

Interim Protected Species Management Strategy Information Sessions

- Wednesday, Oct. 5, 12 -2 p.m. at the Rodanthe/Waves/Salvo Community Building, Rodanthe
- Thursday, Oct. 6, 12-2 p.m. at the First Flight Centennial Pavilion, Wright Brothers National Memorial, Kill Devil Hills
- Thursday, Oct 6, 4-6 p.m. at the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum, Hatteras
- Tuesday, Oct. 11, 4-6 p.m. at the NPS Ocracoke Maintenance Building

Consolidated Comments by Topic

THE PARK & THE PLAN

The park

- Perception in community, NPS policy guided by political pressure
- Perception that park is being run by Region/Washington
- CAHA can provide a whole range of visitor experiences in addition to beach driving (i.e. bird watching)
- NPS should be consistent and predictable (?) move quicker to resolve problems on access
- NPS should manage CAHA
- USFWS should run refuges and not parks
- Balanced management. People/visitors need protection as do resources
- Keep park open for recreational opportunities
- Find other alternatives to beach closures
- Appreciate NPS, but want to drive on the beaches (i.e. 50-50 balance)
- Need balance of different views
- Rules should be left to best judgment of people
- Were told Hatteras Island “not be touched” when Pea Island was taken away
- Beach fishermen get low end of respect
- Wind surfer area – NPS providing services but taking areas away from fisherpeople
- NPS should be friends with people
- “Recreational park” does not necessarily mean only one form of recreation.
- General authorities act actually set forth that all units of NPS would be treated the same relative to resource and visitor use. This is contrary to the belief that the “recreation” legislation meant only recreation is to be considered.
- There is a large population of park visitors from all over country not engaged in this...their experiences are relevant (non-ORV drivers, occasional vacationers to the area)
- Communication important

The plan

- Confusion: FWS relation to the process
 - What does “consult” mean?
 - Why hasn’t this been done before?
- Cape Cod NS is a good model
- With escort service – match hours (earlier and later) to use needs. Escort seemed to be a good way to provide protection and access
- Escort system: if you’re going to protect birds, just do it right and close area; sport fishing in area not good anyway.
- Town hall meetings to review past year operations “lessons learned” how things worked and what could be made better

ACCESS & BEACH DRIVING

Access – general ORV

- Does not think beach driving is a good idea
- Keep small areas closed to ORVs – lighthouse beach (pedestrians)
- Driving on the beach is a tradition
- Support continued ORV access
- Keep beaches open ORV drivers know what is unsafe
- 4-wheel drivers have increased, beach area has decreased
- Access is separate issue from ORV access – most beaches are easy to get to with parking off beach
- Organized ORV entities views outside of main users of park: viewpoint out of proportion to others
 - 1950s rules not applicable today
 - belittles Park Service
 - Get “rise” out of Park then complain about Park
 - Affects how park is managed
- Seems that illegal ORV use has increased exponentially as visitation has increased
- Beach driving has value but needs to be better regulated
- Beach driving has its place but should be secondary to the value of this area being a National Park.
- Inlets and point are important place to be able to access for 4WD. Wild areas are important to keep
- Limiting night time driving will help prevent excessive “trashing” of the beach and places with known turtle nests.

Access – Corridor

- Better corridor marking in a way that vehicles can’t go through
- Corridors making beach too narrow in places to drive safely
- Have to drive into water – corridor too narrow
- Escort corridor too narrow with high tide
- Consider size of vehicles

- Zones – i.e. types of vehicles in certain areas

Access - Permits

- Permit system free or \$ linked to education and specific per beach i.e. yellow Hatteras, blue Bodie, yellow all
- Fees would help defer costs
- Supports driving/beach permit with short training

Access - Seperate

- Separate recreational activities/points/spits
- Separate uses to minimize visitor conflicts
- ORVs impact recreation that I want to do; whether fishing, walking, etc. I want area to do this without ORVs
 - Access impaired by numerous ORVs
 - Need separate areas for different activities
- Also need sections of the beach on the seashore that provide a natural/traditional NPS park-like setting

Access - Villages

- Should be places permanently closed to driving i.e. in front of the villages – safety concern with pedestrians/children
- Villages – imagine they don't want driving next to houses
- Keep beaches closed in front of the villages May 15-Columbus Day
- Seasonal closures only to end of villages – June-Oct 15

Access –fishing

- Access for sport fishing – spits/points
- Keep ORV access open for sport fishing
- Keep Points/Spits open and use for fishing
- Keep areas open for less congested fishing opportunities

Access - other

- Beaches open 24/7
- Keep South Beach open
- Need happy medium – we do not need to close beaches at periods and beaches (i.e. Hatteras spit at July 4)
- Need more non-ORV parking – believe in people using the park so they can appreciate the natural resources
- Section that historically had been closed was a good area for folks to use without vehicle and area between Frisco and Hatteras
- Reopen one-way road
- Would be good if one of the spits was closed to provide “wild” experience
- Soundside access off Pole Rd is important

Access - Interdunal roads

- Interdunal roads. If we preserve dunes vegetation mark to provide compliance
- Keep interdunal roads open to allow access during overwash or resource closures
- Keep interdunal roads open.
- Open inland roads – way to get out in case of high tides

Beach driving - speed

- Reduce speed limits 10-15 mph. Slower if birds/turtles in the area
- 25 mph speed limit is too fast. 15 would be better
- Speed limit 15 on beach may help protect species/safer

Beach driving – other

- Improve education for beach/ORV users at ramps – no 2 wheel drive
- Provide air at ramps/ ORV tires
- Better etiquette on beach with driving
- Communicate ethics and ops (air pressure, speed, etc) and law through realtors/rent reps
- Provide air where possible
 - Hoses for rent at bait shops?
 - Identify locations of availability

ECONOMY

Economy

- Consider economic impacts of actions
- Tourism as a whole would do just as well with additional beach driving restrictions
- Likely no net impact to the overall economy
- Several fishing tournaments – big events that add to the economy
- A lot of people come down to beach fish (significantly impacts business as a private campground operator)
- Dare County Chamber of Commerce receipts
 - Only dips were during hurricane
 - Friend reports 5 best days of business were during Cape Point closure
 - Misinformation was given out
- Economic impact of small closures may be exaggerated – people will come regardless
- May have impact on some individuals business but no huge overall impact
- Total ban would have economic impact
- More people will keep coming and visitation will always keep increasing because Hatteras is not developed and has large natural beaches – people come here because they value that and can not get that in other areas
- Hardliners and hardline views for ORV use and development will have a negative impact long term
- Economics ahead of everything is not the way to long-term success

RESOURCE PROTECTION

Resource protection - general

- Consistent protection on temporary closures/size. If variances, explain why
- Smallest protection possible
- Adaptive management strategy on points/spits only
- Protecting species is an important part of park management
- Keep areas open as long as possible and for as much as possible
- Predators, storms cause actual impacts – people don't intentionally stomp nests
- Put fences (sand fence?) around nest – leave beach open
- Due to changes in beach (not as wide as in past), not much habitat here....with increased visitor use (houses, drivers, etc)
- "Unique flora and fauna" mentioned in park legislation; they're to be preserved and protected; recreation is not supposed to impact unique flora and fauna.
- *Building the protected species numbers provides value to this community and should be recognized by community and elected leadership
- Raccoons not "unique" to this park
- Resources should be managed by professionals; can't have non-professionals (= special interest) dictating resource management protocols
- Nature protection is taking a second place to economics and short-sight/short-term use
- Promote longer term protection view
- Fear of loss of value to the seashore if we lose special species
- This being a National Park site, give the area special protections and that includes protection of the species.
- We need to protect pristine places for our children and grandchildren
- Protect area from degradation

Resource protection - birds

- People attract predators and gulls with actions like flipping bait etc., this has effect on birds and the resource – i.e. red fox are a recent predator
- Once bird exhibits mating behavior, then put up resource closure
- AMOY is indigenous, unique – deserves same protection as piping plover
- NPS – CAHA not a rookery – this puts birds at risk – becomes part of a food chain – doing more harm than good
- Support bird protection but should not restrict access
- Should put little cages around plovers until they hatch
- Bird closures should not go to shoreline – do not need water access

Resource protection - Turtles

- Turtles need natural areas to nest.
- Support turtle closures
- Turtle protection working and need water/shoreline access

Resource protection – move nests

- Turtles – less rigid on nest relocation

- Move turtle and bird eggs
- Take nests to a safe place
- Move turtle nests if they might shut down the spits or other popular use areas
- Relocate bird, turtle eggs – or incubate/captive breeding
- Adopt Padre Island turtle plan

LAW ENFORCEMENT & OTHER TOPICS

Law enforcement

- Rangers should interact with visitors and sports fishermen
- Rangers should stay on the beach
- More NPS rangers on beach. Park base increase
- Why doesn't NPS patrol beaches more?
- Why are we paying people to guard the beach? Too much expense for a bird
- Rangers need attitude to want visitors to have a good time, don't see them – feel not welcome
- Need to increase law enforcement staff
- Security and enforcement – not a lot of presence of LE especially in early evening and night – presence is a deterrence
- A little too predictable. How about having 2 per beach – North to South/South to North – keep moving
- Better patrol/enforcement modify behavior so don't have to be overly restrictive
- **Education** and swift enforcement
- Fair enforcement

Other

- Fireworks in villages a concern
- Stop trapping predators. Relocate/don't kill
- Trap nutria – exotic species
- Dumpsters to allow public to have the ability to clean beach and provide better options for solid waste.
- Provide bathrooms on the beach to improve sanitation and keep visitors outside of closures
- Regular beach cleanups by NPS especially after storms. Including rangers
- Have people rewarded for “policing the people”
 - With more signs (“NPS would appreciate your help”)
 - Personal contacts
- Campgrounds should provide recreational vehicles and be open during fall fishing
- Prefers less congested fishing areas
- Limit fisherpeople to 2 rods in water
- Sandy Bay soundside parking needed
- Dogs off leash is a problem
- Loss of vegetation to provide ORV access is probably not good. Grasses are needed to protect the dunes
- Litter – especially party goers

- Education is important re fires, litter