

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

CAPE HATTERAS NATIONAL SEASHORE PUBLIC MEETING ON OFF-ROAD  
VEHICLE MANAGEMENT PLAN/DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

STATEMENT

HOLIDAY INN & CONFERENCE CENTER  
1815 WEST MERCURY BOULEVARD  
HAMPTON, VIRGINIA

APRIL 29, 2010

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CAPE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,  
HATTERAS NATIONAL SEASHORE --

MICHAEL B. MURRAY, SUPERINTENDENT  
CYNDY M. HOLDA, PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST  
DOUG WETMORE, ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DIVISION  
PAUL STEVENS, CHIEF RANGER  
KENNY BALLANCE, OCRACOCKE DISTRICT RANGER

THE LOUIS BERGER GROUP --

FRANK SKIDMORE, FACILITATOR  
LORI FOX  
RUDI BYRON

COURT REPORTER -- BOBBIE G. NEWMAN

COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: The April 29, 2010, Hampton Public Hearing on Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement commenced at 6:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn & Conference Center, Hampton, Virginia.

SUPERINTENDENT MICHAEL B. MURRAY: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I'm Mike Murray, the Superintendent at Cape Hatteras National Seashore. Welcome to this Public Hearing on the Draft Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. As we proceed with

the

Hearing tonight, if anyone in the back of the room has any difficulty hearing, just raise your hand and we'll realize we need to check the sound system. Can everybody hear

okay?

(No response.) Thanks. I want to briefly review the project time line for the Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan. We are currently in the Public Comment period for the DEIS. It ends on May 11. The newsletter that was available at

the

sign-in desk gives this (on the slide) information, or very similar information, and all the details on how to comment. We've conducted Public Hearings this week: Monday,

Ocracoke

and Buxton; Tuesday, Kill Devil Hills; and, last night, we were in Raleigh, and tonight we are in Hampton. And then, the comment period, again, stays open through May 11.

After

the public comment period closes, the Park Service will be reviewing all the comments and begin preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which includes

written

responses to all the substantive comments. Then internal work will be going on this spring and the summer. In the fall, we'll publish a proposed regulation. This is sort of a two-part process. There's an Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, and then there's also a Special Park Regulation that goes along with it.

The

Proposed Regulation will have a 60-day Public Comment

Period

after it is released. And then, once that Public Comment Period closes, we'll review those Public Comments, and then begin work on the Final Regulation. The schedule is to publish the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Notice of Availability, which is the official Federal

Registernotice

that the FEIS has been completed, this fall. And then, the Record of Decision, which follows after the Final EIS is published, the schedule is to release the Record of Decision before December 31, 2010, and then publish the Final Regulation by or before April 1, 2011. And now, the next slide. Here's a review on how to comment on the EIS. And again, these details are in the newsletter. Now, you can comment in person at the meeting tonight, either orally

or in writing. Our facilitator's going to remind you of  
the ground rules, but just so you can be thinking about it, if  
you want to speak, you have to sign up. So, if anybody  
missed the sign-up table out front, you might want to go  
sign up. You can comment on-line at the Park Planning  
website. The address is on the screen. It's also in the  
newsletter. It's <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/caha>. CAHA  
is the Park Service acronym for Cape Hatteras National  
Seashore. You can comment in writing by mail or hand  
delivery to me, Superintendent, at Cape Hatteras National  
Seashore, 1401 National Park Drive, Manteo, North Carolina.  
Comments must be received by midnight on May 11. The  
reason for Mountain time is the website that the Park Service uses  
to manage public comments is based in Denver. So, you  
actually get two extra hours if you're from the east coast.  
Again, please refer to the newsletter for complete  
instructions. Now, I'm going to turn the meeting over to  
our facilitator, Frank Skidmore. Thank you for coming.  
MR. FRANK SKIDMORE: Thank you. Well, good  
evening.  
As you see from the first bullet up there, the purpose here  
is to receive comments on the DEIS, and DEIS means it's a  
draft. And drafts can change. And there may be very  
important information out there that you have that can be  
very helpful for that. My job is to facilitate a fair  
process that allows everyone who has signed up to present a  
comment, that it's heard, understood by the Park Service,  
and by everyone here in the room as well, and particularly  
by the court reporter, who must record it accurately and  
transcribe it so it's completely responded to and  
addressed.  
So, it's important that we observe mutual respect and  
courtesy, and be quiet as someone is delivering the  
comment,  
so that parts of it are not lost, and of course, no  
disruptions within the hearing room here. Again, you must  
be signed up to speak, and we anticipate each individual  
will be given one chance to speak tonight. Please keep  
your  
comments on point, because there is limited time. Please  
consider what the purpose here is, and that's to provide  
comments on the draft. And each speaker will be allotted a  
maximum of three minutes. Now that is going to be  
administered with a timekeeper who will hold up a yellow  
card when you have used 2 minutes and 30 seconds of your  
time, to advise you that you've only got 30 seconds left.  
And then a red card will come up when the three-minute  
point  
is reached, and I ask you to wrap up your comments at that  
point. Yielding time to another is not part of the process  
that we're following. Again, speakers will come up to this

