

# ATLANTIC PUFFIN AND RAZORBILL MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

*Raised by Working Group July 27, 2000*

## Populations

- How invasive should DIF&W get? Should the Department be doing more than just monitoring? Concerns that if we inventory and monitor islands too early that we increase the likelihood of gull predation. Probably not necessary to do complete nest counts annually - possibly every 5 years
- Is there competition for nest structures among puffins, razorbills, and guillemots? There is probably some competition; however, in general, guillemots select smaller boulders and puffins select larger boulders than guillemots but smaller boulders than razorbills. In addition, razorbills often select nest structures with roofs.

## Habitat

- We tend to focus on nesting habitat, but we need to focus on birds at sea as well.
- Need conservation protection for islands not currently protected that potentially could support nesting birds.
- Long-term future of puffin (and tern) colonies will depend on funding to support a human presence and stewardship on nesting islands; otherwise, gulls will take over, new puffins will not likely colonize an area, and disturbance from the visiting public will increase.
- Are there any additional islands that would support nesting puffins or razorbills?
  - Western Egg Rock (historic puffin site, habitat is questionable)
  - Large Green Island (historic puffin site, 9 private landowners)
  - Wooden Ball Island (perfect site, privately owned, 1 landowner)
- Eastern Egg Rock (future razorbill site?) - razorbill population is expanding, now is the time to look at future nest sites

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### **Disturbance/Predation**

- Need further studies on the affects of expanding populations of laughing gulls on Eastern Egg Rock, Petit Manan, and Matinicus Rock. Laughing gulls seem to affect the tern populations that in turn affect puffins.
- Is there a need for predator control on razorbill nesting islands? There may be for mink but gull control would be difficult because many islands are very remote.
- Razorbills leave their colonies when the chicks are 3 weeks old. Where do they go? How vulnerable is the habitat?
- Need better education and outreach materials (signs? maps?) for boaters and other recreational users.