

Coalition for Beach Access DEIS Assessment

4/13/2010

Coalition Workshop

DEIS Alternatives

1. Non-Action Alternative A – 2007 Interim Plan
 - 2007 Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
 - Superintendent’s Compendium #7
 - Elements from 1978 draft interim ORV management plan
2. Non-Action Alternative B – 2008 Consent Decree
 - Elements from Alternative A
 - Plus additional restrictions required by 2008 Consent Decree
3. Action Alternative C – Seasonal Management
 - High degree of predictability regarding areas available for ORV’s
 - Vehicle free areas based on NPS data gathering of seasonal resource and visitor use characteristics or various areas in the seashore
4. Action Alternative D – Increased Predictability/Simplified Management (Environmentally Preferable Alternative)
 - Maximum predictability of ORV use and ORV-free areas
 - Larger year-around vehicle free areas, year-around pedestrian only areas
5. Action Alternative E – Variable Access and Maximum Management
 - Seasonal flexibility for use in ORV and pedestrian areas
 - Some overnight ORV use at spits and points
 - Where greater access is provided, greater restriction on impacts of sensitive areas
6. Action Alternative F – NPS Preferred Alternative
 - Access similar to Alternative E
 - Different allowable times and dates for ORV use

Coalition Workshop

WHY Comment on the DEIS? The DEIS is the basis for the Final Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) due by the end of 2010

- **The FEIS will govern the future management of:**
 - Off-Road Vehicle use
 - Pedestrian use
 - Vehicle free area designation
 - Bird management buffer zone designation
 - Bird and turtle closures – size and duration
 - Vehicle permitting system
 - Building and placement of additional parking areas
 - Building and location of additional ramps
 - Night time driving
 - Bird habitat restoration
 - Commercial fishing within the seashore
- **The FEIS will :**
 - Directly impact the future economic health of the Outer Banks
 - Define the management of the Seashore of the nex 10-15 years
 - Directly affect the traditional, historica, and cultural uses of the Outer Banks
 - Determine the quality of life of the residents of Ocracoke and Hatteras Islands

Coalition for Beach Access DEIS Assessment

- Pedestrian/ORV Routes - Most Restrictive Ever
- Closures Due to Birds - Most Restrictive Ever
- Closures Due to Turtles - Most Restrictive Ever
- Night Driving - Most Restrictive Ever
- Pet Activities - Most Restrictive Ever
- Benefits to Resources - Negligible
- Impairment to Visitor Experience - Major
- Impairment to Local Economy - Major

Routes and Areas

- **Alternative F restrictions far exceed those under the Consent Decree, the Interim Management Strategy, and the de facto ORV plan previously in place under Superintendent's Order #7**
- **NPS: "Visitor experience could be affected by conflicts between motorized and non-motorized recreation users." (p. vi)**
 - Why has NPS never made public a list of reported incidents?
 - In 10 years, only 1 minor incident involving a stuck vehicle and a pedestrian was disclosed. The driver was not blamed by those involved, nor was he charged. (p. 268)
- **NPS: "Because it is not administered by the NPS, the seashore cannot direct the visitor use at Pea Island NWR." (p. 1)**
 - Why does NPS refuse to acknowledge that Pea Island is a prime, pedestrian-only area for visitors to the seashore and overstate the need for more ORV free areas?
- **NPS: "Even with resource closures in place, protected species are still at risk [from pedestrians and ORVs]." (p. 210)**
 - No Piping Plover deaths have been attributed to ORVs.
 - ORV violations continue to decrease as signage and education improve.
 - Pedestrian violations are much more significant than ORV violations.

Routes and Areas - continued

- **NPS: “Carrying capacity would be a ‘peak use limit’ determined for all areas based on the linear feet of beachfront...” (p. xxiv)**
 - Why is capacity more restrictive on Bodie Island and Ocracoke than at Cape Point? (p. xxiv)
 - Bodie Island, Ocracoke - 260 vehicles per mile
 - Cape Point – 400 vehicles per mile
 - Why do ORV counts provided for Memorial Day and July 4, 2009 which state: “ramp 4:includes Bodie Island Spit” and “ramp 43 to ramp 49:includes Cape Point” fail to recognize Bodie Island Spit and Cape Point were closed to ORV access on these dates due to resource protection closures, which thereby increased ORV congestion at ramps 4, 43, 44, and 49? (p. 265)
 - Why are buffers and closures administered such that more people are forced into smaller areas, potentially resulting in more resource impairment and diminished visitor experience?
- **NPS: Shorter Off-Season ORV access on South-facing Villages (p. xix)**
 - Why are Frisco, Hatteras and Ocracoke Villages closures to ORV access longer than the traditional May 15 to September 15 period, even though seasonal visitor statistics are similar for all villages? (p. 23)

