



CARL T.C. GUTIERREZ
GOVERNOR OF GUAM

August 3, 2000

RADM Tom S. Fellin
COMNAVMAR
PCS 455 Box 152
FPO, AP 96540-1000

Dear Admiral Fellin:

I am writing to inform you of a proposal that my representatives presented to Secretary Babbitt in Washington, D.C. on August 2, 2000 that would address Guam conservation issues in a comprehensive way. The "Guam Conservation Initiative" was drafted after Secretary Babbitt agreed to authorize his representatives to conduct discussions with the Government of Guam to explore resolutions to the vexing conservation and land issues that have caused great difficulty in the relationship between the People of Guam and the United States Government.

The Navy has a stake in these issues, and I would welcome your communication of your viewpoint to our proposal to Secretary Babbitt or his representatives. The Guam Conservation Initiative would enhance the conservation efforts on Guam, and if agreed to, would increase the designated wildlife refuge overlay lands by 25 percent, or 4,500 acres. It would remove original landowner claims at Ritidian as a point of contention. It would encourage a solution to the access problems for the Castro family's land-locked property. And, most importantly, it would change the dynamic on Guam from confrontation to cooperation on conservation issues.

It is our view that the Guam Conservation Initiative is our best hope in avoiding a critical habitat designation, and it may indeed be the premise for a settlement of the Earth Justice lawsuit.

I hope you will find many positive benefits to this proposal and that you will be helpful as this process develops. We are anticipating a follow-up discussion with Secretary Babbitt's representatives on August 21 in Portland, Oregon. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

CARL T.C. GUTIERREZ
Governor

**Executive Summary
Government of Guam
Proposed
Guam Conservation Initiative**

The Government of Guam is proposing a “Guam Conservation Initiative” that will:

- Speed up the recovery of Guam’s endangered native forest birds, fruit bats, sea turtles and protect their habitat into the foreseeable future;
- Increase the size of the Guam National Wildlife Refuge (GNWR) by approximately 25 percent;
- Enhance the quality of Guam National Wildlife Refuge by simultaneously adding rich habitat and extending the habitat continuum;
- Increase the number of active sea turtle nesting sites within the Guam National Wildlife Refuge;
- Transform the existing adversarial relationship between the people of Guam and the United States Government into a true conservation partnership;
- Settle outstanding disagreements between the Federal government and local Guam residents who desire access to their land locked properties or who want the return of lands they formerly owned that were recently included in the Guam National Wildlife Refuge; and
- Create conditions, including the potential support of local conservation organizations, that could eliminate the need for “critical habitat” designation as recently demanded by several conservation organizations in a lawsuit filed against the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

The proposed Conservation Initiative has the following elements:

- 1 Expedited implementation of recovery tasks as outlined in the recovery plans for Guam's native forest birds and fruit bats, including increased area-wide brown tree snake control and initiation of wide area deer and wild pig control to protect native forest habitat vital for endangered species recovery and long term preservation;
- 2 The Government of Guam will contribute up to 4500 acres of Government of Guam land for designation into the overlay of the GNWR;
- 3 The Government of Guam will become a party to the Cooperative Agreement for the management of the GNWR;
- 4 The Government of Guam will exchange 97 acres of pristine lands held by the Chamorro Land Trust at Falcona Conservation Area for 95.5 acres of lesser quality lands within Ritidian Point owned by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service;
- 5 The Government of Guam would obtain an easement that would provide permanent access to the land-locked properties at Jinapsan via Ritidian Point by the most ecologically sound route determined by an environmental assessment; and
- 6 The USFWS would lease back (at no cost) the acreage adjacent to their headquarters building at Ritidian Point and its access to the beach subject only to the condition that USFWS construct a true "Visitors Center" on the site within three years.