



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



Rose Atoll National Wildlife Refuge

Planning Update Number 3, October 2012

Tridacna maxima, also known as faisua or giant clam / Jim Maragos, USFWS

Refuge Releases Draft CCP/EA

The Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment (CCP/EA) for the Rose Atoll National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is now available for public review and comment. The document can be found in the Refuge planning section on our Website at www.fws.gov/roseatoll/planning.html. Printed copies and CDs can also be requested at the Refuge office. This plan addresses only the Refuge and not the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument (Monument) area seaward of the Refuge (other planning is underway for resources seaward of the Refuge's perimeter reef).

In this update, we present two management scenarios (alternatives) being considered for the future of Rose Atoll NWR. These draft alternatives are designed to meet each Refuge purpose, the National Wildlife Refuge System mission, the direction from the Monument presidential proclamation and Secretarial Order, as well as address the comments/issues heard during public scoping and meetings since 2009. Alternative B is the preferred alternative. We included in this update, revised versions of the Refuge's management goals, a brief summary of each alternative, and a comparison of the key actions across alternatives as well as related maps.

We want to thank all those who have been involved in our planning so far and hope you will continue to be engaged. Interested citizens, agencies, partners, and organizations are welcome to review and comment on this Draft CCP/EA. Your thoughts and comments are important to us and can be shared in several ways.

We will be hosting three public open house meetings in American Samoa, October 16 - Sadie's by the Sea at 2:00 PM, October 23 - the Ofu Community Center at 9:00 AM and October 23 - Ta'u High School Gym at 2:00 PM, where printed copies as well as CDs of the document will be available. Refuge staff will also be on-hand to answer any questions.

You may also provide comments via mail, email, or phone — please see page 6 for information. Comments are due by November 9, 2012. The planning team will evaluate your comments and consider their incorporation into the final CCP. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information (PII) in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment, including your PII, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your PII from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Management Goals

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

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

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

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

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.

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

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.

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

Draft CCP Alternatives

Alternative A is the no-action alternative. Existing Refuge management activities would continue, including protection, maintenance, and restoration of habitats that support priority species including seabirds, shorebirds, turtles, native plants, reef fish, invertebrates, and coralline algae. Management activities include monitoring, pest species management, and restoration projects such as the removal of debris from a 1993 shipwreck. The Refuge is closed to the general public and entry is limited to those who have been issued a special use permit (SUP).

