

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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PUBLIC HEARING  
THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2007

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AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION BUILDING  
2000 FLORIDA AVENUE, N.W.  
ROOM A  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20009

I N D E X

Mike Murray, National Park Service ..... 3

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

7:00 P.M.

MR. MURRAY: Good evening. Thank  
you for coming tonight. I'm Mike Murray,  
the superintendent of Cape Hatteras National

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Seashore. In case you weren't sure, the meeting tonight is a public scoping meeting for the off-road vehicle management plan and environmental impact statement at the National Seashore. We have a brief presentation. It's generally not a Q & A presentation, but afterwards we'll have an opportunity for public comment.

And then we'll have informal open house after that, if you do have questions and want to talk with myself, or our chief of natural resources, Thayer Broli, is in the room. Our chief ranger, Nora Martinez, is also in the back of the room. The purpose and objectives of a public scoping meeting primarily are to receive your comments, to explain the planning process and time line, and note relation of this National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, planning process to the proposed negotiated rule making.

We're going to share information with you from our internal scoping process. That's the Park Service sort of talking among ourselves, developing some early ideas

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and concepts about the purpose, need, objectives, issues, preliminary alternative concepts and elements. To give you a little bit of an idea how this process will flow, and hopefully you can read it, but I'll try to help you out. At the very top is internal scoping. That's to identify purpose, needs, and objectives. Identify issues, preliminary alternative concepts and elements.

The phase we're in now is public scoping. December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006, a notice of intent was published in the Federal Register announcing to develop the no off-road vehicle management plan and environmental impact statement. And that opened the public scoping period. We'll remind you of the dates a couple times, but for your comments to be most useful to us, we would like to receive them by March 16<sup>th</sup>.

This public scoping is to solicit public input, especially on issues and ideas for alternatives. After that, we'll go to work on creating alternatives. And that will occur by the Park Service reviewing

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comments received from the public and other agencies. Part of the goal will be to develop a full range of reasonable alternatives, and that will include the consensus alternative, we hope, from the negotiated rule making committee. I'll tell you a little bit more about that in a few minutes.

And so this phase will occur sometime in 2007 into 2008. After that, the Park Service will analyze the impacts of alternatives on the affected environment, and that includes impacts on socio-economics, impacts on visitor experience, and impacts on park natural and cultural resources. After that analysis is done, we will prepare a draft environmental impact statement, and also undertake a consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

And remember, I'm talking right now about the NEPA process, the plan, and the EIS. Parallel to that and kind of working along it at the same time will be the negotiated rule making process to be working on proposed regulation, identifying

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the details that may go into the preferred alternative. So during this, preparing the draft, EIS and consultation, we'll revise alternatives as needed to reduce or mitigate adverse impacts and prepare the EIS. And then we'll also consult Fish and Wildlife Service on the preferred alternative, which is a requirement under the Endangered Species Act.

Sometime along about in 2008 or '09, a draft plan and EIS will be distributed for public review and comment, for a minimum of sixty day public review period. And sometime along in there, we'll hopefully also have a proposed regulation. It will be published in the Federal Register for a minimum of a sixty day public comment period as well.

So ultimately there's two pieces that we need, is the plan and EIS, is one piece. And then the regulation is the other piece. Then we're hoping by winter of 2009 we'll have a decision. The Park Service will analyze all the comments on the draft EIS and on the proposed regulation. And

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we'll prepare a final EIS and a record of decision on the NEPA document, which the regional director is the approval authority. And then the final regulation will be published in the Federal Register sometime after the record of decision.

The National Environmental Policy Act planning process - this is kind of an overview of how the planning process works. First step is to develop the purpose, need, and objectives for taking action, and to identify issues. And you can find information on this in the fliers that were available at the desk coming, and also on these poster boards. Purpose of action. The purpose is a broad goal statement. It describes what the Park Service intends to accomplish by taking action.

In this case, the purpose of this plan and EIS is to develop regulations and procedures that manage off-road vehicle use and access at the National Seashore, to protect and preserve natural and cultural resources and natural processes. To provide a variety of appropriate visitor use

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experiences while minimizing conflicts among various users and uses, and to promote the safety of all visitors.

The need for action is the proper framing of the question, why take action now? It's a because statement. Action is needed in this case now because the seashore must comply with executive orders 11644 and 11989 regarding ORV use. And with National Park Service laws, regulations, such as Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 4.10, and policies to minimize impacts to park resources and values.

