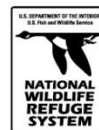


# News Release



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## **Fighter Jets Make Emergency Landing at Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge** *Midway Runaway Provides Critical Service*

A U.S. Marine Corps F/A-18 fighter jet traveling from Honolulu to Iwakuni, Japan, made a precautionary landing on Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge early today after experiencing a mechanical problem.

Traveling in a convoy of four F/A-18s and a KC-10 after supporting a Rim of the Pacific exercise, the F/A-18 landed safely at Henderson Airfield on Midway's Sand Island at 10:33 a.m. SST, followed by its escort. The other aircraft circled the Atoll and continued their transit to Wake Island. No one was injured.

"There is never a dull moment on this strategically positioned atoll," said Barry Stieglitz, Supervisor of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's national wildlife refuges in the Pacific.

Since its operation as a national wildlife refuge, Midway has become a landing strip not only for millions of seabirds but for commercial aircraft, such as the Delta 747 that made an emergency landing with 359 passengers on board last year. Military aircraft often request permission to land for refueling purposes, and ships at sea call for emergency medical services and boat and airlift help to provide critical transport via medevac to Honolulu.

"These rescues at sea and on land are a credit to the skills and services provided by the Fish and Wildlife Service staff and its contractor, Defense Base Services, Inc.," Stieglitz said.

In addition to Fish and Wildlife Service funding, money is provided by the Federal Aviation Administration to administer Henderson Airfield on Sand Island. Unfortunately, providing these life-support services may soon be compromised due to a \$1.2 million dollar shortfall in Midway's budget beginning October 1.

"The budget has simply not kept up with increases in the cost of fuel and infrastructure maintenance," Stieglitz said.

Located within the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, the Refuge's Henderson Airfield is the responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with funding support from the Federal Aviation Administration. This year alone the Refuge staff and its Defense Base Services, Inc., contractor successfully managed and served more than 30 landings for refueling or emergency landing purposes.

*The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov). Connect with our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/usfws](http://www.facebook.com/usfws), follow our tweets at [www.twitter.com/usfwshq](http://www.twitter.com/usfwshq), watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>*

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