

## **Cape Point - Alternative E 11/05/08**

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### **ORV Management Alternative E Site Specific Plan for Cape Point**

#### **GOAL**

- Protect natural resources and maintain some sort of access to Cape Point, to the extent possible, year-round.

#### **DEFINITION OF AREA**

- Cape Point is defined as from Ramp 44 to Ramp 45 (where access route meets the beach).

#### **MEASURES**

- Designate Cape Point as a “restricted access” ORV area from March 15 to August 31. Entire area is closed to ORV use during this period, except for east side access corridor along ocean shoreline to the Point then west to just east of the Salt Pond drainage area (currently approximately 0.2 mile west of the hook). (Exact terminus and configuration of access corridor TBD by NPS Resources Management staff based on an annual habitat assessment).
- Width of access corridor along eastern shoreline to the Point would be up to 100 m at start of the breeding season to allow room for incremental buffer expansions, as needed, as the season progresses.
- As soon as scrapes of any protected bird species occur at less than the prescribed SM2 pedestrian/ORV buffer, restrict access to Cape Point to only ORVs in a “pass through” corridor, with no stopping or disembarking of passengers and no pedestrians in the “pass through” zone. Reduce pass-through zone width as needed for buffer expansions. If/when width is reduced to less than the prescribed SM2 pass-through buffer for nesting/incubation, close the pass-through zone.
- Once scrapes occur and the pass-through zone is implemented, all access is restricted to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7 p.m. until the access corridor fully reopens to ORV and pedestrian access once all chicks have fledged (and, if applicable, two weeks after AMOY chicks have fledged).
- No pets allowed within the Resource Area from March 15 to August 31.
- Stopping, parking, or disembarking passengers, as well as pedestrians and pets would be prohibited in the pass-through zone.
- Once the access corridor, including pass-through zone, is established, it will not be significantly enlarged or relocated to accommodate access, except for minor adjustments that do not affect park resources. The width of the access corridor will be reduced as incremental buffer expansions occur.
- Beginning March 15, follow SM2 monitoring procedures.
- Breeding Behavior/Nesting/Incubation:
  - PIPL: Provide SM2 buffers and monitoring. If breeding adult PIPLs forage outside of the established resource closure(s), adjust buffers as needed to protect foraging sites.
  - AMOY and CWB: Within or along the access corridor, provide SM2 buffers for

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pedestrians/ORVs or, if applicable, for an ORV pass-through for observed breeding and nesting behavior for non-listed species. Expand buffers as described in SM2.

- Unfledged chicks:
  - All Species: Follow prescribed SM2 buffers for unfledged PIPL, AMOY, and CWB chicks. Close access corridor, including pass-through zone, if needed to implement or maintain prescribed SM2 buffers or to protect park resources
  - Once chicks have hatched, allow pedestrian access along ocean shoreline access corridor if possible to maintain SM2 buffers for unfledged chicks of the respective species present.
  - Reopen ORV access corridor when SM2 buffers for unfledged chicks can be maintained for all species present; or reopen ORV use when all chicks have fledged (and 2 weeks after AMOY chicks have fledged).
- NPS retains the right to impose further restrictions than described above if necessary for resource protection.

### **PIPL HABITAT MANAGEMENT**

- In general, rely on natural processes to create and maintain nesting and foraging habitat, except for the following:
  - Contract with researcher(s) to develop a plan to improve habitat and wildlife access to available habitat in the dredge pond area. The objective would be to develop a self-sustaining system to the extent possible that would not be dependent upon heavy duty annual manipulation by the NPS. The most desirable approach would be to create a “system” that connects the dredge pond to the beach environment south of the dredge pond and allows for natural processes such as overwash and fluctuations in water level to set back or slow plant succession and maintain early successional nesting habitat as well as MOSH for foraging. Options could include: modifying the landscape to allow inter-connectivity of the westerly end of the dredge pond with the upper beach south of it; and shaping the landscape to create ephemeral pools on the upper beach that are directly connected to the dredge pond water supply. Part of plan would include adaptive management component to measure and evaluate results of the action.

### **CWB HABITAT MANAGEMENT**

- Conduct annual habitat assessment of Cape Point interior (i.e., west of the access corridor) to determine best available site for targeted CWB nesting habitat enhancement prior to the breeding season, which may include:
  - Improvement of CWB nesting substrate (shell, cobble, etc.) by introducing or relocating shell/cobble and disbursing it across the site.
  - Use CWB decoys and audio-attraction to help establish colony at the targeted site.

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### **ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT**

- Develop adaptive management objectives and conduct monitoring/research to determine effects of management actions described above (access corridor and habitat enhancement). After analysis, modify measures if needed, to meet objectives and improve results.
- Consider research project, with adaptive management component, on the applicability and effectiveness of chick fencing for LETE chicks.

### **INTERDUNAL ROAD(S)**

- The interdunal road system to Salt Pond Road and Ramp 45, and the “by-pass” route by the small Salt Pond would be maintained to provide access to ORV areas. Pull-outs or road widening would be provided where appropriate to provide safe passage.

### **ADDITIONAL OPTIONS FOR ACCESS**

- Develop a pedestrian access route to the dredge pond with suitable nearby parking to facilitate access for bird watching enthusiasts.
- Expand parking near Ramp 43 and provide toilets at an appropriate site nearby. (*The Ramp 43 parking area is subject to overwash and flooding and may not be an appropriate site for toilets.*)
- Increase the width of pavement in the approach to Ramp 44 for airing down.
- Improve the design/construction of Ramp 44 (west of the dune crossing) to increase usability and reliability of the access route during wet or flooded conditions.
- Relocate fish cleaning table and dumpster further away from Resource Area (will address in predator management plan).

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