center microphone here and address the Superintendent. The comments are being delivered to the National Park Service, even though it's important that everyone here also hear those -- those comments, for your own education as to what's being said and -- and provided. If someone addresses your talking point before your turn to speak, you may decline to speak. Or you may stand up and say I agree with so and so's point entirely, and add your name, and the court reporter will take down that fact that your name is agreeing with some other speaker. Written and oral comments are considered in the exactly the same manner. When you provide an oral comment, it's translated into a written comment for review and response. If you have other things you wish to say when the three minutes has been reached, you can submit the rest of your comments here, and it will become a part of -- part of your statement, and they'll be turned in right here at the table. The time limit, we're finding is about right, to allow everyone to speak during the time that's been allocated for the meeting. So that's -- that's the reason for the limitation. Please turn cell phones to "off" or "vibrate." And, I thank you for being here. It's -- it's a busy world. It's a busy time, and we appreciate you taking a couple of hours to show interest in this, and present your ideas and your comments. Now, I'm going to call out several names at a time, so that people are advised that they're next, or third in line, or so on. We have three chairs that are reserved up here, so if you're buried back in the middle of an aisle, and would like to reduce the amount of time we spend transferring among speakers, you may come and, essentially, queue in one of these three chairs, and be ready to stand up immediately to present your comments when the person ahead of you is finished.

MR. ROBERT WOJCIK: I have a point of order. You have a podium. I have a fear that some of these people may not speak many times, may need a podium to speak at. If you could move that podium to the speaker at this microphone.

MR. SKIDMORE: Say that again.

MR. WOJCIK: All I'm saying is, you have a podium to speak at. Many people may not be used to giving talks or speeches, may would be inclined to put their notes on there for reference. Since you have one, can we have one here as well? I think it's just a simple courtesy.

MR. SKIDMORE: Is there anyone out there that needs a podium?

MR. WOJCIK: I'll take it.

MR. SKIDMORE: To speak?

MAN ATTENDEE: Yes.

MR. WOJCIK: I mean, you use it -- just move that one over.

MR. SKIDMORE: Well, you see --

MR. MURRAY: If we're physically able to do it, I don't object. If we're physically able to do it.

MR. SKIDMORE: This thing is -- is locked in where it is.

MR. WOJCIK: Well, we could just talk up there.

MR. SKIDMORE: You want to go see if they've got another podium?

MR. DOUG WETMORE: Yes.

MR. SKIDMORE: Okay. We'll try to get another podium for that to occur. This is pretty well in place. I don't think we can disengage it.

MR. WOJCIK: I mean, if we can just use that one.

I

have no problem.

MR. SKIDMORE: Well, we really -- we really prefer that you're giving the comment to the Park Service and not to the audience, just -- just as a format thing, but should that -- it come to that, we'll make that exception. We've got an individual that's gone to get a podium. We'll -- we'll try to do that. Doug, were you able to get a podium?

MR. WETMORE: We're still looking for one.

COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: There was an off-the-record break at 6:10 p.m. until 6:11 p.m.

MR. SKIDMORE: Okay. Well, here are the first four commenters. It'll be David Graham, followed by Darren Lopez, H. T. Gordon, and Ted Hamilton. Are any of those speakers, speakers that want a podium?

MR. DAVID GRAHAM: I don't even think I need a microphone. Can everyone hear me?

ATTENDEES: Yes.

MR. GRAHAM: My name is David Graham. I'm not a scientist. I don't have a lot of doctorates, just a surf fisherman, and a veteran, and disabled. Take away my ORV and you take my beach away from me. I can't do pedestrian. I can't do walk-overs. That's gone. I'm gone. And that's kind of what I want to address. I'm not too concerned with whatever plan that comes out of this, because I know it's going to court, and you do, too. That's where the real fight will be. And it'll probably come to some legislation also, and we're ready for that, too. It's the plan behind the plan, to get the ORVs off the beach, close the businesses, get the people off the island. That's what we're fighting. The plan behind the plan. There's one thing that bothers me about this whole thing, Mr. Murray, and it's just the way your department has chose sides.

When

your employee, Cyndy Holda, told Bob Eakes of the Red Drum, "Bob, you are young enough to learn and earn a new

business," you showed which side you picked. Why did you pick them? Why are you against us? All we want to do is

go

fishing. Take our kids to the water, like my dad took me, when I was in a stroller. Like I took my grandkids, and I want them to take their grandkids. I fought one war, and I'll carry the scars until the day I die. I'm not afraid

of

another one, sir. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, sir. The next speaker is Darren Lopez.

MR. DARREN LOPEZ: Good afternoon. My name is Darren Lopez. I'm not a veteran. I'm a new -- newcomer to the country. I've only been here for 20 years. My dad didn't used to take me fishing, but I fully intend to take my nine-year old daughter fishing -- fishing, my nine-month old daughter when she becomes nine years old. When

actually

this charade started, I was just a rogue fisherman. I'd go fishing any time I wanted to. Now I have a daughter. Come a few year's time, when she's at school, we could be living here to go fishing when school's out. When major holidays are on. Fourth of July. Memorial Day. According to Plan F, there's going to be a limit on the amount of vehicles at the Point. Well, the Point, the greatest wonder on the

east

coast as far as I'm concerned, is where I want to take my daughter. Without being able to take my daughter, I don't think we'll go. It will be like going to Disneyland, get into Disneyland, and oh, "Well, Mickey Mouse isn't here today." Do you think I would take my daughter to Disneyland? No. If we go -- the point -- if we go down to Hatteras, and there's a limit on the amount of vehicles? What? Are we going to sit at the entrance to the ramp, because we're 401 and wait to be called? I don't think so. We'll probably go somewhere else. That's pretty much what I'd like to say. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: We will have a podium here shortly, so if I call someone who needs a podium, we'll just defer you for another speaker, until we get that podium. Next is H. T. Gordon, followed by Ted Hamilton, and Willie Munden.

MR. H. T. GORDON: My name is H. T. Gordon. I'm a property owner in Salvo, North Carolina. And I think that most of the people in here like fishing and we -- we like fishing on the beach. And also, that these environmentalists that are trying to kick us off the beach, I don't think they fish at all. Because if they were worried about the birds, they would be at the end of the Bonner Bridge protesting. Because every time I come across that bridge, there's at least five -- four or five dead birds on that -- on that bridge. And somebody -- you know, if they were so much worried about those birds, they'd be there protesting somehow, to keep those birds alive. Now,

my wife and I came here this afternoon across the, you  
know,

Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel, the southern bridge going westbound, and we found five dead birds on that bridge already. So, if they were worried about the birds, dead birds on the beach, they should be protesting these bridges where these birds are being killed. So, I -- I would like to see them protesting the places where these birds are killed, rather than on the beach, because I have never seen but maybe one or two dead sea gulls on that beach, since I've been going down there. So, that's all I have to say.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you very much. Next is Ted Hamilton, followed by Willie Munden, and Bill Rumschlag.

MR. TED HAMILTON: I'm Ted Hamilton, a native Tar Heel, who's owned a house in Salvo since 1971, and was a visitor to the area prior to that. Even having seen the area evolve over those years, I still wish to state that I fully support the Coalition for Beach Access DEIS assessment, dated April 13, 2010, as contained at the following website, and that's detailed in the copy I handed in. Of particular note is the Coalition Access Alternative position, shown in column three of the matrix on pages 8 through 10, of the assessment, and the comments shown in column four. Additionally of note is the Coalition

proposed

bird buffer distances on page 12, and the proposed turtle closure revisions on pages 15 and 16. I believe these Coalition alternatives strike a far better balance for

human

access versus resource protection, and is based on experience, observations and data more specific to the seashore than the NPS Alt F. This is further evident from the document's supporting information. Further, the following website, again detailed in the copy I handed in, contains the Coalition Position Statement dated March 5, 2010, updated April 6, 2010, that further justifies the rationale behind the Coalition Assessment and the Access Alternatives offered by the Coalition. I request that each aspect of the Coalition Alternatives that differ from the NPS Alt F be specifically addressed by NPS. And that I,

and

the rest of the public, be provided the NPS rationale for either acceptance or rejection of each particular differing aspect. A response of this sort is indicated by item one

of

the ground rules I was given at the start of this meeting. Finally, for those who say only a small percentage of the seashore is being affected, well, the closures proposed in NPS Alt F for the inlet spits, Cape Point and South Beach are like closing Old Faithful in Yellowstone. Yes, there

is

more beach just like there are more geysers. But all beaches, just like all geysers, are not equal.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Ted. Next is Willie

Munden, followed by Bill Rumschlag, and Rob Beedie.

MR. WILLIE MUNDEN: Hi. My name is Willie Munden.

MR. SKIDMORE: Sir, could you hold just a moment? Just a minute, please.

COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: There is a momentary pause while a podium is being placed for use by the commenters.

MR. SKIDMORE: Start again, sir.

MR. MUNDEN: Okay. Hi. My name is Willie Munden. I'm a lifelong resident of the Tidewater area, and I've

been

visiting Cape Hatteras since the early '50s with my father, fishing. We used to drive off the beach in Sandbridge, drive all the way down the beach to Oregon Inlet, cross

over

on the ferry, drive Hatteras Island, down to Hatteras

Inlet,

and turn around and drive and fish back. That's been happening, like I said, as far as I know, all the way back to the '30s. The present plan as the first speaker spoke about, it's really the -- the -- the complete closure of

the

beach that's -- that's -- that's trying to be done here by the environmental groups, and I'm -- I'm completely against it. Like I said, I've been fishing and surfing down in Hatteras with my father, my -- my daughters, my sons, over the past 40 or 50 years, and I believe that -- that there should be no closure to the beach between the mean -- the mean low tide line and the base of the dune. And that's -- that's year-round, on a daily use basis. If there has to

be

some restrictions for turtle nests or things like that on a very temporary basis, that's makes sense, but otherwise,

no.

The -- some of the data that's being used in a general

sense

that states, well when you -- when you remove human

presence

in an area, that the birds come back or the wildlife come back. Well, of course, that's true. It's self-evident. So, basing decisions on those kinds of -- on that kind of data seems to me, simply -- simply false, unless the only -

-

unless the only result is to just remove humans from --

from

access to any piece of land. I mean, we could take New

York

City and move all the people out, and within six months, it'd be overrun with animals. So, it doesn't make any

sense

to me to use data that, in these reports, that show that, when you remove humans, that more wildlife come. The other part about the data that I have a problem with is that most



majority of the bird nest destruction that happens, the vast  
of it has to do with ocean -- ocean over-wash, and natural  
predators -- non-human natural predators. Well, are we  
going to start killing the natural predators down there?  
Are we going to start putting up sea walls to keep the  
over- wash from coming up? And, if that's the majority of the --  
of the -- of the destruction of these nesting sites, then  
it seems, once again, that this -- that this, as the first  
speaker spoke, it's really not this plan, it's the plan  
within a plan that's trying to be pushed here, and trying  
to force -- force all of us off. Finally, I just want to say  
from a personal note as someone else said, that my access  
down to Cape Hatteras for surfing and so on, is -- is a  
lifelong thing. And if it's -- if it's stopped, I will  
consider moving from this area, having lived here all my  
life. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you very much. Next is Bill  
Rumschlag, followed by Rob Beedie and Rob Giroux.

MR. BILL RUMSCHLAG: My name's Bill Rumschlag, and  
I'm a veteran and also a surf fisherman. The first point I  
want to make is I emphatically agree with all the first  
five speakers. I've been going down to the Hatteras seashore,  
Ocracoke, Avon for 30 years with my family, fishing. Every  
fisherman I've ever met on the beach has the greatest  
respect for the treasure that he's enjoying. They all pick  
up their trash. They all take care of their things and --  
and have a respect for the beach, the dunes, and the  
animals. That doesn't get recognized enough. When you  
talk to the locals down there, and I can give a specific  
example.

A couple years ago, the entire south end of Ocracoke was  
closed for one egg in one nest, that after three or four  
days, after we spent \$3,000 for our cottage and couldn't  
get on the beach, was eaten by another bird. We all own the  
beach. You own the beach. I own the beach. And everybody  
in this room owns the beach. We pay -- it's a National  
Park. We pay our federal income tax. We all must have  
access to that beach. Yes, we have to respect the  
environment. But to close the beach in this concept of the  
plan behind the plan, is very disconcerting. What I would  
ask, the plan -- and you've put a lot of work into it -- I  
think it's what, 40 years in the making -- 40. The science  
that is behind it, the purported science, and -- and the  
environmental statements -- has it been reviewed, peer-  
reviewed by an independent, unbiased third-party? Because  
the entire package is based on the data that's been  
presented. And to date, I have not seen where it has been

reviewed by an unbiased third-party. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Bill. Next is Rob

Beedie,

followed by Rob Giroux, and Alan Pitt.

MR. ROB BEEDIE: Good evening, gentlemen. Nice seeing you. I made a request down in Buxton, at this, the government meeting. And my grandfather and parents would

be

ashamed that there's no American flag that we could pledge allegiance to. And also in the American tradition, of inviting Jesus Christ in, to give all the decision-makers wisdom to make the proper decisions. What's at stake here to me? I disagree with the DEIS. I know everybody's

worked

hard on it, but it -- it leaves out one basic thing: our right to -- our constitutional right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. I served 111th Artillery, '68 to

'74.

I've lived all around the country, in California, and traveled. And Cape Hatteras is very special. It is a

shame

that you're tearing grown men to a point to tears; okay? All I ask ya'll to do, is search your own soul. Okay? We can co-exist. First, God created that. He ordained man to be the caretaker, not governments. Okay? We are responsible people, and I know I'm running out of time, but it's America's coast. And I'm here to let everyone know that my invested interest is neither financial or land ownership, but it was bestowed upon me early on by forces much larger and more important than any of us here. I'm a simple man who's simply loves this area. I pray for the decision-makers to ponder diligently before writing into

law

any regulations that bring any further hardship on a free community and hinders Americans, all Americans, their God-given right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. And as ya'll know, my son, had a surfer celebration at 21 years old and he's buried in that ocean. And I rode down there yesterday, and the "no walking" on the beach is

close.

He was born on Father's Day, and we paddled out, my friends and I, and put flowers there. I will be the first one arrested probably for federal offense. I'm 62 years old, and been surfing for 48 years. I will stand in defiance of this government for denying me my life, liberty, and

pursuit

of happiness, and I will put flowers on that ocean. Okay? And I'm -- I'm gonna abide by the law, but I can't abide by ignorant decisions. And shame on the lawyers. The lawyers are putting the Park Service in a weird situation. It's called a lawsuit. Well, you -- you have fired up the fishermen and the surfers, and the international surf community. When they put a lawsuit on you, we stop mobile war. We stopped mobile war. And -- and, just let Jesus

come into your hearts, and take care of what's His, not yours.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Mr. Beedie. Next is Rob Giroux, followed by Alan Pitt and Chris Detreville.

MR. ROB GIROUX: I would just like -- I would just like to say, I've been going to Hatteras my whole life with my family, and it's very important to us. It's pretty much the only thing that makes living in Virginia tolerable. I don't want to be driving down Highway 12 one day with my son, and say to him, "Look over there. That's where your dad used to surf and your uncle. And past that lighthouse, there's a point where your grandfather used to fish. Trust me, it's beautiful." He's going to look at me and say,

"Who

cares? I've never seen it." Just think about what -- please consider what effect your decisions will have on future generations. If they can't experience the environment, why will they grow up to protect it? Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Rob. Next is Alan Pitt, followed by Chris Detreville, and Matthew Stubbs.

MR. ALAN PITT: Afternoon. My name is Alan Pitt.

I

live in Richmond, Virginia, and I've had a summer place in Frisco, North Carolina since 1993. Thank you for allowing me to speak. I read the entire width and breadth of the DEIS, and feel a gross misrepresentation claimed this is only regulatory toward ORV use, that proposing mandates

that

encompassed every single beach related activity from kite-flying, to pedestrian and pet access, and the seashore for the next 10 to 15 years. The two preferred Alts of DEIS, and the environmental D, NPS F set forth the most stringent protocols in any National Seashore or Park. If the lack of success towards species recovery after two seasons of similar measures under the Consent Decree is any indicator, these proposed measures are likely to fail as well, all while devastating the local economy, and putting undue pressure on all user groups who visit the Park through

over-

reaching, confusing, and dubious regulations. Pedestrian closures violations are, by far, the most numerous year after year, yet education and permitting for this user

group

is not required. And there is no instructional signs at pedestrian entrances to the ORV zones, which leaves this group the most uninformed within the park. Few argue that increased resource management is needed as user numbers rise. But the management techniques touted in the two preferred Alts have not shown significant successes when in practice under the CD, as predation and over-wash continue to be the greatest concern for sensitive species in the

park

-- not ORVs or human disturbance. Larger buffer closures

and buffer sizes allow more unrestrained movement of predator species, and the lack of ORV traffic in the said closures allows for denser habitat and denser vegetation growth, creating more and larger areas of predator habitat within the areas that are supposedly being protected. The NPS's lack of habitat creation and management policies, in particular at Cape Point, in relation to piping plover habitat is especially troubling. A fairly reasonable and practical long-term vegetation litigation surrounding the ephemeral ponds on Cape Point would vastly improve piping plover habitat. Doing so could negate the need for massive and long-lasting closures to this all important visitor destination, all the while helping shorebird recovery numbers. Ever increasing numbers of predator trapping or removal operations from the sea -- within the Seashore,

have

shown little to no improvements for all the effort and loss of life involved for the targeted species in this policy. There can never be a completely, totally, predator-free ecosystem within the Seashore, so it makes perfect sense to manage the predator habitat. The single most troubling aspect of the entire DEIS is the, in reference to the American oystercatcher, prohibiting pets within the

Seashore

during breeding -- breeding season, including in front of the village. There's also a preference to piping plover, saying the same thing, that if people don't keep their animals under control, they'll be taken off the Seashore from May to August. Thank you very much.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Alan. Chris Detreville, to be followed by Matthew Stubbs and Robert Wojcik.

MR. CHRIS DETREVILLE: Good evening. First of all, I agree. Where is the flag? My name's Christopher Detreville, and I'm from Richmond, Virginia. I've been coming to the recreation area for almost 35 years, and I've driven 100 miles tonight, so I could speak for three whole minutes. So, excuse me if I talk a little fast. I've got many problems with the DEIS and Alt F in particular, and it's exceedingly difficult for me to pick out just one or two points to object about in this eight-pound travesty of justice. So, that's going to be my first point. This (shows) is a copy of the Homestead Act. It was written in 1862. Double the size of our country. It's one page, handwritten, front and back. Now, look what happens when lawyers get involved. A 700 page document, that doesn't seem to expand for you. It seems to destroy you. My question is, why exactly is this document so large?

