monument Proclamation prohibits commercial fishing in the Monument. The NMFS is developing proposed Monument non-commercial fishing regulations that include establishing a 0- to 12-nautical mile (nmi) no-take area around the Refuge and propose to establish regulations that permit sustenance and traditional indigenous fishing and recreational fishing in the 12-50 nmi zone of the Monument. Additionally, the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) has initiated the process to add the marine areas of the Monument, outside of the Refuge, to the Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary, and the American Samoa Government through the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR) and Department of Commerce (ASDOC) is a cooperating agency.

Consequently, each Federal agency is currently in the process of developing management plans and/or regulations related to their authorities in the Monument, in coordination with interagency partners. These management plans and regulations will be the basis for management of the Monument. However, if after these plans are completed and proclamation requirements remain outstanding, a process and regulatory regime will be identified by the Service, in consultation with partners, using existing appropriate authorities to address these gaps.

1.10 Refuge Vision and Goals

The following vision and goals for Rose Atoll NWR were developed during the planning and public scoping process.

1.10.1 Refuge Vision (Pale o Galuega o le Faasao mo Meaola)

O lona taoto mai, o se pala mātū na eaea mālie a’e lona faavae i luga o se maugamū, si’omia e ‘amu lona a’au, o ituaiga limu eseese e ola i lona gataifale, ma faisua e ola lauusiagi aga’i i luga e pe a ma le afe ni futu lona maualuga o lo o taoto mai ai lenei nofoaga na foa mai e ona tua’ā i le miliona o tausaga ua mavae. I lea la nofoaga, o le Faasao a le Mālō Tele mo Meaola e pei ona mautu nei i le motu ‘amu o Rose e sulugia mai ai le lanu piniki i le sami tioata. O lenei tama’i motu ‘amu ua fai ma nofoaga e tua i ai le tele o meaola o le si’osi’omaga. E si’osi’omia lona a’au e se limu e soa ma le lanu o le rosa, e mau lona aloalo i i’a matagofie ma ‘amu tetele faatasi ai ma meaola ninii e felanulanua’i solo ma o lo o atagia mai ai le lanu moana, lanu auro, ma le lanu uliuli e sosolo faapei o se faititili lona tino mai. E fegāsoloa’i laumei o le gataifale i le fogāsami ae mālōlō mai i lo latou mapusaga i le matāfaga e tu’ufua ai ma atili olaola ai lo latou tupu’aga na amata asā le vavau se i o’o mai nei ona po. I luga o lea fanua, e fa’alafuā le tuputupu a’e o laau e ta’ua o laumatui ua fai ma nofoaga tumau o gogo ma lagona leotele ai le fetalia’i o o latou leo i lalo o le malu o pupu laau. E feālumi nei leo o manu tagi ma le pāfuga o le ‘ā, o le tagi lea o le fua’ō, faatasi ai ma le tagi mai o le ‘atafa, ma le uiō o le toloa. Ona o le taualoa tele o talatuu tau measina o lea motu ‘amu, ua teu fatu ai le naunauta’iga a tupulaga talavou e u’una’i pea le Faasamoa i se faagaoioiga malamalama toe manino ma avea ai i latou o ni tausimea i le taavili soifua o lea si’osi’omaga tūpito. I le vasa loaloa o i le Pasefika i Saute, o lo o pāpā’aveloa le soifua o le motu ‘amu o Rose ua avea ai o se motu iloga toe faailogaina na amata mai lava i lona anamua ma o lea ua avea o se taula’iga e faasinoala i su’esu’ega tau paiolo (biological), su’esu’ega o le eleele (geological), ma le talia lelei o eseese tau aganuu mo Samoa atoa.

Perched on an ancient volcano, reef corals, algae, and clams grow upwards thousands of feet on the foundation built by their ancestors over millions of years. Here, Rose Atoll National Wildlife Refuge glows pink in the azure sea. This diminutive atoll shelters a profusion of tropical life. Encircled by a rose-colored coralline algal reef, the lagoon teems with brilliant fish and fluted giant clams with hues of electric blue, gold, and dark teal. Sea turtles gracefully ply the waters and find safe haven lumbering ashore to lay eggs that perpetuate their ancient species. On land, stately *Pisonia* trees form a dim green cathedral where sooty tern calls echo as they fly beneath the canopy. Their calls join the cackling of the red-footed boobies, whinnying of the frigate birds, and moaning of the wedge-tailed shearwaters. Inspired by their living history at the atoll, tamaiti perpetuate Fa’a Samoa through an understanding and shared stewardship of their natural world. In the vast, deep South Pacific, Rose Atoll survives as a monument from the past and beacon for the future of biological, geological, and cultural diversity for all Samoa.

