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GUAM COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ASSESSMENT FORMAT

DATE OF APPLICATION: 5/5/2021
NAME OF APPLICANT: USDA Wildlife Services
ADDRESS: 233 Pangelinan Way, Barrigada, GU 96913
TELEPHONE NO. 671-635-4440 Fax No. _____ Cell No: 671-747-1568
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TITLE OF PROPOSED PROJECT:
Invasive Brown Treesnake Eradication to Protect Natural Resources on Cocos Island, Guam

COMPLETE FOLLOWING PAGES

FOR BUREAU OF STATISTICS AND PLANS ONLY:

DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED: _____
OCRM NOTIFIED: _____ LIC. AGENCY NOTIFIED: _____
APPLICANT NOTIFIED: _____ PUBLIC NOTICE GIVEN: _____
OTHER AGENCY REVIEW
REQUESTED: _____

DETERMINATION:
() CONSISTENT () NON-CONSISTENT () FURTHER INFORMATION REQUESTED

OCRM NOTIFIED: _____ LIC. AGENCY NOTIFIED: _____
APPLICANT NOTIFIED: _____
ACTION LOG:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

DATE REVIEW COMPLETED: _____

Consistency Determination Statement

The proposed Invasive Brown Treesnake Eradication to be conducted on Cocos Island will be undertaken in a manner consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of GCMP

Project Description

In October of 2020, The U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) Brown Treesnake Rapid Response Team (RRT) verified the establishment of a reproducing population of brown treesnakes (BTS) on Cocos Island, Guam. Cocos Island is a small islet about 1.5 mile from the southern tip of Guam. Guam rails (a population established under a Safe Harbor Agreement in 2010 with the release of 16), Slevin's skinks, and occasional Mariana fruit bats, federally listed T&E species, as well as other native species that are found on Cocos Island are at jeopardy from BTS predation. The invasion on Cocos Island is the first and only known extralimital population of BTS since the species arrived on Guam. Despite important developments and improvements in suppression tools and techniques, BTS have not been eradicated on Guam. However, Cocos is a small islet, 83 acres, and eradication is possible, but needs to occur rapidly before native species are lost. A rodent eradication project was successful and removed all rats from Cocos Island in 2009. That allowed for the release of Guam rails in 2010.

The unprecedented nature of this invasive species introduction will require that all possible measures be used to increase the probability of eradication of BTS from Cocos Island. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Service, Wildlife Services (WS), and the U.S. Department of Interior, USGS and Fish and Wildlife Service in cooperation with the Government of Guam, Department of Agriculture, Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources and Iowa State University are developing a plan to eradicate BTS off the islet.

The proposed action to eradicate BTS will use cage traps, acetaminophen in dead mouse or bird chick baits in bait tubes, visual searches with hand capture or take involving firearms, and detector dogs. Associated activities include boat travel between Guam and Cocos and the establishment of minimally-maintained transects throughout the entire island. The project is proposed for implementation following the issuance and decision on the finalization of an Environmental Assessment and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service have been consulted under the Endangered Species Act to ensure impacts to T&E species have been considered and potential impacts minimized.

A more thoroughly-detailed description of background, purpose and need, agency roles, description of the proposed activities is included in the Biological Assessment to be provided along with this assessment form.

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES (DP):

DP 1. Shore Area Development

Intent: To ensure environmental and aesthetic compatibility of shore area land uses.

Policy: Only those uses shall be located within the Seashore Reserve which:

- enhance, are compatible with or do not generally detract from the surrounding coastal area's aesthetic and environmental quality and beach accessibility; or
- can demonstrate dependence on such a location and the lack of feasible alternative sites.

Discussion:

Not applicable N/A

DP 2. Urban Development

Intent: To cluster high impact uses such that coherent community design, function, infrastructure support and environmental compatibility are assured.

Policy: Commercial, multi-family, industrial and resort-hotel zone uses and uses requiring high levels of support facilities shall be concentrated within appropriate zone as outlined on the Guam Zoning Code.

Discussion:

Not applicable N/A

DP 3. Rural Development

Intent: To provide a development pattern compatible with environmental and infrastructure support suitability and which can permit traditional lifestyle patterns to continue to the extent practicable.