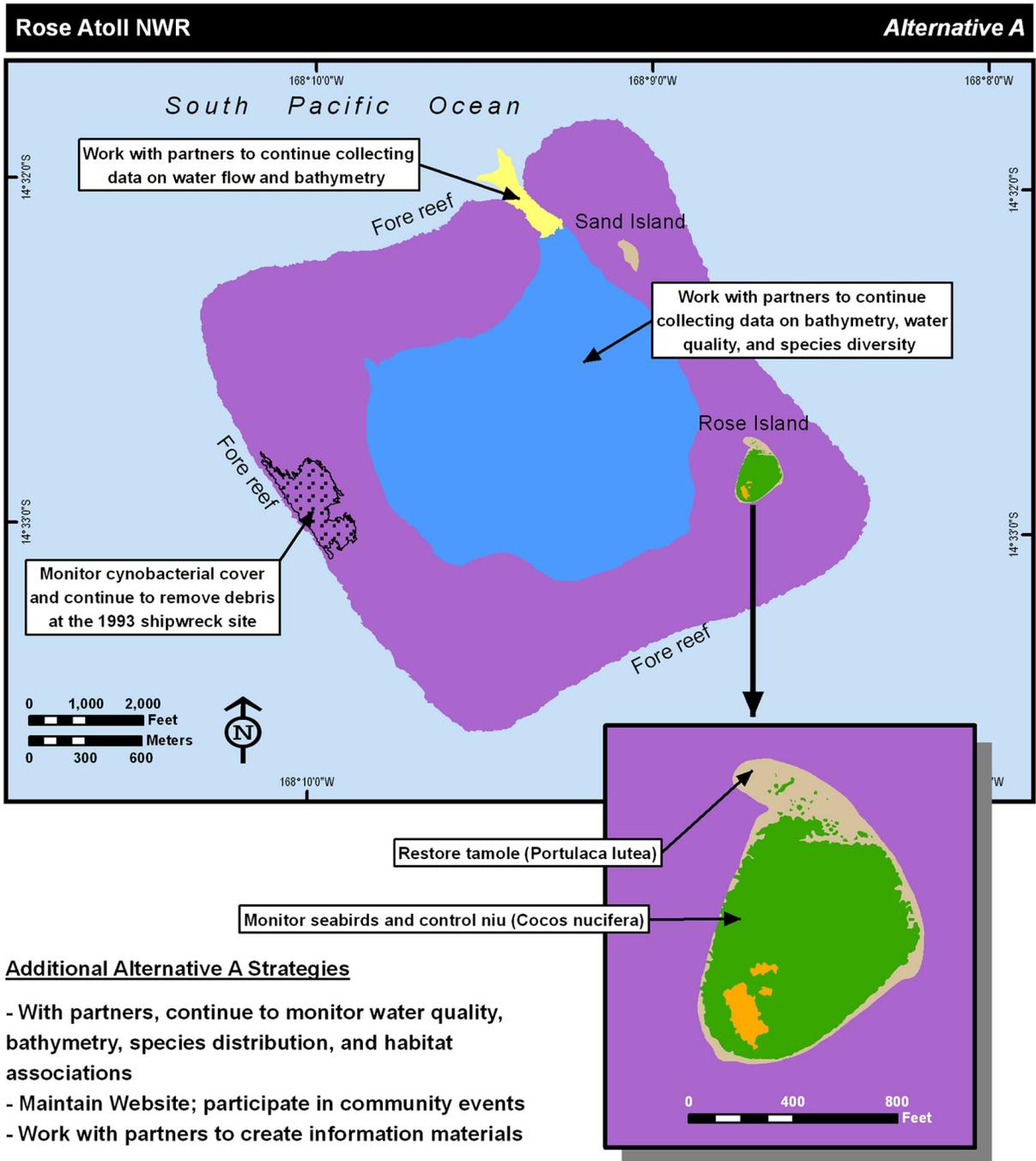
Alternative B is the preferred alternative where enhanced habitat restoration, monitoring, and outreach are proposed. Increasing the frequency of management trips to the Refuge and fortifying close partnerships with the American Samoa Government, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Park Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, and other partners is key to this alternative. A remote sensing system would be set up to monitor nesting seabirds, turtles, and other wildlife. Restoration of the littoral forest on Rose Island by extirpating introduced ants, and the introduced scale insect (*Pulvenaria urbicola*) and propagating native forest trees would be explored. More frequent visits would allow for improved law enforcement oversight and compliance, and remote sensing would also provide better management and documentation of any unauthorized entry into the Refuge. The Refuge will remain closed to the general public with entry only allowed via SUP.

Refuge staff would provide outreach and interpretation opportunities and develop an environmental education (EE) program. Appropriate cultural practices would also be facilitated through expanding Refuge management related to cultural resource management (e.g., working with the American Samoa Historical Preservation Office and other partners to conduct archaeological surveys at Rose Atoll, integrating cultural resources into interpretation, and increasing dialogue with the Office of Samoan Affairs and local villagers).

Planning Schedule

Public review/comment on Draft CCP/EA	October-November 2012
NEPA Decision	Fall 2012
Planning Update 4 Issued	Winter 2012
Final CCP	Winter 2012

Schedule dates are tentative and subject to change as CCP planning progresses.