Routes and Areas - continued

- **NPS: “ORVs have long served as a primary form of access for many portions of the beach in the seashore, and continue to be the most practical means of access and parking for many visitors.” (p. 1)**
 - Pedestrian only areas discriminate against individuals with limited mobility due to age or physical impairments, families with small children, and those wishing to engage in activities requiring recreational equipment.
 - Why will Special Use permits to allow the transportation of disabled visitors to the village beaches require the vehicle to be returned to the street, creating unnecessary hardships and risks in the event of emergencies? (p. 58)
- **Other**
 - Why does Alternative F continue to ignore the longstanding need for a soundside access ramp on Bodie Island? (p. 263)
 - The relocation Ramp 2 to 0.5 miles south of Coquina Beach is financially irresponsible. This money would be much better spent to enlarge the parking lot and provide pedestrian and handicapped accessible ramps to the beach at Ramp 1 since it will be closed to ORV use to increase the “Pedestrian Only” area. (p. 61)

Routes and Areas - continued

OCEANSIDE ACCESS				
Red background = Villages Blue = Species Mgt Areas		Alternative F – NPS Preferred	Coalition Position	Comments on Coalition Position
DEIS – Miles closed to ORV		16	5.0	Access includes all oceanfront and mileage at spits
Pea Island – closed to ORV		Not Recognized	15	Access includes all oceanfront mileage, not inter-dunal roads
DEIS – Seasonal ORV		23 *	17.1	
DEIS – ORV Year Round		29 *	46.4	
Total Miles		68	83.5	Total mile difference is result of NPS not counting Pea Island
Notes				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed/Open refers to ORV access. • Open areas are subject to resource and safety closures • ML-1 = larger, longer buffers • ML-2 = smaller buffers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal ORV closure details total 21.8 miles, not 23 miles • ORV year round details total 30.2 miles, not 29 miles • ORV open year round details include 3.3 miles for Pole Rd, cable crossing, and Spur Road at Hatteras Inlet • Closed to ORV details do not acknowledge 1.7 oceanfront miles between Ramp 55 and end of Spit • ORV year round includes 4.0 miles with expected limited access (Cape Point 1.0 & South Point 3.0 miles) • 4 miles of "Floating" closures will also be applied within year round areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excluding Pea Island, the Coalition accounts for 68.5 miles of Oceanside access • Coalition does not recognize inter-dunal roads as part of Oceanside access • Coalition recognizes spit beaches as Oceanside • Coalition position is that village closures should extend from village boundary to village boundary 	
Location	Miles			
Ramp 1 to north end of Coquina	0.9	Closed	Closed May 15 to Sep 15	0.9 miles closed seasonally
North end of Coquina to 0.5 mile south of Coquina	0.8	Closed	Closed May 15 to Sep 15	Ramp 2 relocated 0.5 miles south of Coquina Beach is unnecessary (0.3 miles closed seasonally)
0.5 miles south of Coquina to 0.2 mile south of Ramp 4	2.1	Open	Open	2.3 miles open
0.2 mile south of Ramp 4 to Oregon Inlet/Bait Pond	1.9	(ML-2) Closed Mar 15 to Jul 31 or, 2 wks after fledged Pre-nest ped corridor	Open	2.6 miles open
Pea Island Natl Wildlife Refuge		15 miles not recognized by NPS	Closed	15 miles pedestrian access only – ORV's not allowed
Villages of RWS to Ramp 23	5.3	Closed May 15 to Sep 15	Closed May 15 to Sep 15	
Ramp 23 to Ramp 27	4.3	Open 1.5 mile "Float" non/orv here or 2 areas below	Open	Floating closure of 1.5 miles is not warranted
Ramp 27 to Ramp 30	2.2	Closed (ML-1)	Open	(Same as above)
Ramp 30 to new Ramp 32.5	2.5	Open 1.5 mile "Float" non/orv here or above/below	Open	(Same as above)