Action is needed now because the lack of an approved plan has led, over time, to inconsistent management of off-road vehicle use, user conflicts and safety concerns. Action is needed now because off-road vehicle use could damage natural and cultural resources. Action is needed now because the seashore needs to provide for protected species management in relation to off-road vehicle and other uses, to replace the Interim Protected Species Management Strategy and

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Environmental Assessment, and the associated biological opinion.

In January of 2006, we issued an interim strategy environmental assessment, and the intent of that is to provide guidance until this long-term plan can be developed. Objectives are goals that must be achieved to a large degree for the plan to be considered a success. There are various objectives for this off-road vehicle management plan. One is management methodology objectives. One is to identify criteria to designate all ORV-use areas and routes.

Another management methodology objective is to establish off-road vehicle management practices and procedures that are able to adapt to changes in the seashore's dynamic, physical, and biological environment. Another objective is to establish a civic engagement component for off-road vehicle management. Another objective is to establish procedures for prompt and efficient public notification of beach access status. Including any

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temporary ORV-use restrictions for such things as ramp maintenance, resource and public safety closures, storms, events, etcetera.

Another objective is to build stewardship through public awareness and understanding of the National Park Service Resource Management and Visitor Use Policies and Responsibilities as they pertain to the seashore and off-road vehicle management. Visitor use and experience objectives include, manage ORV-use to allow for a variety of appropriate visitor experiences, to minimize conflicts between ORV-use and other uses. Another visitor use and experience objectives include, insure that off-road vehicle operators are informed about the rules and regulations regarding ORV-use at the seashore and to ensure that ORV management promotes the safety of all visitors.

Park resource objectives. For threatened, endangered, and other protected species, such as state-listed species in their habitats, we want to minimize adverse

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impacts related to ORV-use as required by laws and policies, such as the Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, National Park Service laws, and management policies. We want to minimize adverse impacts to native plant species related to ORV-use. Minimize adverse impacts to wildlife species and their habitats that could be related to ORV-use. Protect cultural resources, such as shipwrecks, archaeological sites, and cultural landscapes, from adverse impacts that could be related to ORV-use.

Park operations objective. We want to identify operational needs and cost to fully implement an ORV management plan. Issues. In Park Service NEPA planning process, issues are environmental, social, and economic problems and effects that may or may not occur if actions are implemented or continue to be implemented. During this internal scoping, we've identified possible issues that can be considered as we proceed into the planning process.

Visitor use and experience. How

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we manage and allow the use of ORVs could result in user conflicts and adverse and beneficial changes to visitor use and experience. The economy of local communities, management and use of ORVs could effect the local economy and have a subsequent effect on the regional economy. Management and use of ORVs could effect access for commercial fishing. Management and use of ORVs could impact federally threatened or endangered species in their habitat on the beach and sound-side of the seashore.

Conflicts between listed-species and ORV-use could create direct or indirect losses to the species. Management and use of ORVs at the seashore may impact habitat for American oystercatcher and other locally sensitive species, as well as species listed by the state of North Carolina that may be vulnerable to such use. Management and use of ORVs could impact seashore soundscapes, as vehicular noise as well as recreational uses associated with it may introduce an element to the soundscape that is

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incompatible with other recreational uses.

Water resources. Management and use of ORVs has the potential water quality, marine and estuarine resources and wetlands. Coastal varia ecosystem. Management and use of ORVs may be impacted by natural processes, such as hurricanes and other storm events that change the landscape of the seashore in the area available for ORV use. Over time, high levels of ORV-use could have a cumulative effect on ecosystem processes.

Alternatives. A full range of reasonable alternatives is required in an environmental impact statement. Where purpose and need define the problems, alternatives are different ways to solve them. In other words, they meet the purpose and objectives while resolving the needs and the issues. They're all within stated constraints, such as NPS policies and legal mandates. Alternatives provide real options for decision makers. They require creative approach. They're based on environmental, rather than technical, logistic, or

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economical differences. They must be reasonable.

Reasonable alternatives are economically feasible, display common sense, meet the objectives of taking action. They're technically feasible, not necessarily the cheapest or the easiest solution. How alternatives are developed. A variety of sources of information and inputs are considered in the development of the alternatives. At the top of the circle, at this phase of the process, is receiving public input. And once we have a negotiated rule making committee formally appointed, they will be providing input on possible alternatives.

