



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

1011 E. Tudor Rd.

Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

IN REPLY REFER TO:

RF612.AKM

MAR 9 1994

Mr. Craig S. Harrison
7001 North 9th Street, Suite 1801
Arlington, Virginia 22203

Dear Mr. Harrison:

First, let me apologize for not answering your letter of a year ago concerning eradication of introduced predators.

In 1985 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) prepared an Environmental Assessment on Eradication of Foxes on Islands in the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. Since we do not have permission to use 1080 or M-44's, we have been limited to the islands we can efficiently work with guns, snares and traps. Because of the vagaries of budgets, vessel scheduling and available eradication techniques, we did not set timelines for the work. Since 1985 we have removed foxes from 20 islands using conventional methods, and I am happy to report that the Exxon Valdez Trustee Council has funded fox eradication on Simeonof and Chernabura Islands this year.

Rats are another species of great concern to the Service. We are presently working with the cities of St. Paul and St. George in an effort to prevent rat introduction in the Pribilofs. We have prepared an environmental assessment on the use of toxicants to prevent rats from becoming established on any refuge island by shipwrecks or maritime accidents, and a three person, inter-divisional team is working to develop an action plan for dealing with shipwreck introduction of rats. A third prong of our rat program deals with actually trying to eradicate them from Shemya Island. We hope all the planning and the administrative paperwork can be completed quickly so we can start field operations this year. We are looking at this as a trial horse to see what we can actually do. This will be our first attempt at rat eradication on an island.

The Service has not developed a comprehensive predator eradication plan with dates and milestones. We are interested in discussing with you a plan for removing introduced predators from Alaskan islands. You should contact John Martin, Refuge Manager of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, 2355 Kachemak Bay Drive, Suite 101, Homer, Alaska 99603, who will have the lead in developing such a plan if we decide to pursue it. The refuge has

systematically removed foxes from 20 islands (ranging in size from 173 acres to over 69,000 acres) in the last 10 years. The refuge is also in the forefront of our rat program. Their practical, on-the-ground experience would be invaluable in developing your plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Walter D. Stigley". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Regional Director