Routes and Areas - continued

New Ramp 32.5 to Ramp 34	1.8	(ML-1) Closed Mar 15 to Jul 31 or 2 wks after fledged 1.5 mile "Float" non/orv here or above	Open	Seasonal closure is not required
Avon Village Ramp 34 to Ramp 38	3.9	Closed May 15 to Sep 15	Closed May 15 to Sep 15	3.8 miles Closed Seasonally
Ramp 38 to 1.7 miles south (Haulover)	1.7	Open	Open	2.0 miles Open
1.7 miles S of 38 (Haulover) to Buxton Line	2.0	Closed (ML-1)	Open 0.6 close May15/Sep15	1.7 miles Open Seasonally
Buxton Village Beach to 0.4 mile north of Ramp 43	1.9	Closed	1.0 = Closed	0.6 miles Closed Seasonally 1.0 miles Closed year round
0.4 mile north of Ramp 43 to Ramp 43	0.4	Open	Open	0.7 Open, north of 43 to Ramp 43
Ramp 43 to 0.2 mile south of Ramp 44	0.6	Open	Open	
0.2 mile S of Ramp 44 to Cape Pt to 0.2 mile west of the hook	1.0	Open with limited access Mar15 to Jul 31 Pre-nest ORV corridor (ML-2)	Open	
0.2 mile west of the hook to Ramp 45	1.2	(ML-1) Closed Mar 15 to Jul 31	Open	
Ramp 45 to new Ramp 47	1.7	(ML-1) Closed Mar 15 to Jul 31 1.5 mile "Float" non/orv here or below	Open	Floating closure of 1.5 miles is not warranted
new Ramp 47 to Ramp 49 (Frisco Campground)	1.7	Open 1.5 mile "Float" non/orv here or area above	Open	Floating closure of 1.5 miles is not warranted
Ramp 49 to east Frisco boundary	1.2	Open	Open	
Frisco Village Beach (east to west boundary)	1.1	Closed Mar 1 to Nov 30	Closed May 15 to Sep 15	For consistency, seasonal village closures should be May 15 to Sep 15
Frisco Day Use (W Frisco Boundary) to E Hatteras village	1.4	Closed	Closed	
Hatteras Village Beach East boundary to Ramp 55	2.2	Closed Mar 1 to Nov 30	Closed May 15 to Sep 15	For consistency, seasonal village closures should be May 15 to Sep 15
Ramp 55 along ocean to 0.2 mile SW of bone road	1.8	Open	Open	
Pole Rd from NC12 past cable crossing access to Spur Rd.	2.3	Open	Open	Inter-dunal roads that are not oceanfront
Cable crossing along sound shoreline to Spur Rd.	0.8	Open	Open	Inter-dunal roads that are not oceanfront
Spur Rd along sound shoreline to Hatteras Inlet	0.2	Open Pedestrian access to "rip"	Open	Inter-dunal roads that are not oceanfront
Shoreline from 0.2 mile SW Bone Rd (Ft Clark Spur) to Inlet	1.0	Closed (ML-1)	Open	Should be 3.1 miles, Bone Rd. to rip at Hatteras Inlet
Ocracoke Inlet to 0.25 mile NE of Ramp 59	1.1	Closed (ML-1)	To mid point – Closed Remainder – Open	
0.25 mile NE of Ramp 59 to 0.25 mile SW of Ramp 59	0.5	Open	Open	
0.25 mile SW Ramp 59 to new 62 at 3.0 miles NE of Pony Pen	2.4	Closed	Open	
New Ramp 62 to new Ramp 64 at 1.0 mile NE of Pony Pen	2.0	Open	Open	
New 64 at 1.0 mile NE Pony Pen to 0.75 mile NE of Ramp 67	2.3	Closed	Open	
0.75 mile NE of Ramp 67 to 0.5 mile NE of Ramp 68	1.4	Open	Open	