Federal laws are considered as we develop alternatives, as well as National Park Service policies. Science, as well as practical knowledge. And all this information is considered as we move forward into developing a range of alternatives. Are all alternatives reasonable? There are many alternatives that could be analyzed in this process. We choose a few that cover

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the full spectrum of options. It's the range of alternatives that's most important rather than the number.

We don't want to have ten alternatives that are all a slight variation of the same theme. It's more important to have alternatives that represent a wide range of reasonable options. Alternatives must include a no-action option, which means current management is continued through the life of the plan. At this point, we're finishing up the interim strategy. We have not released the final decision document yet. We hope to in the next few weeks.

By the time in the EIS process that we will have developed alternatives could be a year or two down the line. So one possibility is that the interim strategy might be considered the no-action alternative. And that's something you certainly can comment on at this stage, whether that should be the case or not. During internal scoping we developed preliminary alternative concepts, and these are simply ideas for discussion that may or

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may not be developed into alternatives.

You can find them in the newsletter handout, as well as on the posters around the room. They include concepts such as a seashore zoning system for different uses, a percentage system guaranteeing a certain percentage of the seashore would be open at any one time for off-road vehicle driving, and a number of possible elements that could be used in one more alternatives, such as speed limits, designated routes, time of day restrictions, etcetera.

And at this point, these are very vague and conceptual. It's to give you things to react to, comment on, and provide your suggestions and input. So we really need your ideas for alternative concepts and elements, so that we can proceed to develop a full range of alternatives.

So how to provide comments during this public scoping period. One option is tonight, you can either talk to us informally at one of these poster stations and we can jot down comments on a flip

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chart. You can make formal comments during the meeting. You can comment directly online through the National Park Service Planning, Environment, and Public Comment Website. For this particular park, it would be [parkplanning.nps.gov/caha](http://parkplanning.nps.gov/caha), which is the acronym for Cape Hatteras. And once there, you'll have an opening page and you would choose the off-road vehicle, or ORV management plan EIS project.

And once you enter that, there will be a public comment button you can choose. As a reminder, the comments, to be most useful, should be received by March 16<sup>th</sup>. That Website information as well as the mailing address is also in the newsletter. You can also provide comments in writing by sending them to Superintendent, Outer Banks Group, 1401 National Park Drive, Manteo, North Carolina, 27954.

If you'd like to be on the project mailing list so that you receive numerous updates, press releases when we have reports to be released, or other things

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available, to receive the weekly status reports during the summer, reports from our biotechnicians on the ground, or weekly beach access reports, which identify what areas are closed and why they're closed, as well as what's open. And that's updated weekly so that people coming for a visit have an idea of where they can go and where they might not be able to get to.

So we encourage you to be on our mailing list. We'd appreciate it if you have email. That's a very efficient way for us to send you information. And also LAN mail works as well. Right now we have a very large emailing list for people interested in the subject, and we can keep adding to that to keep you all informed if you're interested.

So that concludes my presentation. Are there any real specific questions about the information I provided? Yes sir?

PARTICIPANT: What's the geographic scope we're talking about? How wide a net is this up and down the Outer

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Banks?

MR. MURRAY: It's specifically for Cape Hatteras National Seashore. At the southern end is the southern tip of Ocracoke Island, and it runs up through portions of Hatteras Island. It does not include the Island National Wildlife Refuge. And then north of Bonner Bridge, north of Borgan inlet section of the national seashore, up to Whalebone Junction. But it's exclusive to lands actively managed the National Park Service at Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

All right, at this point I'm going to turn it over to Jess Commerford. He is with the Louis Berger Group, Park Services contracted with Berger to assist us in the environmental planning of this, and Jess will be the mediator for the public comment period. So thank you very much. I'll be available after the formal comment period if you have any other questions or comments for me. Thank you.

MR. COMMERFORD: So we have two folks who have signed up to speak tonight, so my job's going to be a little easier this

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evening. Having said that, I'm going to go over a few of the ground rules for this, for the official part of the meeting. This is on public record with the reporter, and while a couple of these rules may seem a little ridiculous given the crowd size this evening, I'm going to go through them anyway for the sake of continuity and consistency with the other three meetings that we held down near the park.

We were in Buxton on Monday night, Wright Brothers on Tuesday night, and Raleigh last night. We, not surprisingly, had much larger crowds there. So this is a public comment period, so come up to the microphone when I call your name, if you would please, state your name for the reporter. Please address your comments to the National Park Service. This part of the meeting is not a question and answer format. We've been doing three to five minute limits on the speaking, given the size, we're going to go with a five minute limit tonight.

So we'll time the comments, so please limit your remarks to the five

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minutes. If you brought written remarks or written testimony that you would like entered into the record officially, go ahead and give those to the reporter tonight and she'll add that to the public record if you have supporting materials or remarks that you want entered into the record.

There's no yielding time from one speaker to the next, so the five minute rule applies to everyone who comes up. We will go back to the open house format after this, so we're here until nine o'clock. So we'll go back to the format with the pads before, when we're done. So with that, we'll go ahead and get started. The first person who signed up to speak tonight is Andrew Hawley. And if you'll come up to the microphone and state your name.

MR. HAWLEY: I'm Andrew Hawley, I'm with the Federal Wildlife. I've actually submitted a written copy of my comments to the reporter, so I'm not going to hold everyone up.

MR. COMMERFORD: The second speaker is Carl Onesty.

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MR. ONESTY: Hi, my name is Carl Onesty. I guess I represent an ORV driver and probably represent that segment of the users who use this. As such, I'm glad to see that the Park Service is finally taking the issue in hand and is preparing a formal use plan, and I applaud the efforts that are going forward here. I would like to see, in the information that comes out, some information that puts a scope on the size of the problem that we're trying to deal with.

How many ORVs visit each week? How many trips are made on the beach? What exactly is this problem that we're trying to solve? What damage is occurring? What cultural landscapes are being affected by this? Where are there any reports of excessive noise on the beach? You've raised issues here that I realize are potential problems, but they're issues that I've never heard a complaint about before. So from that viewpoint, I also would like to say that I've been going to the beach, probably twenty, twenty five years.

In that period of time, I've seen

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the number of ORVs rise quite significantly from where they were in the beginning. I recognize that we are loving the beach to death, perhaps is the way we might want to say it. But at the same time, if the beach wasn't there, and access wasn't there, then people like myself wouldn't come to North Carolina.

Thank you.

MR. COMMERTFORD: Thank you. So those are the two folks who signed up. Is there anybody else who came this evening that would wish to speak on record? Yes, sir. Come up and state your name in the mic, if you would please.

MR. AMICK: Good evening. My name is David Amick, and I'm really a pedestrian that has a lot of interest. I've had years and years of enjoyment at Cape Hatteras. And I have to admire -- the Park Service, up to now, really have done a pretty good job. And even though I have not caught too many fish, I can at least try. But I'm concerned - after having probably been down through Cape Hatteras over years, that it's going to

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be such a change that it's going to probably cause us more concern, and so I would appeal that the drivers on the beach and surf fishermen would be very carefully considered.

And even though you must take into account the impact on the environment and all the other things you've listed, no question about that. I guess in summary, I'd plead for a very good case that's going to support the fishing, surf fishermen, that will still want to come there. And I know you'll have to put some kind of constrictions or maybe even a fee, something of that nature, but I think we can live with something like that. But I think, I would hope, that we don't get stoned to death by marshmallows and small things. Thank you very much.

MR. COMMERFORD: Thank you.  
Anyone else? Yes, sir.

MR. SMITH: Good evening. My name is Ken Smith. I prepared a statement which I'll hand to the reporter after I'm finished reading. Cape Hatteras National Seashore

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Enabling Legislation reads in part, "Except for certain portions of the area deemed to be especially adaptable for recreational uses, particularly swimming, boating, sailing, fishing, and other activities of similar nature, which shall be developed for such uses as needed, the set area shall be permanently reserved as a primitive wilderness with no development of the project or plan for the convenience of visitors shall be undertaken which would be incompatible with the preservation of the unique flora and fauna or the physiographic conditions now prevailing in this area."

The beaches of Cape Hatteras are especially adaptable for ORV-use, due to the dynamic nature of weather and sea conditions that prevail along the coast. The development of an ORV plan, and importantly, the implementation of a plan, whether done officially through federal law, or agency policy, is consistent with the intentions of the act. I commend the National Park Service on their recent involvement and demonstrated willingness to work with the

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public in creating alternate access ways to important and popular recreational areas. Namely, the Cape Point and Oregon inland areas.

