



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Cape Cod National Seashore News Release

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT COMPLETED FOR THE CAPE COD NATIONAL SEASHORE FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL

Cape Cod National Seashore Superintendent George Price announced the approval of the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) signaling completion of the Final Environmental Assessment for the Seashore Fire Management Plan. The FONSI culminates over four years of planning in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and NPS Wildland Fire Management Director's Order #18.

Director's Order #18 directed that Cape Cod National Seashore prepare a fire management plan and address the need for adequate funding and staffing to support its fire management program. The plan was designed to guide a program that responds to the park's natural and cultural resource objectives; provides for safety considerations for park visitors, employees, neighbors, and developed facilities; and addresses potential impacts to public and private property adjacent to the park. The environmental assessment was developed in support of the plan and considered the effects on air quality, water quality, health and safety, and natural and cultural resource management objectives. Preparation of the plan and environmental assessment included collaboration with adjacent communities, interest groups, state and federal agencies, and tribal governments.

Fire is a natural and integral part of the ecosystem encompassing Cape Cod National Seashore. A history of fire spanning thousands of years has created a fire-dependent environment on the Outer Cape. Fire acts as a significant force of change to the resources of the Seashore and surrounding non-federal lands. The evolution of efficient fire-detection and fire-suppression technology and increases in barriers to fire spread since the 1940's have resulted in increased fuel loadings within the Seashore's forests and wildland environments. The increase in fuel loading places the Seashore's resources and the Outer Cape's widespread development at risk to devastation by catastrophic fire.

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The NPS preferred alternative, Alternative 2, proposes increasing the use of mechanical treatments and prescribed burning to designated areas within CACO based on wildland-urban interface areas, firefighter safety, and resource management goals and needs. The treatments are anticipated to take place over a cycle of several decades comprising a proposed maximum of 500 treated acres per year for up to a maximum cumulative of 15,000 acres.

The FONSI can be accessed online at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/> or viewed at the Cape Cod National Seashore, 99 Marconi Site Road, Wellfleet, Massachusetts, 02667.

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