Routes and Areas - continued

0.5 mile NE of Ramp 68 to 0.5 SW of Ramp 68 (Campground)	1.0	Closed Apr 1 to Oct 31	Closed May 15 to Sep 15	NPS seasonal closures dates are inconsistent
0.5 mile SW of Ramp 68 to 1.2 mile NE of Ramp 70	0.9	(ML-1) Closed Mar 15 to Oct 31	Closed May 15 to Sep 15	NPS seasonal closures dates are inconsistent
1.2 miles NE of Ramp 70 to 0.5 mile NE of 70 (day use area)	0.8	Closed Apr 1 to Oct 31	Closed May 15 to Sep 15	NPS seasonal closures dates are inconsistent
0.5 mile NE of Ramp 70 to 0.5 mile SW of Ramp 72	2.7	Open	Open	
0.5 mile SW of Ramp 72 to Inlet	3.0	(ML-2) Open - limited access Mar 15-Jul 31 Pre-nest ORV corridor 1.0 mile "float" non/orv	Open	Inlet continues until it curves back to the northeast
INTERDUNAL ROAD ACCESS				
Inter-dunal Rd Ramp 4 to Bait Pond		Pedestrian only	Open (New)	
Inter-dunal Rd Ramp 44 to Ramp 49		Open	Open	With access from Inter-dunal Road to beachfront at Ramps 45, 47, 48, 49
Inter-dunal Rd Shirley's Lane		Open	Open	
Inter-dunal Rd Ocracoke South Point		Seasonally Open	Open	Maintain soundside access as indicated on Alternative F Map p.181
SOUNDSIDE ACCESS				
Bodie Island		Closed to the public Open only to members of the private Off Island Hunt Club	Open	NPS provides no soundside access on Bodie Island. Develop an ORV/handicapped accessible soundside access (northernmost soundside access is currently 28 miles south of Whalebone Info Center at the Salvo day use area)
Hatteras Island		Existing ramps would be designated as ORV routes and would remain open with sufficient maintenance to provide clear passage. (page 103)	Open	Salvo Day Use # 46 #48 Little Kinnaeket 1 Little Kinnaeket 2 Little Kinnaeket 3 #52 #53 #54 #57 #58 Haulover #59 #60 Coast Guard Station Pole Road Cable Crossing Spur Road
Ocracoke Island		Existing ramps would be designated as ORV routes and would remain open with sufficient maintenance to provide clear passage. (page 103)	Open	Borrow Pit Road Cockarat Creek Quark Hammock Scrag Cedar Road Hammock Hills Dump Station Road Ocracoke Inlet #1 (Shirley Lane) Ocracoke Inlet #2 Ocracoke Inlet #3

Closures Due to Birds

- **Restrictive Species Management Areas (p. 468)**
 - **NPS:** Established based on annual habitat assessment.
 - **NPS:** Manage each SMA using ML1 or ML2 procedures.
 - **NPS:** ML1 – No pedestrian or ORV access during entire breeding season
 - **NPS:** ML2 – pedestrian only corridor thru SMA at Bodie Island Spit
 - **NPS:** ML2 -- pedestrian & ORV corridor thru SMA at Cape Point, South Point
 - **Coalition:** ML1 is overly restrictive. Pedestrian and ORV corridors or bypasses should be provided thru, around or below high tide line in all SMAs during entire breeding & nesting season (within guidelines) to maintain access.
- **Limited Pedestrian and ORV Corridors (p. 468)**
 - **NPS:** Only recognized in ML2 managed SMAs
 - **NPS:** SMA management reverts to standard buffers when **bird breeding activity first observed**
 - **Coalition:** Pedestrian and ORV corridors or bypasses should be provided thru, around or below high tide line in all SMAs during entire breeding season to maintain access.
- **Inflexible Buffers (p. 468)**
 - **NPS:** ML1 – 300 meters for all activities for all state listed species
 - **NPS:** ML2 – buffers vary by species by activity

Closures Due to Birds - continued




- **Large, Inflexible Buffers (p. 121-127)**
 - **NPS:** buffers (i.e closures) will be larger than those endorsed by Coalition
 - **NPS:** buffers do not allow for ORV pass-thru only corridors
 - **Coalition:** buffers use breeding / nesting buffer distances to establish ORV pass through only corridors to ensure beach access is always maintained
 - **Coalition:** Piping Plover unfledged chicks buffer should move with the brood as it relocates to reliable food source, not expanded

Species	Breeding / Nesting Buffer			Unfledged Chicks		
	ML1	ML2	Coalition	ML1	ML2	Coalition
Piping Plover	75m	75m	50m	1,000m	1,000m 300m(ped)	200m
Wilsons Plover	300m	150m	30m	300m	200m	30m
AMOY	300m	150m	Flush + 15m	300m	200m	Flush + 15m
Least Tern	300m	100m	30m	300m	200m	30m
Other Colonial Waterbirds	300m	200m	30m	300m	200m	30m

Closures Due to Birds - continued

- **Pro-Active Adaptive Management (p.124)**
 - NPS should aggressively pursue the adaptive management initiatives identified in the DEIS with an object to **improve** its success with both resource protection **and visitor access**. The initiatives identified include:
 - Vegetation Management
 - Habitat Management
 - Enhanced Predator Management
 - Colonial Waterbird social attraction
 - Piping plover check fledge rate
 - Piping plover chick buffer distance
 - Pass-through buffers during the incubation period
 - Opportunities to implement **less restrictive** closures as a result of the above initiatives should be considered more frequently than the 5-year periodic review process identified in the DEIS.

Closures Due to Birds - continued

- **NPS Resource Management Pedestrian / ORV Closure Policies Address the Least Significant Factor Affecting Nest Survival with Little Chance to Have more than Negligible Impact – for example:**
 - AMOY Nest Failures are Predominately due to Non-human Events
 - Mammalian Predation: 54%  **Highly Significant Impact**
 - Storm / Lunar Tides: 29%  **Highly Significant Impact**
 - Nest Abandonment: 6%
 - Avian Predation: 5%
 - Ghost Crab Predation: 3%
 - Human Interference: 3%  **Insignificant Impact**
- **NPS does not adequately consider locations neighboring the Recreational Area that are part of the same ecosystem.**
 - Villages, dredge and spoil islands, Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge
 - Dredge and spoil islands typically have fewer predators to threaten nesting birds
 - Bird activity within neighboring areas should be tracked and included in target productivity levels. Fluctuations and trends in Recreational Area bird populations should be viewed relative to regional and state experiences – not in isolation.
 - 500 black skimmer nests reported on Pea Island in 2009

Closures Due to Turtles

- **Night Driving Restrictions Penalize Pedestrian and ORV users (p.125)**
 - May 1 – November 15th
- **Excessive DEIS Hatch Window Closures Restrict Access –**
 - **NPS:** Around the clock closure from nest to surf line (p.125)
 - **Pro-Access:** Closure to surf line from 1 hour before sunset until dawn, monitored by Turtle Night Nest Watch Team
 - **NPS:** 105 meters wide (p.125)
 - **Pro-Access:** Closure should be 10 meters square during the day
 - **NPS:** Use U shaped light filter fence to orient hatchlings
 - **Pro-Access:** Use Pea Island style keyhole pattern fence to the surf line at night
- **NPS: “ORV and other recreational use would have long-term major adverse impacts on sea turtles due to the amount of Seashore available for ORV use and by allowing nighttime driving on the beach.” (p. 377)**
 - “Major Adverse” (NPS definition, p.369) events have not occurred at the Recreational Area – Night Driving Restrictions are Not Necessary
 - Nesting females **have not** “been killed”
 - Complete or partial nest lost due to human activity **has not** “occurred frequently”
 - Hatchling disorientation/disruption due to humans **have not** “occurred frequently”
 - Direct hatchling mortality from human activity **has not** “frequently occurred”
 - Pro-active Turtle Night Nest Watch program will insure no ORV impact.