Open access to these popular recreational areas are extremely important to the public and local economy, and are a primary reason why many people vacation at the park each year. Many statements made by the defenders of wildlife in their lawsuit against the National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service, submitted in December 2006, are falsely clouded. Contrary to their misguided legal interpretation of applicable laws and policy, Cape Hatteras National Seashore was not intended to be permanently reserved as a primitive wilderness in all areas.

In a similar attempt to misguide public opinions about ORV users, an article published in the Audubon Society's January-February 2007 issue, takes things a bit further, by labeling anyone who finds benefit, enjoyment with an ORV at Cape Hatteras National Seashore as a "beach bum."

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Did the author and editor both fail to recognize that people can be society members and ORV-users too? The point of the matter is that these organizations, while hiding behind the credibility of a righteous name, repeatedly demonstrate a propensity to disrupt and hinder positive action and movement related to ORV issues, and are now attempting to disrupt the rule making process.

I consider myself a defender of wildlife, but more importantly, I am a defender of human life, human enjoyment, and defender of a liberty, justice, and the pursuit of happiness. Importantly on this matter, I am a defender of the intent of the law, which established Cape Hatteras as a national seashore. I am displeased, but not surprised, at the conduct and tactics taken by these groups, and hope that their ill intentions backfire. In my opinion they are no different than organizations that use religion in the name of God to justify the slaughter of innocent people.

Only here, they proclaim to do

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their deeds in the name of wildlife. In 1939, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed legislation establishing Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area. And in 1953, the National Park Service established it. It is important to note that Cape Hatteras was established as a recreational area. Bringing further clarification on this matter, Title 16 of the U.S. code and chapter 1, sub-chapter LXIII, section 459, states in part, "Said area shall and is established, dedicated, and set apart as a national seashore recreational area for the benefit and enjoyment of the people, and shall be known as the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area."

The ending of this law specifies how the park shall be known. According to information online from Cornell School of Law, words, "National Seashore Recreational Area," substituted for "National Seashore," pursuant to act June 29<sup>th</sup>, 1940. If Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area is the right and proper name of the park, I

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submit that the National Park Service change the name to reflect the name as given by law. This designation helps clarify the park's meaningful purpose.

The law, in its intentions with regard to the purpose of the park as indicated by name, is clear. Cape Hatteras is a recreational area, set apart for the benefit enjoyment of the people. ORV beach access brings great enjoyment to many people, and a primary reason why people choose to come to the park. As the son of aging, somewhat incapacitated parents, I know firsthand that there is no other way that I could share time with my parents at the beach if it were not for ORV access. When I am older, I want my children to afford me the same benefit and enjoyment.

I stand here today fighting for their rights, and the rights of their children, and their children after them. I understand the difficulty you face in balancing the positions of all parties. I urge you, however, to remember the reason the park was established, and allow that to

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be the focus of the matter which drives your decisions. I would you to consider the following items as part of the process for developing an ORV plan.

MR. COMMERFORD: You've got about thirty seconds left, if you could wrap up or summarize, I'd appreciate it.

MR. SMITH: ORV access should remain free and open to the public. I feel the current plan is good, but can be improved with the help of leadership from open-minded organizations such as the NCBBA, OBPA, Cape Hatteras Anglers' Club, and other similar groups. A method should be set in place to accurately count the number of vehicles that access the beaches throughout the entire year, and identification as to purpose of their activity.

The piping plover recovery plan should be updated, according to NEPA specialists I know, documents over five years old are generally considered to be outdated. Recognizing the relevance of piping plover plight to the ORV process and access and planning process, it's critical

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that the Park Service consider information from current sources. Alternative methods for protecting endangered species should be studied. Controlled, detailed surveys should be conducted for a period of lengthy time, enough to collect usable data, and the surveys should capture such things as why people come to the park, how often, and if they use beaches for ORV access.

A large scale education campaign should be in place to educate ORV users about safe and responsible beach driving. Pamphlets, brochures, short films, etcetera, should be available to the public throughout the park and visitors' areas. Fines for littering or causing harm to the park and its inhabitants should be widely posted, prominently displayed and enforced. In the event that access user fees are considered, the accounting and costs should be compared with alternate forms of monetary compensation, such as charging a one dollar fee to everyone that enters the park at the main gate, with exemptions granted to property owners and residents to pay

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property taxes.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Park Service for holding this meeting in D.C. area, and more importantly, for demonstrating commitment over the past year to work with ORV user groups, and provide ORV access to beaches on Cape Hatteras for the purpose of recreational enjoyment. Additionally, I'd like to thank the Park Service for sheltering areas of the park from development. That, couple with free and open access, is what makes Cape Hatteras a unique and wonderful experience that needs to be preserved for future generations. Thank you.