Average

everyday people, you know, the kind of people that come

here

to fish and hunt -- I mean, fish and enjoy the area -- they can't make heads nor tails of this. Was that the purpose? To confuse the public? Why can't we have a public comment extension period, to properly comprehend this document,

Murray,  
and

that'll change the recreation area for so long? Mr.  
your agency was charged with coming up with an ORV plan,  
Off-Road Vehicle Plan. That's it. How did this morph into  
telling me where I can walk, jog, fish, surf, fly a kite,  
walk my dog?

COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: There is a momentary  
pause as the audience stands and applauds.

MR. DETREVILLE: Sir, you have overstepped your  
bounds. And where's the real science issues? I mean,  
seriously, this document is slam full of "might've,"  
"could've," "should've," "probablies," but there's hardly  
any real science here. A consensus does not make science.  
Where is the real peer review? Where is the unbiased peer  
review? The reality is, neither NPS nor the assorted  
environmental groups can show that we, as users of the  
seashore, sir, cause harm to either the environment or the  
wildlife. In fact, the record shows quite the opposite.  
All of that is conveniently ignored. Why does the NPS  
ignore the fact that there's been no incident concerning  
injury or death of a plover as a result of ORV usage? One  
hundred percent of plover mortality is due to storms and  
predation. Why is that ignored? Under Alt F, suddenly, my  
five-pound dog, my little Yorkie-Poo, is an enemy of the  
State. Well, I've got news for you, Mr. Murray, I don't go  
places where my best friend's not invited. But, I guess  
that's probably the point; wasn't it? And it's all for the  
animals; right? Is it? One thousand two hundred and

ninety

one (1,291) animals have been slaughtered in the recreation  
area, since this tragedy began -- 1,291 -- that's over a  
1,000 innocent creatures killed to protect a handful of  
birds, birds that aren't even endangered. They're on the  
threatened list. The only thing threatened here, sir, Mr.  
Murray, is freedom. The only thing endangered here, is the  
rights of the citizens to use and enjoy the recreation area  
that was given to us so long ago. I believe it's an entire  
disaster. Alt F of the DEIS is a perversion of justice.  
All of it. It doesn't matter what we say here tonight, NPS  
doesn't care about the pro-access side. We don't have the  
money, the clout, the power of these well-funded  
individualists. Sir, that's justice, justice perverted.

COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: There is a momentary  
pause as the audience stands and applauds.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you. Next is Matthew Stubbs,  
followed by Robert Wojcik, and Alfred Nugent.

MR. MATTHEW STUBBS: First, I would like to say  
that, thank you for being here, but thank these folks for  
being here, because these people are fighting for what we  
love. I would like to say that I disagree with all  
alternatives that were listed in the DEIS. To be honest  
with you, I didn't read it. I'm a working man, and I enjoy  
the seashore, but I don't have time to spend 800 -- my son

doesn't want me reading this and go to bed with it. I do not believe in plovers. That secondly, I want to state. Why don't I believe in plovers? Because I've only seen pictures of them, just like dinosaurs. I've only seen these

from a distance. My son can learn this from watching television at home. He cannot learn this by going to the seashore. My son does not own a 1,000 meter spotting scope.

So, my son will never see one of these birds. It's impossible. I would also like to say that, it's been stated

several times -- people are saying that they're trying to close the beach. I want to basically make a little anecdote

to that. You guys state several times, you don't want to close the beach. But however, you want to give a 1,000 meters to a bird that can nest in the palm of my hand. All right? According to the National Park Service, there's 74 miles of accessible seashore -- 119,000 meters. Put 119 plover nests, 1,000 meters apart, what do you have left? Zero. Now we've come five and a half, six hours, to see Highway 12. There's not that much down there to see, except

for the beach. You take away the beach, you take away reason to go to the shore in the first place. Are we going to, as a society change this where my children are going to sit in the house and watch television, so they can see nature? I live on five and a half acres in western Goochland, so my kids can see nature. They can't see it at the beach. That's impossible for me to understand. Who determines whether the animals live and die? I mean, this is something that's been mentioned by my friend, Mr. Chris Detreville, and several other folks. Animals are dying so others can live? Who makes that decision? I thought that was God's role in life. Thought that was Mother Nature.