Policy: Rural districts shall be designated in which only low density residential and agricultural uses will be acceptable. Minimum lot size for these uses should be one-half acre until adequate infrastructure including functional sewerage is provided.

Discussion:

Not applicable N/A

DP 4. Major Facility Siting

Intent: To include the national interest in analyzing the siting proposals for major utilities, fuel and transport facilities.

Policy: In evaluating the consistency of proposed major facilities with the goals, policies, and standards of the Comprehensive Development and Coastal Management Plans, Guam shall recognize the national interest in the siting of such facilities, including those associated with electric power production and transmission, petroleum refining and transmission, port and air installations, solid waste disposal, sewage treatment, and major reservoir sites.

Discussion:

Not applicable N/A

DP 5. Hazardous Areas

Intent: Development in hazardous areas will be governed by the degree of hazard and the land use regulations.

Policy: Identified hazardous lands, including flood plains, erosion-prone areas, air installations' crash and sound zones and major fault lines shall be developed only to the extent that such development does not pose unreasonable risks to the health, safety or welfare of the people of Guam, and complies with the land use regulations.

Discussion:

Not applicable N/A

DP 6. Housing

Intent: To promote efficient community design placed where the resources can support it.

Policy: The government shall encourage efficient design of residential areas, restrict such development in areas highly susceptible to natural and manmade hazards, and recognize the limitations of the island's resources to support historical patterns of residential development.

Discussion:

Not applicable N/A

DP 7. Transportation

- Intent: To provide transportation systems while protecting potentially impacted resources.
- Policy: Guam shall develop an efficient and safe transportation system, while limiting adverse environmental impacts on primary aquifers, beaches, estuaries, coral reefs and other coastal resources.
- Discussion: To the extent possible, WS, USGS, USFWS and other workers will use safe transport to and from Cocos Island from piers near Merizo and use Best Management Practices to ensure that corals, sea turtles, and other reef resources are not affected.
- Not applicable
- We do not believe resources will be impacted more than negligibly during the removal of brown treesnakes from Cocos Island as discussed in a Biological Assessment and consultation with NMFS.

DP 8. Erosion and Siltation

- Intent: To control development where erosion and siltation damage is likely to occur.
- Policy: Development shall be limited in areas of 15% or greater slope by requiring strict compliance with erosion, sedimentation, and land use regulations, as well as other related land use guidelines for such areas.
- Discussion:
- Not applicable N/A

RESOURCES POLICIES (RP):

RP 1. Air Quality

Intent: To control activities to insure good air quality.

Policy: All activities and uses shall comply with all local air pollution regulations and all appropriate Federal air quality standards in order to ensure the maintenance of Guam's relatively high air quality.

Discussion:

The only air quality impacts will be associated with boat travel between mainland Guam and Cocos Island. Only well-serviced vessels will be used. These inputs are routine and trivial.

RP 2. Water Quality

Intent: To control activities that may degrade Guam's drinking, recreational, and ecologically sensitive waters.

Policy: Safe drinking water shall be assured and aquatic recreation sites shall be protected through the regulation of uses and discharges that pose a pollution threat to Guam's waters, particularly in estuaries, reef and aquifer areas.

Discussion:

Water pollution is limited to the minor use of boats for moving personnel and equipment from mainland Guam to Cocos Island. These will have minimal potential to cause pollution problems to the ocean and Cocos Lagoon. Conservation measures for minimizing effects to water quality and transporting invasive species include: Discharges of chemicals and other fluids dissimilar from seawater into the water column will not be done; An oil spill pollution prevention plan and contingencies to avoid and clean up potential spills will be developed and guide boating activities; All equipment found to be leaking contaminants will be removed from service until repaired; all vessels, machinery, and equipment that enters the marine environment in Cocos Lagoon will be inspected for the presence of invasive species daily and removed and decontaminated or cleaned as necessary; All USEPA Vessel General Permits and Coast Guard requirements will be obtained and followed; Cleaners with nonylphenols will not be used; the anchor will be cleaned with a high-powered hose after retrieval; trash and debris from operations will be disposed of appropriately and not allowed to enter the marine environment.

RP 3. Fragile Areas

Intent: To protect significant cultural areas, and natural marine and terrestrial wildlife and plant habitats.

Policy: Development in the following types of fragile areas including Guam's Marine Protected Areas (MPA) shall be regulated to protect their unique character.

- historical and archeological sites
- wildlife habitats
- pristine marine and terrestrial communities
- limestone forests
- mangrove stands and other wetlands
- coral reefs

Discussion:

There will be no development associated with this project. No historical and archaeological sites will be disturbed as there will be no ground disturbance. Effects to marine and terrestrial communities are evaluated under a NEPA EA and a formal ESA Section 7 consultation process. It has been determined that the project may affect some ESA-listed species on the island, but that failure to remove Brown Treesnakes will be detrimental to these species and the net effect of the project will be beneficial for wildlife on Cocos Island.

RP 4. Living Marine Resources

Intent: To protect marine resources in Guam's waters.

Policy: All living resources within the waters of Guam, particularly fish, shall be protected from over harvesting and, in the case of corals, sea turtles and marine mammals, from any taking whatsoever.

Discussion:

This project involves no harvesting of marine resources. Effects to sea turtles, listed corals, and essential fish habitat are considered in the ESA Section 7 consultation. Based on our analysis and the employment of best management practices proposed by USFWS and NOAA, we determine that vessel activities associated with this project may have minimal, temporary, or short-term adverse effects on the marine environment, based on the localized scale of potential impact.

RP 5. Visual Quality

- Intent: To protect the quality of Guam's natural scenic beauty
- Policy: Preservation and enhancement of, and respect for the island's scenic resources shall be encouraged through increased enforcement of and compliance with sign, litter, zoning, subdivision, building and related land-use laws. Visually objectionable uses shall be located to the maximum extent practicable so as not to degrade significant views from scenic overlooks, highways and trails.
- Discussion: The eradication of brown treesnakes from Cocos Island will be beneficial for all native plants and animals there, thus Guam's natural scenic beauty will be preserved.
- Not applicable

RP6. Recreation Areas

- Intent: To encourage environmentally compatible recreational development.
- Policy: The Government of Guam shall encourage development of varied types of recreational facilities located and maintained so as to be compatible with the surrounding environment and land uses, adequately serve community centers and urban areas and protect beaches and such passive recreational areas as wildlife, marine conservation and marine protected areas, scenic overlooks, parks, and historical sites.
- Developments, activities and uses shall comply with the Guam Recreational Water Use Management Plan (RWUMP).
- Discussion:
- Not applicable N/A

RP 7. Public Access

Intent: To ensure the right of public access.

Policy: The public's right of unrestricted access shall be ensured to all non-federally owned beach areas and all Guam recreation areas, parks, scenic overlooks, designated conservation areas and their public lands. Agreements shall be encouraged with the owners of private and federal property for the provision of releasable access to and use of resources of public nature located on such land.

Discussion:

Not applicable N/A

RP 8. Agricultural Lands

Intent: To stop urban types of development on agricultural land.

Policy: Critical agricultural land shall be preserved and maintained for agricultural use.

Discussion:

Not applicable N/A

CATEGORY OF APPLICATION (check one only)

- I - Federal Agency Activity
- II - Federal Permit or License
- III - Federal Grants & Assistance

TYPE OF STATEMENT (check one only)

- Consistency
- General Consistency (Category I only)
- Negative Determination (Category I only)
- Non-Consistency (Category I only)

APPROVING FEDERAL AGENCY (Categories II & III only)

Agency _____

Contact Person _____

Telephone No. during business hours:

Area Code () _____

Area Code () _____

FEDERAL AUTHORITY FOR ACTIVITY

Acts of March 2, 1931, as amended (7 U.S.C. 426-426c; 46 Stat. 1468), and
Title of Law December 22, 1987 (7 U.S.C. §§ 8351 –83544); Brown Tree Snake Control and
Section Eradication Act of 2004 (H.R. 3479)

OTHER GUAM APPROVALS REQUIRED:

Agency	Type of Approval	Date of Application	Status
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
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