

Rat Island Project Report

March 9, 2011

Steve Delehanty
Refuge Manager
Alaska Maritime National Wildlife
Refuge



STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

BOARD of GAME

SARAH PALIN,
GOVERNOR

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May 1, 2008

Mr. Will Meeks, Acting Refuge Manager
Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge
95 Sterling Highway
Homer, AK 99603

Dear Mr. Meeks:

At the January and March 2008 Board of Game meetings, staff from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) presented information on the Service's plan for "Restoring Wildlife Habitat on Rat Island" and the Environmental Assessment/NEPA (EA) planning process that is nearing completion. The objective is to eradicate introduced rats, using poison, and restore native wildlife and habitats on Rat Island.

This letter supplements the consent letter from Chairman at the time, Mike Fleagle, of March 24, 2005 and is specific to the broad-scale Rat Island restoration program. The Alaska Board of Game (Board) is granting written consent to the Service to take, using poison, rats and other non-native rodents that are a threat to native bird populations on Rat Island of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. This consent is granted from the date of this letter until December 31, 2009 and is consistent with the concurrent Nuisance Wildlife Permit issued by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game - Division of Wildlife Conservation (Department). A copy of that permit is provided here and was sent under separate cover. An annual report of activities and progress towards a rat-free island shall be provided to both the Board and Department.

The Board commends the Service for the EA process and for thoroughly involving the public and considering all aspects of the proposed rat eradication program. However, the Board remains highly concerned about the use of poison and its broad prescription across Rat Island. The Board expects the Service to take all appropriate measures that ensure minimal and insignificant impacts to the few remaining native birds and nontarget species on Rat Island. In your annual report to the Board, please address the measures taken to avoid the take of nontarget species and if this occurs please report on species and scope of incidental take.

Thank you for taking the time to brief the Board on the EA and Rat Island restoration



**“Foxes come,
Birds go...”**



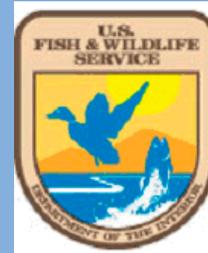
Rat Island Rat with Bird Remains





Rat Island

2011



Rat Island

6891 acres

Rats since 1780, shipwreck

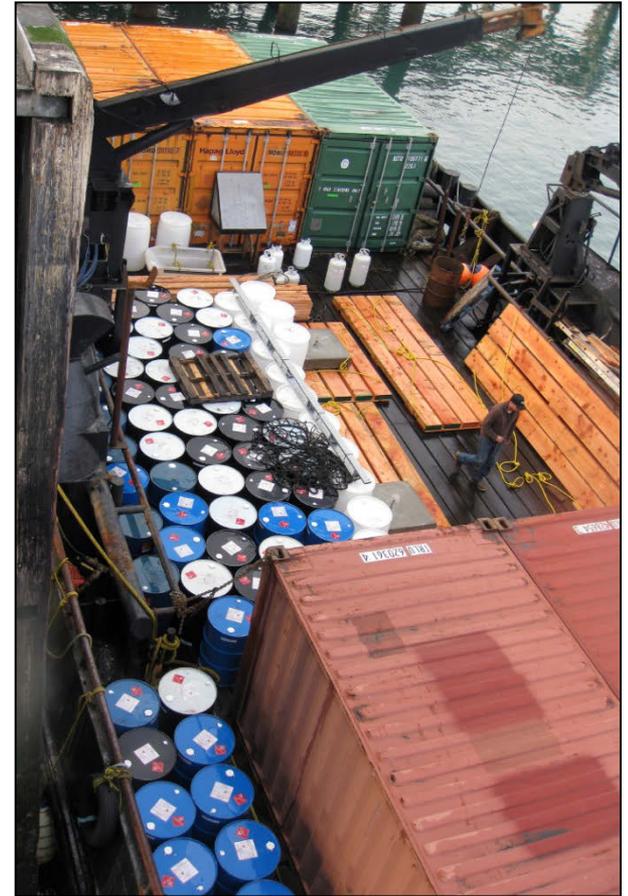
Foxes stocked 1922 (eradicated 1984)