Closures Due to Turtles - continued

- **NPS will not Adopt More Proactive Techniques Used at Other East Coast Locations to Encourage Turtle Nesting Success – WHY?**
 - Captive Rearing (p.86)
 - Routine Nest Relocation (p.86)
 - Hatcheries (p. 87)
- **NPS Inadequately Addresses Environmental Issues More Detrimental to Turtle Recovery Success than ORVs or Pedestrians (p. 392-396)**
 - 38.5% of nests had 0% hatchlings due to weather events. (p. 87, p. 219) – 2009 Loggerhead Recovery Plan calls this catastrophic
 - False crawl statistics do not support theory that light pollution is a significant problem at the Recreational Area. (p.125, p. 219)
 - Predator management and nest enclosure practices encourage ghost crabs which are a primary predator of turtle eggs and hatchlings
- **North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission Relocation Guidelines are Inadequate**
 - Recreational Area and the State have lost 55% and 60% of Leatherback nests respectively over the past 10 years following these guidelines.
 - Use of “average high tide line” (as used in other states) rather than “seaward of debris line marking spring high tide” to identify which nests to relocate leave many nests at risk.

Cultural / Historical Values

The very purpose of the DEIS as set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is to protect and preserve natural and cultural resources in the federal decision making process. In the DEIS, the statement “protect and preserve natural and cultural resources” appears in the first sentence of the first page of the plan, in the Purpose of the Plan section, and numerous times thereafter. Yet, the 800 page document devotes only two paragraphs to analysis of cultural resource issues.

- Why does the DEIS ignore the traditional cultural importance of surf zone access to Outer Banks communities? These published criteria clearly define the traditional use and cultural value of the Outer Banks surf zone.
 - NPS Guidelines state; “A Traditional Cultural Property designation can and should be based on patterns of land use that reflect cultural traditions valued by the long term residents of the local community.”
 - NPS Guidelines state; “A landscape can also constitute Traditional Cultural Property if it is a location where a community has traditionally carried out economic or other cultural practices important in maintaining its historic identity.”

Cultural / Historical Values - continued

- The DEIS describes ORV access as historical in nature (pg. 83) and also both predating the Seashore and as being integral to the public use by both residents and visitors. The document also illustrates and captions historical commercial fishing (pg.18), historical recreational fishing (pgs. 15, 260) and historical general recreational activities (pg. 259). These same traditional cultural activities are featured on the front cover.
- The surf zone has long been not just a location for traditional economic activities such as surf dory seine net fishing but also other cultural activities as well. These include general beach recreation activities, social gatherings, weddings, funerals and hook and line recreational/subsistence fishing. Collectively these activities are components of an unbroken pattern of land use that extend back many generations before the establishment of the Seashore and remain integral to the fabric of the historically unique Outer Banks communities. Further yet, the continuation of this traditional pattern of land use is central to maintaining the historic identity of these same communities.

Why has the NPS failed to appropriately address the traditional cultural value of surf zone access? The NPS failure stands in direct violation of its legal responsibility under Section 106 of the NEPA and the NEPA framework as a whole.

Socioeconomic Analysis

The socioeconomic data and analyses in the DEIS (pg 270-281;561-598) result in misleading and sometimes erroneous conclusions. Critical weaknesses in the analyses pertain to: 1) statistical definition of the Region of Influence (ROI); 2) incomplete visitation/business survey data (p.566); 3) erroneous recreational user data; 4) inflated overall Seashore visitor counts pertaining to beach use; and 5) flawed key assumption concerning the maintenance of access under Alternative F. These flaws are directly manifested in both the Effected Environment and Socioeconomic Impact sections of the DEIS.

Region of Influence (ROI)

- The ROI incorporates the Northern Beach communities, including Southern Shores and Duck. These areas are almost completely disconnected from ORV use and access issues relating to the Seashore
- Inclusion of the Northern Beaches in analysis significantly dilutes estimates of economic impact on the Seashore Villages
- Analysis of economic impact to the Seashore Villages appears to be significantly down played. Emphasis in DEIS is on the ROI-wide or county-wide level impacts
- Nowhere is it clearly addressed that the overwhelming majority of negative impacts will be felt by small businesses in the Seashore Villages rather than by overall economic interests within the greater ROI

Socioeconomic Analysis - continued

Incomplete Data on Visitation/Business Surveys

- Economic analyses in the DEIS do not use data from the first full year of the Consent Decree (2009).
- Many 2008 visitors were either unaware of the scope and breadth of Consent Decree beach closures, or had already made plans/reservations
- Actual business survey data rather than model projections for economic impact for Seashore Villages businesses are not available in DEIS

Socioeconomic Analysis - continued

Overall Visitor Counts

Overall visitor counts appear to include visitors to Fort Raleigh National Historic Site and the Wright Brothers National Memorial.

