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Cc: [Alayne Chappell - NOAA Affiliate](#); [Karen Reyna](#); [Brian Johnson - NOAA Federal](#); [Maria Brown](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PLEASE READ: USFWS Mouse Eradication Project
Date: Tuesday, July 2, 2019 12:58:28 PM
Attachments: [Nur et al ASSP Pub Brief.docx](#)
[Nur et al WEGU PVA Pub Brief.docx](#)

Hi all,

Sorry for the silence over the last month... I was away on vacation while the mouse eradication discussion took place, and I would like to share some of the information below.

As you know, just over fifty years ago, biologists from Point Blue Conservation Science (known then as Point Reyes Bird Observatory) landed on the Farallon Islands for the first time. We have maintained a continuous presence on the islands ever since: 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. A year after arriving, the South Farallon Islands became part of the Farallon Islands National Wildlife Refuge and we entered into a unique, long-term partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to become stewards of the island and to provide baseline monitoring of the islands populations. Our role on the islands is simple: we use our expertise in biology, ecology, and conservation to provide rigorous science to the Service, helping them make decisions that will ensure a healthy ecosystem on the islands for generations to come.

Right now, the USFWS is considering an important decision and a significant opportunity for ecological restoration: the eradication of the invasive house mouse from the Farallon Islands. Point Blue would like to voice our strong support for this project and we encourage you to do the same by sending a note to the California Coastal Commission (CCC) letting them know you support the Service's project to eradicate the invasive house mice. The CCC is meeting next week to vote on the project and they need to hear from you by Friday July 5th for your comment to be considered. Please reference "July 2019 Agenda Item Wednesday 14a CD – 0002 – 19" in any comments and see some key points at the bottom of this post you can include in your comment.

Addressing misinformation and misleading statements

Point Blue is aware that there are critics of this project have been spreading misinformation and misleading statements and we wanted to clarify four points:

- **The total amount of rodenticide that will be used in the bait application is less than two ounces.** This 1.16 oz of rodenticide is dispersed into 1.45 tons (aprox 3,500 lbs) of a cereal-like grain bait to get the mice to ingest the rodenticide.
- **The Obama administration never "abandoned" this project.** The draft EIS was submitted in

2013 during the Obama administration. It took six years for the USFWS to address all of the public comments and incorporate new science into the Final EIS document that was published in the spring of 2019. This long, thorough, public process shows just how cautious and transparent the USFWS has been throughout the project.

- **There are successful gull hazing techniques that have been studied on the Farallones and will be employed to minimize the number of gulls present on the islands and lessen the chances of exposure to rodenticide during the implementation phase of the project.** See [report brief here](#) for more information from a Point Blue-authored report.

Key points regarding mouse eradication on the Farallon Islands

- The introduction of invasive, non-native house mice to the Farallon Islands has caused significant disturbance to the islands' sensitive ecosystem. The house mice have direct and indirect harmful impacts on the islands' breeding seabirds, especially ash storm-petrels, but also on Leach's storm-petrels, as well as on native salamanders, crickets and other invertebrates, and native plants.
- The only way to allow the ecosystem to recover is to ensure 100% eradication of the house mice. The survival of even a single pair of mice jeopardizes the whole project, as the mouse population can recover incredibly quickly.
- At present, there is only one known method that has proven effective for island eradications, and that is the "preferred alternative" (an aerial broadcast of the rodenticide Brodifacoum) identified by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in the Final Environmental Impact Statement published in March 2019.
- The US Fish and Wildlife Service, with Point Blue in a supporting role as a science partner, produced one of the most thorough and scientifically rigorous EIS documents on record. The final product represents over ten years of careful study, with a final report of 322 pages supported by an appendix 577 pages long. Before publishing the final EIS document, USFWS reviewed each of the 553 public comments and addressed all substantive comments in its final report.
- Invasive rodent removals have been successfully completed on nearly 700 islands worldwide, including on California's Anacapa Island in the Channel Islands National Park, three National Wildlife Refuges in the Pacific, two islands off the coast of Mexico, many islands off the main islands of New Zealand, and recently, multiple islands in the Galápagos Archipelago. Land managers have successfully eradicated house mice from more than 60 islands worldwide. Nearly all of these successful projects utilized techniques like that proposed for the South Farallon Islands house mouse eradication.
- The USFWS will follow best practices learned from successful eradications and has outlined in the final EIS all of the precautionary measures it will take to minimize any potential negative impacts of the eradication.

I also included summary versions of two papers that relate to the eradication. Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Jaime Jahncke, Ph.D., *California Current Director*

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