Norway Rats



Tactics

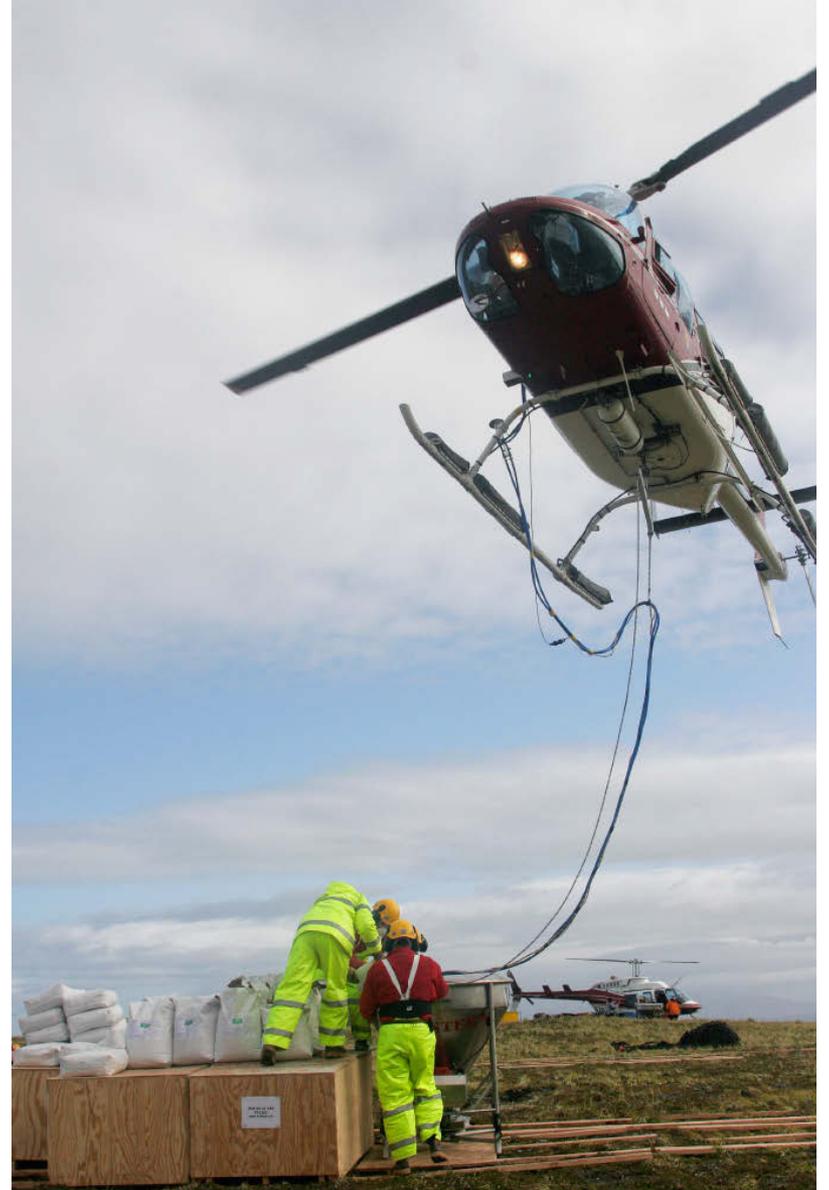


2 helicopters

2 ships

38 people, 6 weatherports

50 tons bait = 125 boxes, 16 bags per box = 2000 bags bait







Dead Rat on Rat Island After Bait Application



List of Species Found



Species	Number
Glaucous-winged gull	320
Bald eagle	46
Northern fulmar	9
Unidentified auklet	1
Harlequin duck	4
Black-legged kittiwake	3
Gray-crowned rosy finch	3
Tufted puffin	3
Rock sandpiper/Pacific Golden Plover	2
Common eider	2
Common raven	2
Green-winged teal	2
Lapland longspur	2
Least auklet	2
Pelagic cormorant	4
Pigeon guillemot	2
Rock ptarmigan	2
Snow bunting	2
Thick-billed murre	2
Unidentified puffin	2
Whiskered auklet	2
Common murre	1
Emperor goose	1
Parakeet auklet	1
Peregrine falcon	1
Shearwater	1
Unidentified murre	1
Total	423

**THE RAT ISLAND RAT ERADICATION PROJECT:
A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF NONTARGET MORTALITY**

PREPARED FOR

ISLAND CONSERVATION

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, ALASKA MARITIME
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

PREPARED BY

THE ORNITHOLOGICAL COUNCIL

Final report issued December 2010

conclude that all or nearly all the mortality resulted from the eradication operations



Success!!! No More Rats on Rat Island

Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge

