



Off-Road Vehicle Use

The following regulations and conditions of Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) use at Cape Hatteras National Seashore have been established to provide for both visitor enjoyment and protection of park resources. ORV users are responsible for knowing applicable State of North Carolina and Federal laws for vehicle use, visitor safety, and resource protection, etc. Failure to comply with these regulations can result in Federal prosecution; up to \$5000 fine and/or 6 months imprisonment.

REGULATIONS REGARDING LICENSING

REQUIREMENTS AND VEHICLE USE (any law applicable to vehicle use on a paved road in the State of North Carolina also applies to ORV use on any Seashore beach)

- A current driver's license, and valid vehicle registration, insurance, and license plate are required for all vehicles, including ATVs.
- Reckless driving, including cutting circles or needlessly defacing the beach is prohibited.
- Open containers of any type of alcoholic beverage are prohibited in all vehicles on the beach.
- Passengers may not sit on the tailgate, roof, or otherwise stand or hang outside the vehicle. Passengers in truck beds must be seated on the floor with the tailgate closed and children in truck beds must be accompanied by an adult.
- The use of seatbelts is required.
- Vehicle speed regulations are enforced. Speed may not exceed 25 mph, and must be reduced to 15 mph when on beaches in front of villages or within 100 feet of pedestrians, wildlife, and vehicles. Pedestrians have the right-of-way.

REGULATIONS REGARDING RESOURCE PROTECTION AND VISITOR SAFETY

- Enter and leave the beaches only at designated, numbered ramps.
- Driving into areas marked as closed to vehicle use is prohibited. Certain areas of the beach may be posted as closed due to beach narrowness, high seasonal pedestrian use, turtle nesting, bird nesting, etc.
- Do not drive on or between beach dunes, except on marked ORV routes.
- Drive only on that portion of the beach which lies between the foot of the dunes and the ocean.
- ORV use on the soundside (west) of NC Hwy 12 is limited to marked ORV routes only.
- Driving on vegetated areas is prohibited.
- Pets are required to be on a six (6)-foot leash at all times when in the park, including the beach.
- Camping on the beach is prohibited. Parking on the beach at night is permitted only for those who are actively engaged in a recreation activity.
- Beach fires are allowed on the beach below the high-tide mark and should be at least 100 feet away from any vegetation. Fires may not be left unattended, should be burned to ash, and extinguished with water, not sand.
- Public consumption, display or possession of spirituous liquor or fortified wine is prohibited.

- Litter or waste (including fish parts and dead fish) may not be buried or discarded. It must be disposed of at an established collection station or removed from the area.
- Wastewater (including graywater) from self-contained vehicles must be kept in a holding tank while on the beach and may only be emptied at dump stations.
- Fish (including skates and sharks) caught and not used or kept, should be returned to the water alive.
- Jet skis are illegal in the park and on the beach.
- The use or possession of fireworks or metal detectors is prohibited.
- All other applicable State and Federal laws are enforced. You are responsible for knowing the regulations

