USFWS Moves Forward with Marmot and Rabbit Eradication

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has determined there is no reason not to go ahead with the eradication of invasive mammal species on uninhabited islands near Kodiak and Akutan. In January, the service asked for comments on the removal of hoary marmots from one of the Barren Islands north of Kodiak, and European rabbits on Poa (po-ah) and Tangik (tan-gick) islands east of Akutan.

Steve Delahanty is the director of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, based in Homer. He says 16 comments were received, and that 14 were supportive, one wanted further study, and one - from a blog - was against the eradication.

He said there were several good suggestions in the comments, some of which will be implemented:

-- (Eradicate 1 30 sec "We got a comment that ... couldn't take that action.")

He said with the approval of the finding, the project is now green-lighted:

-- (Eradicate 2 34 sec "We

are, literally as we speak ... project will be deferred.")

Shooting and trapping will be used in the eradication process. The hoary marmot was introduced to Sud (sudd) Island in the Barren Island group in 1930, and the rabbits were introduced to Poa (po-ah) and Tangik (tan-gick), decades ago.

The project is being funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, also known as the Stimulus Plan.