- A large percentage of these visitors vacation in the Northern Beaches communities and recreate on the non-federal beaches outside of the Seashore.
- Visitors who patronize the Fort Raleigh National Historic Site and the Wright Brothers National Memorial but do not visit the actual seashore areas need to be factored out.

Maintenance of Future Access to Cape Point and South Point Ocracoke

All socioeconomic analyses related to Alternative F are predicated on the assumption that access corridors will remain open for at least an appreciable portion of the visitor high season.

- Under Alternative F, the access corridors will be subject to Resource Closures based on buffers similar or identical to the Consent Decree.
- Unless some predictability of access to Cape Point and South Point Ocracoke can be assured, economic analyses predicated on assumption of access are fundamentally flawed.

Socioeconomic Analysis - continued

Summary

The definition of the Region of Influence (ROI), faulty data on economic activity generated by specific type recreational activity, incomplete visitation/business survey data, inflated overall Seashore visitor counts pertaining to beach use, and flawed key assumptions concerning the maintenance of access under Alternative F, all lead to inaccurate conclusions in the socioeconomic analyses. Specifically, these inaccuracies can be seen as understating the negative socio-economic impact of the Seashore Villages. Further, this negative impact will be absorbed almost entirely by Small Businesses. Neither of these important aspects of the management alternatives are adequately presented in the DEIS.

Other Areas of Interest

- **Pet / Horses Restrictions**
 - DEIS: “...prohibition of pets in the Seashore during bird breeding season including in front of the villages.” (p. 136) = No Pets in public areas – beaches, campgrounds, soundfront, foot trails, park maintained roads - from March 15 – July 31
 - The Coalition position allows pets on 6 foot leashes year-round in all areas open to pedestrians or ORVs.
- **Safety / Administrative / Temporary Closures**
 - DEIS guidelines, other than previously mentioned carrying capacity issues, are consistent with the Coalition position statement.
- **Permits Requirements**
 - DEIS guidelines, other than the implementation of fees and how the moneys collected are used, are consistent with the Coalition position statement.
- **Vehicle Characteristics Requirements / Camping**
 - DEIS guidelines are consistent with the Coalition position statement.
- **Visitor Education**
 - The Coalition endorses a thorough Education Program as a way to increase awareness of policies important to the successful accomplishment of both recreational and resource protection objectives.

Other Areas of Interest

- **Predator Management**
 - **NPS:** Current policy of selective species eradication will continue.
 - **NPS:** Adaptive management initiative may review effectiveness of some policies in the future (p. 124)
 - **Coalition:** NPS should more aggressively consider experiences at other East Coast locations in the development of an overall, integrated predator management policy.
- **WHY - Is it ok to tamper with nature in some cases but not others?**
 - The adaptive management decisions reflected in the DEIS show a clear bias to implement actions that will adversely affect the visitor experience but to avoid actions that would benefit both natural resources and visitors.
 - **NPS:** OK to replace South Point wetlands with parking area because beach will be closed to ORVs.
 - **NPS:** OK to relocate Turtle Nests when storms are imminent, but not before (coincidentally the high risk nests are in prime ORV corridors).
 - **NPS:** OK to set aside areas of beach to replant the “extirpated” seabeach amaranth, but not OK to clear vegetation at Cape Point ponds to create more favorable piping plover habitat (outside of the prime ORV corridor).
 - **NPS:** OK to kill predators (greatest risk to birds and turtles), not OK to drive on the beach at night (deterrent to predators, low risk to turtles and birds).

Other Observations and Questions

- **WHY - Was Alternative F attributed to the Advisory Committee?**
 - The rules, policies and procedures in Alternative F were not reviewed nor approved by the participants within the Reg–Neg process. The Coalition members that participated in Reg-Neg do not endorse the DEIS plan.
- **WHY - Is around the clock law enforcement an issue?**
 - If access restrictions are due to violations, those responsible should be held accountable. The law-abiding public should not be penalized as they have under the Consent Decree.
- **WHY - Does the baseline not recognize the de facto plan in place in the years leading up to interim plan, unofficial only because of bureaucratic failures?**
 - The cumulative impact of the preferred alternative policies on the visitor experience and the regional economy, when assessed relative to the pre-interim plan period, will be much more adverse than the DEIS acknowledges.

Making Comment to the NPS

CAPE HATTERAS NATIONAL SEASHORE RECREATIONAL AREA DRAFT OFF-ROAD VEHICLE MANAGEMENT PLAN/ ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (DEIS)

Public Comment Period ends at Midnight on May 11th

An electronic copy of the Coalition for Beach Access *ORV Access Environmental Impact Position Statement* can be downloaded at:

www.obpa-nc.org/position/statement.pdf

An electronic copy of the Coalition for Beach Access *DEIS Assessment* can be downloaded at:

www.obpa-nc.org/position/assessment.pdf

An electronic copy of NPS DEIS can be downloaded at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=358&projectId=10641&documentID=32596>

Three (3) options are available to respond:

- 1. Comments may be submitted electronically on-line at the Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website at:**
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/caha>
 - click on: Open for Comment,
 - click on: Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan/EIS,
 - click on: Comment on Document.
- 2. Written comments, i.e. letters, may be sent via the US Postal Service to:**
Mike Murray, Superintendent
Cape Hatteras National Seashore
1401 National Park Drive
Manteo, NC 27954
- 3. Oral comments can be made at any and/or all public meetings as scheduled:**
 - Ocracoke, NC – Mon, Apr 26, 9-11 am, Ocracoke School, 1 School House Road
 - Buxton, NC – Mon, Apr 26, 5-8 pm, Cape Hatteras Secondary School, Hwy 12
 - KDH, NC – Tue, Apr 27, 6-8 pm, Wright Brothers Pavilion, M.P. 7-1/2
 - Raleigh, NC – Wed, Apr 28, 6-8 pm, McKimmon Conf. Ctr. @ NC State Univ., 1101 Gorman St.
 - Hampton, VA – Thurs, Apr 29, 6-8 pm, Holiday Inn & Conf. Ctr., 1815 W. Mercury Blvd.

Suggestions on How to Comment Effectively

- *All comments should reference what is contained in the document in the order and sequence presented.*
- *All comments should start with “I agree” or “I disagree” and then describe what it is you agree or disagree with and why. It is very appropriate to suggest items left out of the document.*
- *Be short and specific.*
- *Arbitrary statements or philosophical arguments do nothing but lessen the impact and viability of your other and probably more substantive comments.*
- *Comments should be complete and include full sections, not just sections with which a commenter only disagrees. Remember the government employee in the cubicle reading your document, and think about what you do when someone does nothing but complain. Most people tune them out.*

Suggestions on How to Comment Effectively

- *The US Government is presenting this document to the public for comment on this document and what is contained in this document. To spend time on items not relevant to the document will only serve to lessen the impact of your comments.*
- *You may submit multiple written comments either via mail or on-line at the NPS “PEPC” web site. If, after you comment, you remember or read about something else of concern, you are free to submit as many comments as you like.*
- *Keep in mind that a nameless government employee will be in a room reading your written comments and deciding if what you wrote gets into or is left out of the summary.*

**ALL COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED AT NPS NO LATER THAN
MIDNIGHT, MAY 11, 2010**

The image shows a screenshot of the Adobe Reader application window. The title bar reads "HA_ORV_DEIS_part1_March2010[1].pdf - Adobe Reader". The menu bar includes "Edit", "View", "Document", "Tools", "Window", and "Help". The toolbar shows the current page is 1 of 258, zoomed to 47.5%, and the search field contains "95". The main content area displays a cover page for "Cape Hatteras National Seashore" with a photograph of people on a beach and a lighthouse. The text on the cover includes "National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior", "Cape Hatteras National Seashore", "OFF-ROAD VEHICLE MANAGEMENT PLAN / ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT", and "MARCH 2010".

Adobe Reader Find feature searches all document text for value entered here.

To find physical page, enter desired page number with a space on each side,

e.g. " 95 " (don't type quotations)

The spaces help avoid finding text that might include the page number value.

e.g. "2,395,000"

Adobe Reader Page feature locates page by physical location in the file, NOT by the number printed on the page, so it's not very useful for this document.

DEIS-Part 1.pdf contains cover sheet thru page 182

DEIS-Part 2.pdf. contains pages 183 – Appendix page B-6