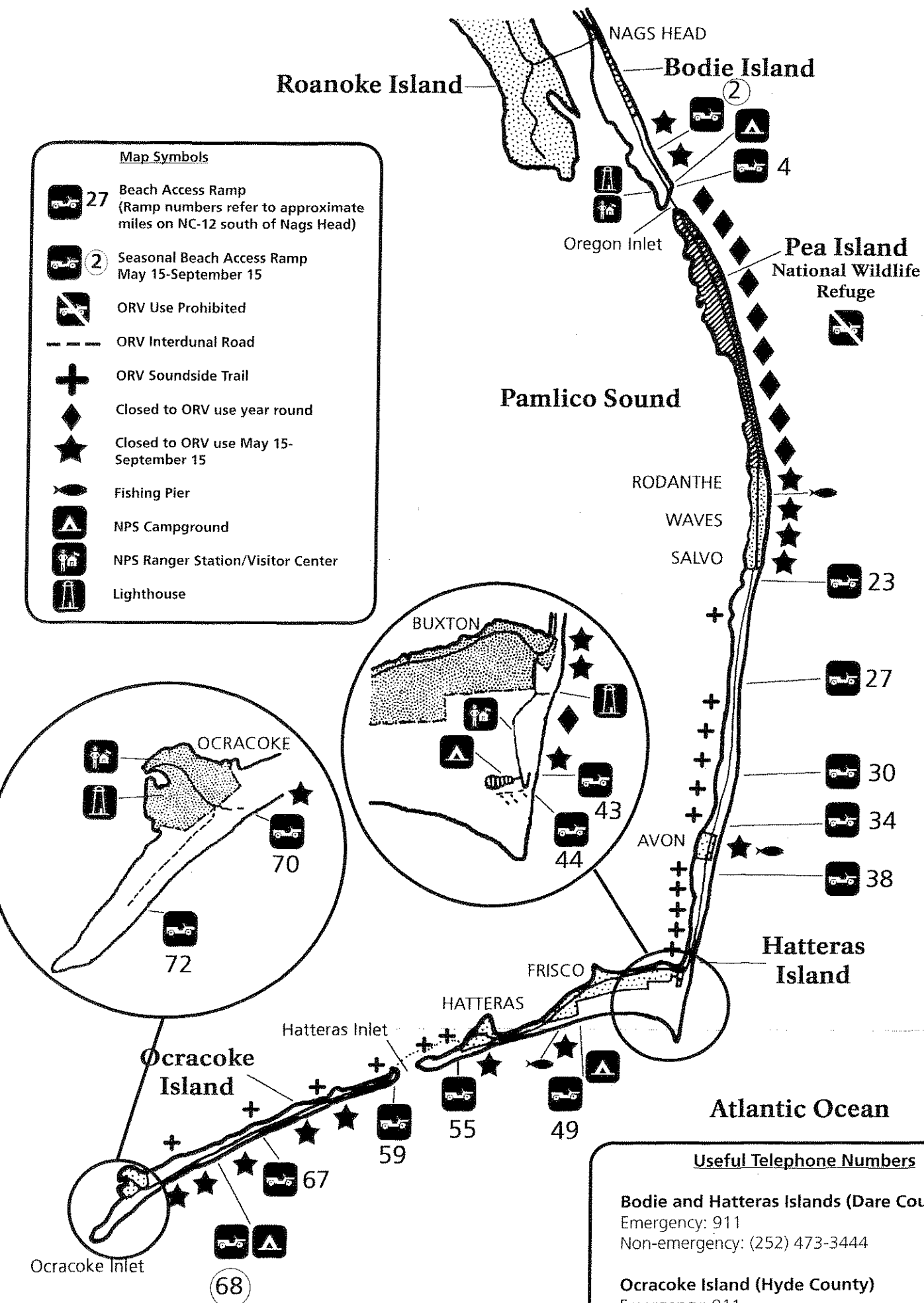
BE PREPARED AND COURTEOUS WHEN DRIVING ON THE BEACH

- Two-wheel drive vehicles, including front-wheel drive vehicles, do not have adequate tire traction for beach driving. Please do not attempt to drive on the beach in a 2-wheel drive vehicle. In all likelihood, you will become stuck and will have to pay for a tow.
- Before entering the beach, check the weather forecast and tide tables. Local tackle shops are a good source of information for current, tide, and beach condition.
- Recommended Equipment Checklist: small shovel, good quality tire pressure gauge, first aid kit, spare tire, jack and jack support (at least 12" x 12" of non-bending steel, 5/8" plywood, or 2" hardwood), tow rope (at least 18' long with a load strength of 5000 lbs or more), litter bags, fire extinguisher, flashlight, tide table.
- Lower pressure in all tires to a recommended 20 lbs; the softer the sand, the lower the pressure needed for better traction. Inflate tires to normal pressure as soon as possible after leaving the beach. Low tire pressure can adversely affect vehicle braking and maneuverability on paved roads.
- Excessive speed is illegal and endangers you, your vehicle, and others. A slow steady rate of speed and correct tire pressure will be more effective than speed. If your wheels start to spin, back up in your tire tracks for several car lengths, then accelerate slowly.
- If stuck, you may need to lower your tire pressure more. Go slowly: sudden moves and acceleration are your worst enemies. Rangers can not winch or pull out your stuck vehicle.
- Do not stop on or block ramps or access points.
- Watch for fishing lines.
- Drive carefully around children - lower your speed to 15 mph. Watch your own children and keep them out of the ORV pathway.
- Some sections of beach can be cut off by high tides. Be careful not to get trapped in these areas. Do not drive into closed areas to bypass a narrow section of beach.
- When possible, drive on the portion of the beach located just below the high tide mark; avoid getting too close to the water.
- Driving through standing water and surf is not recommended. Determine in advance water depth and firmness of the underlying surface. Salt water/spray is highly corrosive and can ruin your vehicle. Wash your vehicle, both sheet metal and under carriage after each outing.

Cape Hatteras National Seashore Off-Road Vehicle Routes

Revised June 2005

Beaches are subject to closure when they become too narrow.
For updated information check: www.nps.gov/caha/bdriv.htm



Useful Telephone Numbers

Bodie and Hatteras Islands (Dare County)

Emergency: 911
Non-emergency: (252) 473-3444

Ocracoke Island (Hyde County)

Emergency: 911
Non-emergency: (252) 926-3171

National Park Service Headquarters

Non-emergency: (252) 473-2111