Additional Alternative A Strategies

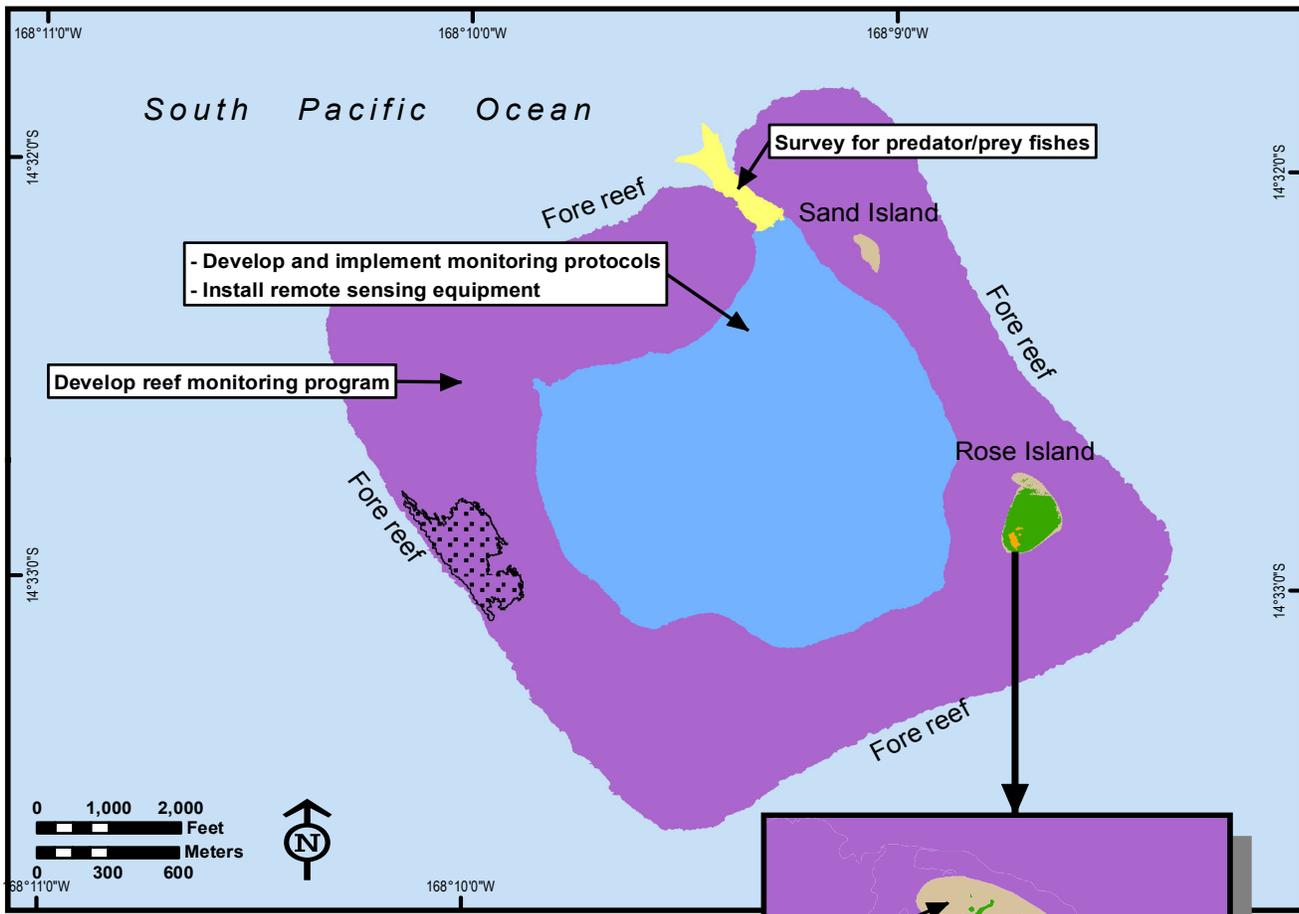
- With partners, continue to monitor water quality, bathymetry, species distribution, and habitat associations
- Maintain Website; participate in community events
- Work with partners to create information materials

LEGEND	
	Highest density of cyanobacteria
	Perimeter Reef
	Lagoon
	Ava (channel)
	Littoral Forest
	Beach Strand (restore and protect ≥ 3 acres with native coastal plants)
	Coconut Grove (maintain cover of niu at or below 5%)

