

ACTION 10

Increase the efficacy of terrestrial predator management

Increase the efficacy of terrestrial predator management activities to promote healthy populations of wildlife around the Estuary. Assess and guide management of terrestrial nuisance species with access to shoreline habitats that prey on threatened and endangered species, and on species of special concern.

TASK 10-1 Develop a map showing priority areas in the San Francisco Estuary where actions can be taken to reduce feral cat predation on sensitive species, particularly Ridgway's rail. This cat predator threat assessment and opportunities map will include: 1) locations of known or suspected feral cat colonies and feeding stations; 2) identification of entity(s) maintaining each cat colony (individual, group-sanctioned, or city and county authorized activity); 3) jurisdictions of landowners with the authority and willingness to enforce the law (map to include all landowners of marshes and adjacent areas); 4) information on city and county cat-feeding station laws; 5) presence of critical Ridgway's rail populations; and 6) extent of housing and urban development, including landfills and transfer stations.

BY 2018 Produce feral cat threat assessment and opportunities map.

BY 2019 Engage managers on feral cat management and report on findings.

TASK 10-2 Guide predator management on publicly-owned conservation lands that support threatened and endangered species by: 1) assessing the impacts of management strategies (including the direct removal of predators and landscape alterations to reduce predator access to sensitive habitats) on populations of listed threatened and endangered species (in particular Ridgway's rail, Western snowy plover, and California least tern); 2) developing data and protocols for predator management activities (including predator surveys); 3) engaging managers of conservation lands in needs assessments.

BY 2019 Complete and disseminate predator management assessment report and recommendations.

BY 2020 Implement predator management recommendations at Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge.

BACKGROUND

Predators both disturb and consume not only sensitive resident birds that live and nest in marshes and along sandy beaches, but also songbirds, shorebirds, small mammals, amphibians, and other vulnerable wildlife in the Estuary watershed. Some predators are introduced while others are native, but swelling populations of both kinds of predators increasingly impact native species of concern to Estuary managers.

The 2011 *State of the Birds San Francisco Bay (State of the Birds)* report identifies introduced and increased predators as a threat to tidal marsh birds. The report highlights predators such as non-native red foxes, Norway rats, and house cats, native raccoons, corvids, and gulls.

Impacts from predators, both introduced and native, are usually greater near urban areas. Of particular recent concern are growing feral cat colonies in parks and other wildlife habitat areas. Unfortunately, many of these colonies of feral cats have serious impacts on local wildlife and park ecosystems.

This CCMP action supports *State of the Birds* report recommendations such as controlling introduced predators (particularly in areas with high concentrations of marsh birds), removing feral cat feeding stations supported by advocates, and educating the public about the impact of cats on bird populations.

Through this action, high priority areas for predator control will be defined and mapped. Conservation organizations and resource managers will use the new maps, data, and surveys to collaborate on increasing the effectiveness of predator control, management, and outreach programs. There is also considerable opportunity for community groups to advocate for predator management. Such efforts should, in turn, help protect and increase tidal marsh-dependent wildlife populations.

OWNERS

Point Blue Conservation Science (Task 10-1)
US Fish and Wildlife Service (Tasks 10-1, 10-2)

COLLABORATING PARTNERS

CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, CA State Coastal Conservancy, East Bay Regional Parks District, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture

NEXUS

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