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The mission of the National Wildlife 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.”

Rose Atoll Overview

Rose Atoll is located approximately 130 nautical miles east-southeast of Pago Pago Harbor, American Samoa, and is the easternmost Samoan island and is one of two atolls in the Samoan Archipelago. It is the southernmost unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System and shares the distinction with Jarvis Island of being the only National Wildlife Refuges located south of the equator.

Rose Atoll is nearly square, with the ocean-side slopes about 1 mile in length. It is one of the smallest atolls in the world, consisting of two low sandy islets, Rose and Sand. Each is located on a coralline algal reef rim enclosing a lagoon. A single, narrow, shallow channel with a minimum depth of 8 feet links the lagoon to the sea. The lagoon is a maximum of 1.2 miles wide and up to about 65 feet deep, and includes 1,575 acres. Rose and Sand Islands cover areas of about 14 and 7 acres respectively, and rise a mere 8 feet above sea level.

Despite its small size, Rose Atoll supports the largest populations of giant clams, nesting sea turtles, nesting seabirds, and rare species of reef fish in American Samoa. To date, about 270 species of fish have been recorded at the atoll. The two islands are important nesting sites for the threatened green turtle in American Samoa. Satellite tags attached to the nesting green turtles at Rose have shown that these turtles migrate between American Samoa and other Pacific island nations (i.e., Fiji and French Polynesia). In

Visitor Services Activities

• Wildlife observation and photography
• Environmental education
• Public visitation via sail or motorized boat

In preparing the CCP, a range of possible alternative management approaches will be explored and evaluated, including current management practices. The effects of the various alternatives on the biological resources and local communities will be evaluated in an Environmental Assessment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

The planning team has identified some potential issues to be considered during CCP development. We want to hear your comments on these issues, and any other topics of concern, at our public meetings (see page 6). If you aren’t able to attend one of our public meetings, please submit your comments in writing to the Refuge (see page 6 for contact information), by December 31, 2009.

Protection of Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources

• Threats to the islands and reefs (unauthorized trespass, illegal fishing, marine debris, shipwrecks, and invasive species)
• Public awareness and understanding

Other topics

• Scientific exploration and research
• Monitoring and enforcement
• Permitting

Wildlife and Habitat Resources

• Terrestrial habitat protection and restoration (for the Pisonia forest, sea turtle nesting, seabird nesting, shorebirds)
• Marine habitat protection and restoration (for coral reefs, giant clams, marine mammals, sea turtles, seabirds, and fishes)

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Tentative Planning Schedule

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Step</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning Update 1 issued</td>
<td>November 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Meetings</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>February 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning Update 3 issued</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Public Review/Comment on Draft CCP/EA</td>
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addition to the migratory breeding population of turtles at the atoll during the nesting season (August to February), a small resident population of juveniles apparently lives on the atoll. Endangered hawksbill turtles have also been seen in the lagoon, although it is not known if they nest on the islands.

Rose Atoll is the most important seabird colony in the region, since approximately 97 percent of the seabird population of American Samoa resides on Rose. The two islands provide important nesting and roosting habitat for 12 species of federally protected migratory seabirds including terns, noddies, boobies, frigatebirds, and tropicbirds. Only 1 year after removal of rats in 1993, two species of shearwaters (wedge-tailed and Christmas Island) were sighted on Rose Island, the first such burrowing seabirds recorded on Rose.

The Refuge has been closed to public uses since its establishment to protect the natural resources of this small atoll. In 2002, the National Marine Fisheries Service prohibited vessels longer than 50 feet from fishing within 50 nautical miles of Rose Atoll. In 2004, the National Marine Fisheries Service established a no fishing zone that extends outside of the atoll to a depth of 50 fathoms (300 feet). In recent years, most management attention at Rose Atoll by FWS has been focused on removing the 120-foot Taiwanese longline fishing vessel F/V Jin Shiang Fa, which ran aground on the southwest perimeter reef at Rose Atoll in October 1993. The last remaining debris was removed from the atoll in 2007, and FWS continues to monitor reef recovery.

Rose Atoll Marine National Monument

On January 6, 2009, President George W. Bush established the Rose Atoll Marine National Monument (MNM) by signing Presidential Proclamation 8337 under the authority of the Antiquities Act of 1906. The lands, submerged lands, waters, and marine environment of Rose Atoll support a dynamic reef ecosystem that is home to a very diverse assemblage of terrestrial and marine species, many of which are threatened or endangered. One of the most striking features is the pink hue of fringing reef caused by the dominance of coralline algae.

President Proclamation 8337 assigned management responsibility for the Rose Atoll MNM to the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce. Through Secretary’s Order January 16, 2009, the Secretary of the Interior delegated management responsibility for the Monument to the FWS Director.

The Secretary of Commerce, through NOAA, has primary management responsibility for fishery-related activities regarding the management of the marine areas of the Monument seaward of mean low water. NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service will be developing regulations for fishery-related activities. Agencies with jurisdiction or special expertise, including the Department of Defense, Department of State, and the Government of American Samoa, are to be treated as cooperating agencies in development of any Rose Atoll MNM management plans.
National Wildlife What?

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Rose Atoll is part of the Territory of American Samoa and was established as a National Wildlife Refuge by cooperative agreement between the Government of American Samoa and FWS on August 24, 1973.

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Preliminary Issues to be Considered

Protection of Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources
• Threats to the islands and reefs (unauthorized trespass, illegal fishing, marine debris, shipwrecks, and invasive species)
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