MR. COMMERTON: Anyone else?

MR. PAQUETTE: Good evening. My name is Patrick Paquette. I currently serve as a national shore access representative for the Recreational Fishing Alliance, and the executive director of the United Mobile Sport Fishermen, an access group with thirty four individual fishing and beach buggy clubs up and down the east coast. A couple of comments regarding process. We will be

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submitting a detailed document with suggested alternatives by March 16<sup>th</sup>.

My first comment is on the NEPA process, as has been explained in the scoping hearings. I do not believe using the Interim Protected Species Management Plan as the required status quo alternative meets either the intent or requirements of NEPA. The interim plan is brand new and does not accurately reflect the current management strategies or the management strategies of the park over the past few years. Furthermore, the process in developing the interim plan was clearly stated as temporary, and that is what drove comments and positions taken by the recreational fishing community during its development.

We surely would have taken different positions had we been informed the interim plan would be the status quo, or as I will describe from experience in NEPA processes and fisheries management, the fallback alternative. I request that the National Park Service reconsider this

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decision, using the interim plan as the status quo option.

ORV-use area. It is our opinion that as the National Park Service approaches development of the ORV management plan, one set of alternatives must truly start at the beginning. When the park was designated, there was a complete ORV access to both ocean-facing and sound-facing beaches. If you begin at this point, then apply today's modern laws and policies, I believe you will end up with one alternative that must be included in any proposed ORV management plan. In developing an alternative from this perspective, the National Park Service will face many issues that have difficult decisions regarding subjective interpretation of existing legislation.

It is during this process that alternatives dealing with parameters, sunset provisions, and details concerning resource closures, should be developed. I want to remind National Park Service that though they're well funded and appear at times to be neutral, environmental non-governmental

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organizations are a user-group with an agenda and an industry in and of themselves. Science, education, and public service are all noble undertakings, but this industry should not be considered with any more or less weight in this process than the fishing or tourism industries.

While in this process, we request the National Park Service place a strong emphasis on the historical and cultural human environment. This area was originally protected for its total uniqueness, and is not just that of its natural flora and fauna. I think it would be hard to argue that if left unsupported by human endeavors, much the actual land within the boundary of the park would have been long ago washed away.

Though we can all agree that this geographic area must be supported by today's technology, as the National Park Service lays out the appropriate ORV use areas, we must remember that constructing alternative, inter-dunal corridors should be considered as appropriate as saving a dune or

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preventing an island from washing away from natural erosion or the misplacement of a jetty. The whole environment, both natural and human, should be protected.

And it is absolutely possible to construct an ORV management plan in which nature and humans can coexist. Thank you.

MR. COMMERTFORD: Thank you. Anyone else? Yes, sir.

MR. BOZELL: My name is David Bozell. I'd just like to add to those ORV users, add my name and number to the list of those people who are very concerned about the state of the Outer Banks, should the National Park Service restrict ORV use. My family and my friends have been coming down there for twenty five years. I bought a sports utility vehicle, a \$27,000 car, for one week out of the year, to come down to the Outer Banks and just spend more money, down at the Outer Banks, eating and having a good time, and enjoying ourselves.

We've been coming down, oddly enough, with a good friend of ours who is an environmental attorney. Head of a worldwide

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conservation organization. He taught us from a very early age to respect the beach, respect our surroundings, have fun, enjoy ourselves. I see the piping plover comment over there. We've been seeing them ever since I've been a little boy coming down there. And as much as it was tempting to kind of walk through those ropes, we've been good in allowing those plovers to have their habitat as they've been designated.

I'd just like to, again, add to those people who are concerned. I really do applaud the Park Service for having this forum of open debate. It's rare in Washington that actually happens, and I appreciate that. Again, just make sure that we can come to a reasonable conclusion, a reasonable compromise, and allow people to enjoy the beach as it was intended. Thank you.

MR. COMMERTFORD: Anyone else? With that, we'll go ahead and conclude the formal part of the meeting this evening. And as I said, we'll be back here at the boards if those of you who wish to hang

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around have more questions, and want some answers to those questions, or get some other questions in writing here.

Thank you very much. I appreciate everyone coming out tonight.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter was concluded at 7:40 p.m.)