

## Request for Waiver of Time and Page limits under S.O. 3355

**To:** Office of the Deputy Secretary

**Through:** Margaret Everson, Principal Deputy Director

**From:** Paul Souza, Regional Director, Pacific Southwest Region

**Date:** March 21, 2019

**1. Bureau or Office Name:** Farallon Islands National Wildlife Refuge

**2. Title of Document:** South Farallon Islands Invasive House Mouse Eradication Project: Final Environmental Impact Statement

**3. Description of Action:** The project proposes to eradicate introduced, invasive house mice (*Mus musculus*) from the South Farallon Islands which are located approximately 30 miles offshore from San Francisco, California. Eradicating mice is expected to benefit native seabirds, amphibians, terrestrial invertebrates, and plants and will help restore natural ecosystem processes on the islands. The Preferred Alternative (FEIS Alternative B) proposes two aerial applications of rodent bait Brodifacoum-25D Conservation to the islands.

The project includes a number of mitigation measures to reduce or avoid adverse impacts to native species including operational timing that avoids the breeding season for most native species and an extensive gull hazing operation to minimize impacts to gulls from non-target take.

There are no cooperating agencies; however, the Service consulted extensively with collaborating agencies including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (USDA/APHIS/WS), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife prior to choosing the preferred alternative for this project.

**4. Time waiver:**  150 Page waiver:  (check all that apply)

**5. Was a waiver or extension previously granted, and if so, how much time or many pages were previously approved?** We have not previously requested a waiver.

**6. Description of Reason for Request:**

We are requesting an extension of the due date for signing the Record of Decision for this project, until July 23, 2019, in order to complete the Coastal Zone Management Act federal consistency determination review process.

This request is an outgrowth of recent consultations with the California Coastal Commission (Commission) on the optimal schedule for reviewing the federal consistency determination and preparing staff recommendation for presentation to the Commission at one of their regularly scheduled public hearings. The Commission has advised us that there will likely be significant

public interest in this project and that members of the public will want the opportunity to address the Commissioners at the required public hearing on the Federal Consistency Determination.

The Commission holds monthly meetings in different parts of the state. In order to maintain the current schedule of receiving the Commission's concurrence in order to meet our current ROD target date of June 20, 2019, a hearing on the project should be held not later than the Commission's May meeting. The May meeting (May 8-10) is in Oxnard, a six hour drive from the area where the Farallon Islands and most affected public members are located within the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Commission consequently is recommending scheduling the hearing on the Consistency Determination at the July meeting (July 10-12) in San Luis Obispo, which is significantly closer to the Bay Area. This would make it substantially easier for the interested public to attend the Commission hearing and provide public comments.

The FEIS was published in the Federal Register on March 15, 2019. The Commission's March meeting has already occurred and the agenda for the April meeting is closed. The June meeting location is even farther away, in San Diego, a 9-hour drive from the Bay Area. The closest meeting location in/near the Bay Area would not be an option until November. Therefore, both the Commission and Service staff believe that the July meeting in San Luis Obispo will allow the process to be more open and transparent to the affected public.

**7. Need and deadline (if any) for issuance of waiver(s) decision:** A decision on this waiver request is needed by March 28, 2019. If the waiver is denied, the current schedule requires us to submit the Consistency Determination to the Commission on or before April 1, 2019, in order to be on the agenda for the May 8-10, 2019 Commission meeting.

**8. Positions of affected stakeholders:** Members of the public who want the opportunity to comment on the consistency of the project with the Commission's Coastal Plan will support this time extension because a meeting location closer to the Bay Area will facilitate their participation in the public process.

**9. Other relevant considerations:** Delaying the ROD until late July would not affect project implementation because the Service does not have funds to implement this project this year.

**10. Attachments:** Spreadsheet with current and new proposed project timeline.

Granted: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Denied: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	A	B	C	D
1	<b>FARALLON MOUSE ERADICATION NEPA timeline (as of 03/21/2019)</b>			
2		<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Proposed Revised Schedule</b>
3	Project Briefing to the Review Team	_____	Done	
4	Review Team provides comments to Project Team (day of the briefing and up to 5 business days following)	3/1/2019	Done	
5	Review Team approval	3/1/2019	Done	
6	Delegated SES (Regional Director) signs and approves FEIS and NOA	3/4/2019	Done	
7	File FEIS with EPA	3/8/2019	Done	
8	Federal Register Notices Published - (Friday of the week following filing with EPA)	_____	Done	
9	Final EIS wait period - 30 days	4/15/2019		
10	Submit Consistency Determination to the Coastal Commission (Coastal Commission has 60-75 days to review the Determination, but need to allow 90 days for review)	3/15/2019		4/26/2019
11	Coastal Commission hearing on Consistency Determination	April 10-12, 2019 (Salinas, CA)		July 10-12, 2019 (San Luis Obispo)
12	ROD Clearance Process - EIS Project Team sends a one-page notice to the Review Team seeking objections to Final ROD approval. Notice includes: 1) a brief discussion on any substantive issues that arose during the Final EIS notice period, 2) the Final ROD text, and 3) confirmation that it did not change from what was initially reviewed, or advise of any outstanding issues that need to be addressed, such as protest resolutions or Governor's Consistency Review objections.	6/17/2019		7/17/2019
13	Review Team has 3 days to request an oral briefing or object to the ROD.	6/19/2019		7/19/2019
14	Regional Director signs ROD and Notice of Availability (NOA)	6/20/2019		7/23/2019
15	ROD NOA sent to Federal Register for publication	6/20/2019		7/23/2019