1.10.2 Refuge Goals (Manulauti o le Faasao mo Meaola)

Refuge management goals are descriptive, open-ended, and often broad statements of desired future conditions that convey a purpose, but do not define measurable units. Goals must support the refuge vision and describe the desired end result. The following are goals for Rose Atoll NWR.

Manulautī 1: Puipuia ma toe faaleleia nofoaga ‘ainā i le aloalo ina ia o gatasi ma tulaga moomia na iai ituaiga olaga faamauina o meaola eseese i lea lotoifale.

Goal 1: Protect and maintain the lagoon habitats to meet the life-history needs of native species in this community.

Manulautī 2: Fa’afō’isia, puipui, ma toe faaleleia le si’omaga e ola ai le ituaiga limu e ta’ua o le “crustose coralline algae” i le a’au ina ia ‘ausia tulaga moomia tau le faaolaolaga o meaola i ituaiga eseese o lo o i lea itulagi.

Goal 2: Restore, protect, and maintain the perimeter crustose coralline algal reef to meet the life-history needs of native species in this community.

Manulautī 3: Puipui ma toe faaleleia foliga ma tulaga masani o le ava e puipuia uma isi nofoaga ua ‘ainā e meaola o le Faasao ma le aafia o le pala mātū ona o le fogāsami o lo o si’omia ai le aloalo.

Goal 3: Protect and maintain the natural state of the channel (ava) to protect all other Refuge habitats and the hydrology of the lagoon.

Manulautī 4: Fa’afō’isia, puipui, ma toe faaleleia le gataifale o lo o fai ma nofoaga o meaola o lea si’omaga ina ia o gatasi ma tulaga moomia na iai se ituaiga olaga faamauina o meaola eseese i lea lotoifale.

Goal 4: Restore, protect, and maintain the beach strand habitat to meet the life-history needs of native species in this community.

Manulautī 5: Fa’afō’isia, puipui, ma toe faaleleia nofoaga o lo o folasia i le oneone o le gataifale ina ia o gatasi ma tulaga moomia na iai se ituaiga olaga faamauina o meaola eseese i lea lotoifale e aafia ai laau, manufeleele o le sami, manufeleele e masani ona aumau i le nofoaga oneonea o le matafaga, manufeleele o le laueleele, manufeleele e aumau i se vai o i le laueleele, o ituaiga manu fetolofi e i le faatulagaga e faaperetania o “reptiles”, ma pa’a e maua i le pala mātū.

Goal 5: Restore, protect, and maintain littoral forest to meet the life-history needs of native species in this community including plants, seabirds, shorebirds, landbirds, waterbirds, reptiles, and land crabs.

Manulautī 6: Faamaopoopo faamatalaga faasaientisi (faamaumauga tau tamaoaiga, vaavaaiga o le itu i fafo ma totonu, laulilūga, ma su’esu’ega) e lagolagoa fa’ai’uga fai a le taupulega e pei ona folasia mai e manulauti 1-5.

Goal 6: Gather scientific information (inventories, monitoring, assessments, and research) to support adaptive management decisions under objectives for Goals 1-5.

Manulautī 7: Fa’atāua le faatoetoe o alagaoa ma opogi faatasi le faiva faatausimea e va’ava’alua ai ma tagata lautele e tusa ai o le si’osi’omaga o meaola uma, su’esu’ega tau le eleele, ma le tele o le tamaoaiga fa’aleaganu’u o le Faasao e ala i le faafoega o polokalama e feso’ota’i atu ai ma tagata lautele, o galuega tau faaliliu upu, ma a’oa’oga tau le si’osi’omaga.

Goal 7: Strengthen resource conservation and the public’s shared stewardship of the ecological, geologic, and cultural richness of the Refuge by providing outreach, interpretation, and environmental education opportunities.

Manulauti 8: Faailoa ma'oti, puipui, faatoetoe, ma faaliliu tulaga tau alagaoa fa'aleaganu'u o le Faasao ma faafaigofie, pe a talafeagai ai, faagaoioiga fa'aleaganu'u.

Goal 8: Identify, protect, preserve, and interpret the Refuge's Samoan cultural resources and facilitate, where appropriate, cultural practices.