

Restoring Our Refuges: A Plan for Guam



The invasion of the brown tree snake has become a cautionary tale on Guam National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is seeking to establish a grid of traps and bait stations on 40 acres of coastal strand and limestone forest surrounding the headquarters building to fight the brown tree snake and monitor lizard populations – all in an attempt to restore such extirpated species as the rufous fantail and Micronesian starling. Endangered species such as the Guam rail and the Micronesian kingfisher will be repatriated from captive breeding populations when monitoring shows it to be safe.



The endangered *Serianthes nelsonii* tree exists only in on Guam and the Marianas Islands. With only 122 of these trees are left on the planet, budget shortfalls will limit the staffs ability to properly manage and protect this majestic species.



Guam National Wildlife Refuge

The National Wildlife Refuge System struggles to meet its wildlife conservation mission

In Guam alone, 9 mission-critical projects sit on the shelf.

Guam is home to spectacular natural resources including Guam National Wildlife Refuge, which provides over 23,000 acres of essential habitat for native plants and wildlife, while also safeguarding significant cultural resources of the Chamorro people. This wildlife refuge is a national treasure, providing habitat to the last remaining populations of the threatened Mariana Fruit Bat, the endangered Mariana Crow, and the endangered *Serianthes nelsonii* tree.

In 2008, 85 thousand visitors enjoyed hiking, birding, wildlife photography, environmental education, and hunting and fishing on Guam refuges.

Yet, national wildlife refuges in Guam may not be able to continue protecting wildlife and offering world-class recreation. Guam wildlife refuges are saddled with deferred operations and maintenance projects that exceed \$500 thousand.

Today, the state's wildlife refuges need at least 8 additional positions. Those include 5 wildlife biologists, 1 guides and educators, and 2 essential maintenance and enforcement personnel. Without these people, Guam refuges will fall further behind in meeting the demand.

What's the solution? CARE recommends \$514 million for the Refuge System's FY 2010 Operations and Maintenance budget and an increase to at least \$765 million by FY 2013

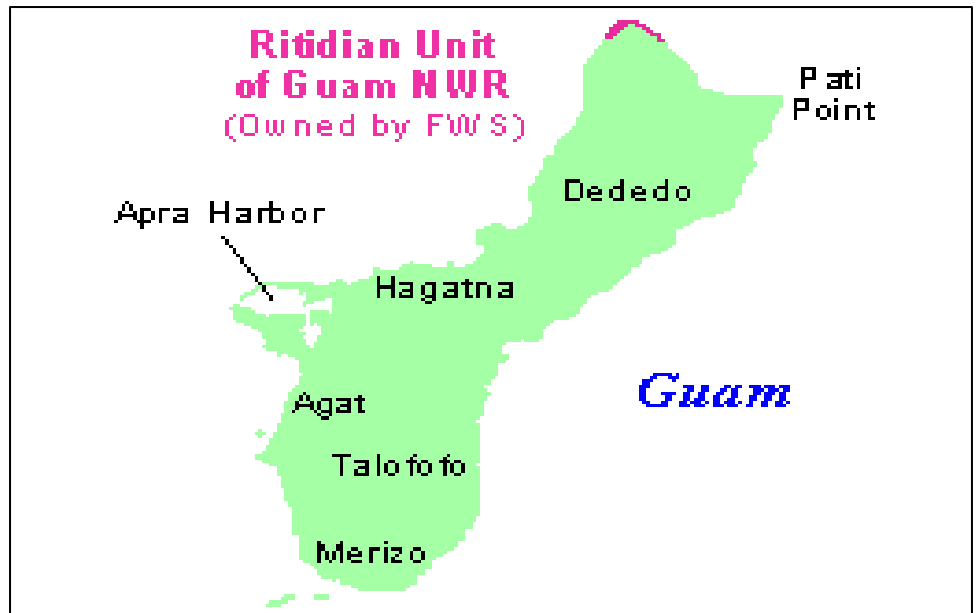
About C.A.R.E.

The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement is a diverse coalition of 22 conservation, recreation, sporting, and scientific organizations with more than 14 million members and supporters across the United States. Since 1995, CARE has been working to help the National Wildlife Refuge System fight a serious funding crisis.

American Birding Association
American Fisheries Society
American Sportfishing Association
Assateague Coastal Trust
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
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National Audubon Society
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[www.FundRefuges.org/CARE/
CareHome.html](http://www.FundRefuges.org/CARE/CareHome.html)



Saddled with declining purchasing power and a \$3.5 billion backlog of deferred operations and maintenance projects, the National Wildlife Refuge System is in a financial vise.

The Refuge System needs an annual increase of \$15 million in its operations budget just to keep pace with inflation and demand. The Refuge System welcomed more than 41.2 million visitors in 2008, up from 33 million in 1998.

National Wildlife Refuges are undeniable economic engines. According to the *Banking on Nature* report from the FWS:

- Spending by visitors to refuges generated more than \$1.7 billion of sales nationwide, created 27,000 jobs in local communities and added \$543 million in employment income. These economic data do not include Alaska or Pacific island refuges, which together generate millions of annual visitors.

Yet, according to Management Systems International, a respected business consultant, the Refuge System has seen its real purchasing power decline by 11 percent between fiscal years 2003 and 2008.

The Government Accountability Office found that with continuing funding constraints and an expanding list of challenges, it may be difficult to maintain the Refuge System as envisioned in law – “where the biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health of the Refuge System are maintained; priority visitor services are provided; and the strategic growth of the system is continued.”

There is a solution to safeguard the world’s finest network of public lands dedicated to wildlife conservation: \$514 million in FY 2010 for the National Wildlife Refuge System and an increase to at least \$765 million by FY 2013 – steps that will restore operational quality and begin to chip away at the deferred operations and maintenance backlog.