

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



Rose Atoll National Wildlife Refuge

Planning Update Number 4, Summer 2014

Black-tip Reef Shark /Mark MacDonald

The Comprehensive Conservation Plan is Available

*Talofa lava from Rose Atoll
National Wildlife Refuge*

This is the final Planning Update in a series of updates distributed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to keep you informed about the progress of the Rose Atoll National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plans.

This update provides a summary of management projects that will be implemented over the next 15 years as funding becomes available.

*Tofa ia soifua,
Susan White*

We are pleased to announce the completion of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for Rose Atoll National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). We sincerely thank all the individuals and organizations who participated in our planning process and contributed valuable input.

Two alternatives were analyzed in the Draft CCP and Environmental Assessment (EA). Alternative B was selected for implementation. Many dedicated people helped to develop the CCP, and we thank all of you who participated in our planning process and provided valuable comments to help improve the plans.

Electronic copies of the final CCPs are available at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Rose_Atoll/what_we_do/planning.html.

Printed copies are available at each of the following locations:

Feleti Barstow Public Library (Tutuila)
Ofu National Park Service Office (Ofu)
Manu'a High School (Ta'u)

Printed or CD copies can also be obtained by contacting the Refuge at (684) 633-7082, ext. 15.

Summary of Public Involvement

Beginning with public scoping in 2009, we sought to inform and invite participation from the public, interested agencies, and organizations in developing and reviewing the CCP. Efforts included seven public open houses/meetings; three planning updates; updates provided through meetings with partners, elected officials, and chiefs; Federal Register notices; website postings; mail and email list circulations; news releases; and a public comment period on the draft CCP/EA from October 9–November 27, 2012.

The comments received on the draft CCP/EA covered a variety of topics, including wildlife and habitat management; research and monitoring; law enforcement; public uses such as fishing, environmental education, and interpretation; cultural resources; and partnerships.

Additional public involvement details, a summary of substantive comments received and our responses to them, and any changes made to the preferred Alternative B are outlined in detail in Appendix J of the final CCP. Some of the changes made based on public comments include: adding research strategies to investigate breeding seabird diets, correlating seabird reproduction with oceanographic conditions and prey locations, and clarifying the relationship between seabirds and pelagic fish in the biological chapter. Additionally, a strategy to work with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to identify the Refuge on nautical charts and other marine information products was added to a revised law enforcement section.



Hermit Crab/Mark MacDonald

What Happens Next?

As funding becomes available, projects will be implemented as identified in the CCP. Priority projects are identified in Appendix D of the plan. In addition to federal funding, we will rely on grants and partnerships to help implement the plan.