Produced by USFWS Region 1
Refuge Information Branch
Portland, Oregon

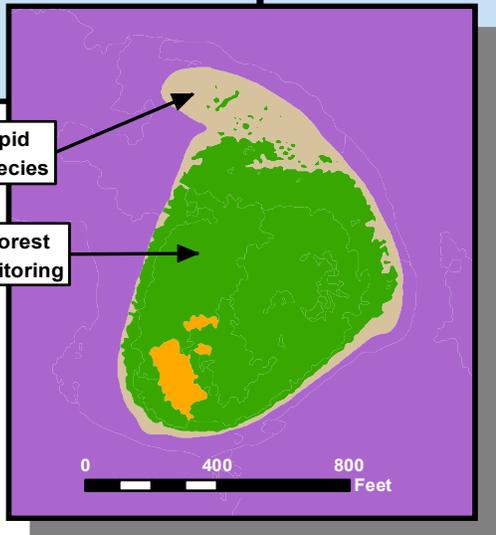
Map Date: 6/25/2012 File: 11-088-4.mxd
Data Source: American Samoa Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources, 2010

Rose Atoll NWR **Alternative B**



Prepare and implement monitoring plan and rapid response program for terrestrial non-native species

Restore littoral forest and improve monitoring



Additional Alternative B Strategies

- Improve quality and quantity of monitoring
- Increase research to support restoration
- Increase interpretive opportunities with partners
- Develop EE program
- Inventory, restore and maintain cultural resources

LEGEND	
Highest density of cyanobacteria	Littoral Forest (restore, protect, and maintain 15 acres)
Perimeter Reef	Beach Strand (restore and protect ≥ 3 acres with native coastal plants)
Lagoon (protect and maintain 547 acres)	Coconut Grove (maintain cover of niu at or below 5%)
Ava (channel)	

Produced by USFWS Region 1
Refuge Information Branch
Portland, Oregon

Map Date: 6/25/2012 File: 11-088-5.mxd
Data Source: American Samoa Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources, 2010

Comparison of Alternatives

Key Themes	Objectives	Alternative A (Current Management)	Alternative B (Enhanced Habitat Restoration, Monitoring, and Outreach)
<i>Lagoon Habitat</i>	1.1 Protect and maintain the lagoon habitats	Work with partners to continue collecting data on bathymetry, water quality, and species diversity	In addition to Alternative A, develop and implement monitoring protocols for fish, corals, other invertebrates, and marine pests to manage populations as needed; install remote sensing to monitor resources and document illegal boat traffic
<i>Perimeter Reef</i>	2.1 Restore, protect, and maintain the perimeter reef	Monitor cyanobacterial cover which greatly increased in response to the 1993 shipwreck, continue to remove debris	In addition to Alternative A, develop reef monitoring program
<i>Ava</i>	3.1 Protect and maintain the ava	Work with partners to continue collecting data on water flow and bathymetry	In addition to Alternative A, survey for predator and prey fish species
<i>Beach Strand</i>	4.1 Restore, protect, and maintain the beach strand	Restore tamole (<i>Portulaca lutea</i>)	In addition to Alternative A, prepare and implement a monitoring plan and rapid response program for terrestrial non-native species
<i>Littoral Forest</i>	5.1 Restore, protect, and maintain littoral forest	Monitor seabirds and control niu (<i>Cocos nucifera</i>)	In addition to Alternative A, restore native littoral forest, and improve monitoring of seabirds, vegetation, and pest species
<i>Inventory, Monitoring, and Research</i>	6.1 Conduct high priority inventory and monitoring (survey) activities and scientific assessments	Work with partners to continue monitoring water quality, bathymetry, species distribution, and habitat associations	In addition to Alternative A, improve the quality and quantity of monitoring efforts by monitoring more often, creating standardized protocols and management databases
	6.2 Conduct high priority research	Limited research	Increase research as part of restoration efforts for habitats and wildlife populations
<i>Outreach, interpretation, and environmental education (EE)</i>	7.1 Enhance and expand interpretation and outreach	Maintain Website; participate in community events	In addition to Alternative A, develop more interpretive opportunities with our partners
	7.2 Develop EE	No EE program	Develop an EE Program
<i>Cultural Resources</i>	8.1 Protect and perpetuate cultural resources related to Rose Atoll	Work with partners to create information materials	In addition to Alternative A, inventory, restore, and maintain cultural resources and work with local representatives to facilitate appropriate cultural traditions related to Rose Atoll



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Address Correction Requested

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How to Contact Us

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E-Mail: FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov
**Please include "Rose Atoll Draft CCP/EA" in the
subject line.**

Find Us On the Web:
<http://www.fws.gov/roseatoll>



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