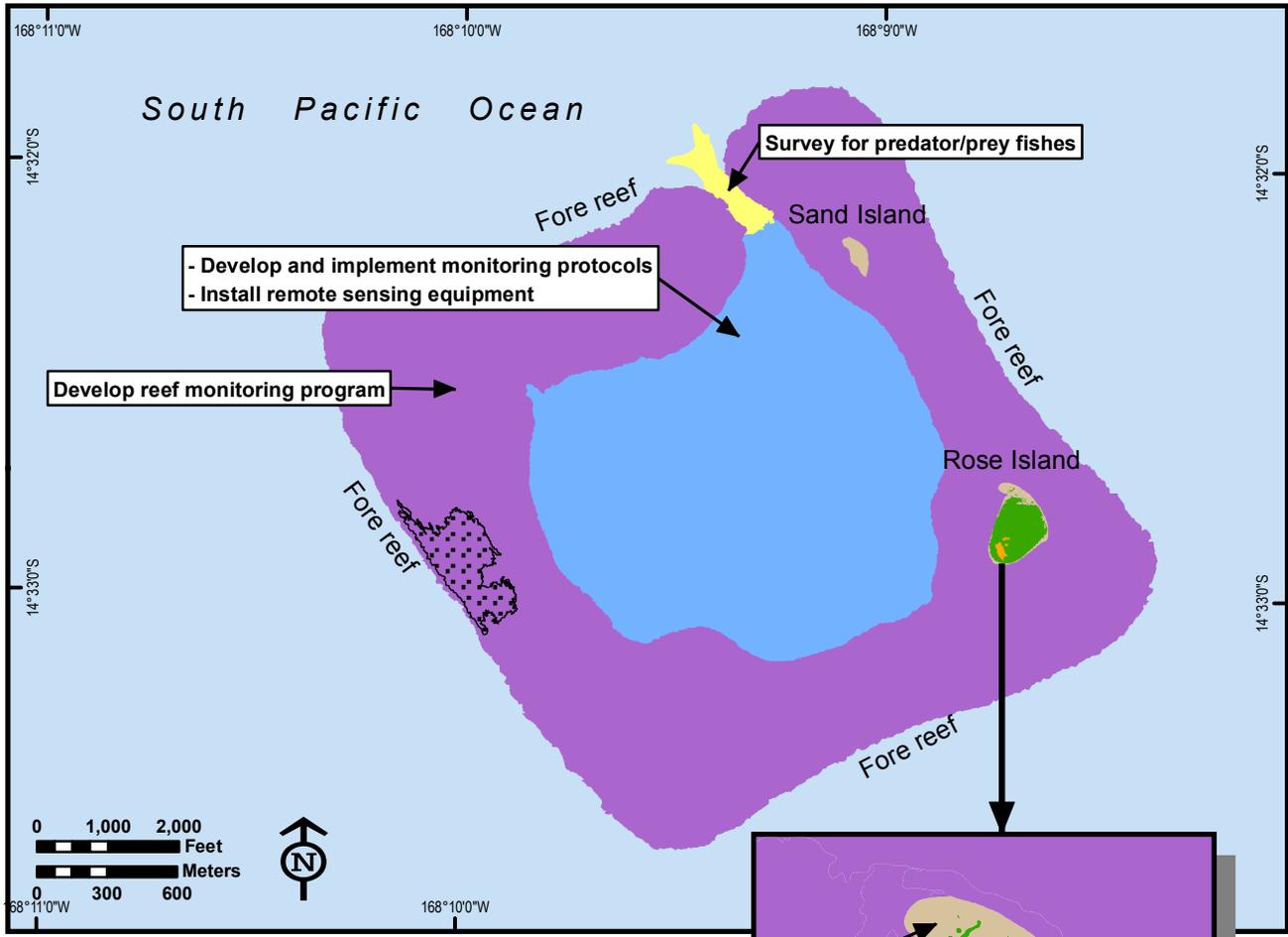
Highlights from the Final CCP

Wildlife and habitat management will emphasize protecting, restoring, and maintaining habitats including the lagoon, perimeter crustose coralline algal reef, aua (channel), beach strand, and littoral forest as well as species that rely on these habitats (e.g., corals, fish, seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles, native plants, fauna, and invertebrates). Strategies for accomplishing the above include developing monitoring protocols, installing a remote camera system, increasing surveys, implementing a rapid response program to prevent new nonnative species, restoring native plants, and increasing applied research.

Increasing the frequency of management trips to the Refuge and strengthening partnerships with the American Samoa Government, NOAA, National Park Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and other partners are key components of our management direction. More frequent visits will allow for improved law enforcement oversight and compliance.

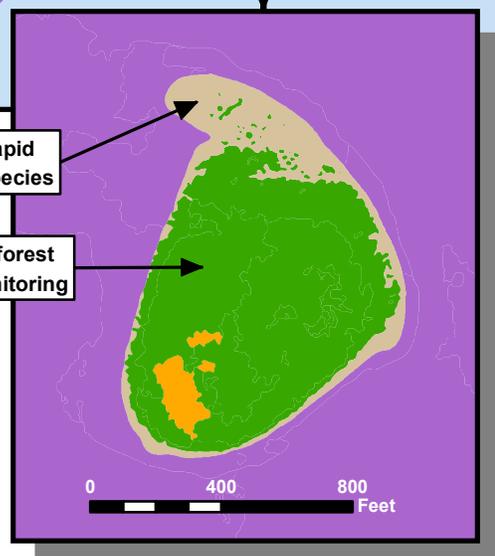
The Refuge will remain closed to the general public, with entry only allowed via special use permit. Refuge staff will provide outreach and interpretation opportunities and develop an environmental education program focusing on “bringing the refuge to the people.” Staff will work with the American Samoa Historical Preservation Office and other partners to conduct archaeological surveys at Rose Atoll Refuge, integrating cultural practices and resources into interpretation, and increasing dialogue with the Office of Samoan Affairs and local villagers.

Rose Atoll NWR **Management Direction**



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

Restore littoral forest and improve monitoring



Additional Management 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)	




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Rose Atoll National Wildlife Refuge/Marine National Monument
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Pago Pago, AS 96799

Address Correction Requested

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www.fws.gov/refuge/rose_atoll