We

have on here -- there -- there is not one endangered bird in

Hatteras Seashore. Not one. Not one. There are threatened

a

turtle nest that was supposed to be being protected. I saw it destroyed due to the protections that were afforded it by

the National Park System. They put a netting around it to block out light. That caught the seashore waves from an in-

blowing storm, destroyed the sea turtle nest, later to find out that no -- no survivors. Lastly, I'd like to say this. There's a sign in front of the first National Park.

There's

of a sign. This sign says, very clearly, "For the enjoyment  
the people." It says it right above the main entrance.  
Also, they'll be filming life after people on this island,  
after we're gone.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you. Next is Robert Wojcik,  
followed by Alfred Nugent and Joe Basilone.

MR. ROBERT WOJCIK: I'm Robert Wojcik. Many of you  
may know me as a professor, because there's a couple of  
websites I'm on, and they probably reference me in that  
way.

I'm married, from Richmond, Virginia, two children, a  
grandson. I have a house in Salvo, around mile post 43.  
Non-rental. I go down there as much as I can. Observe.  
Fish. Relax. My wife says when I go there, all the  
wrinkles go out of my face. But now, since this decree, I  
go down there and I probably have more wrinkles in my face,  
because it just -- I just grind my molars through the teeth  
for the waste of time and money. I'm a veteran. I love to  
fish. Thank God I still have the right to speak, with the  
freedom of speech. But, as far as the rest of this I've  
seen, it's just deplorable. I want to talk about one area,  
because many people have talked about this. My son talked  
to your office, Mr. Murray, about eight years ago. He was  
in a car accident. He is a quadriplegic now. Not of his  
fault. But he addressed your office, because he's one of  
these kids that just wants to do things right. He

addressed

your office about putting a -- a -- a barriers to -- not  
barriers, but ways to get onto the beach for him --

handicap

accessible. About three years ago, I went down -- we were  
down there. Mile post 44, the last street, I can't think -

-

it's called North Beach now. Go to the far northeast  
corner, you'll see a area which you gave a person access to  
that, so he can build a pier all the way up to the dunes.  
That access was given, if he'd make that accessible to the  
public. I walked up there. That's -- that's not handicap  
accessible. I called your office. Your office said, we're  
not required by law to follow that. I forget the name in  
your office that said that. I can give that name to you,  
but I left it back at home. I called you back the second  
time, because I think, well, you know, I'm a professor at a  
college, and I said, "You know, that's just a bum answer."  
The second response was, "That's a closed community or  
closed subdivision." Well, so it is. It is a subdivision  
within the area, but that subdivision has renters. If I'd  
go over and rent that, would you be liable if I sued you

for

not letting my son get to that beach, just to drive down to  
look at the dunes? I can take my son to the beach by my  
vehicle, but last year, 23, 30, 34, the only beach open was  
38 and 40. And I don't know about the rest of you, but try

riding with a trailer with a handicapped son, strapped to the back, with my wife holding him down, to ramp 38. He get's tossed. It's a hard ramp to drive on. I have no access to the beach. He has a 300-pound chair that I

cannot

push. I don't know what -- I can't put him on a little rubberized chair and run him down here. I'm 63. I

probably

have 15 more years to live here. In that case, I just -- but anyway. I'm going to -- one more response was, it's a

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- the people in the Outer Banks, I feel sorry for them. They've been slapped into the face. My final comment. You've showed no creativity for the Outer Banks. Two areas that I was concerned with here lately. The bright lights. Why can't we put red lights on trucks so they can drive at night? I've read another one, too, that says, "Black barriers -- we can't -- we can't guide with black barriers

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- plastic -- because the quote is, "Fencing chicks away

from

their areas would essentially reduce their chances of survival." No data. No reference. No nothing. I mean that could have been plucked out from anywhere. I'd like

to

see the reference. The validity and reliability of the National Parks so that's other resources and information. It's just not -- it's not good information. It wouldn't flow in the college where I work. And I thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you very much, sir. Next is Alfred Nugent, followed by Joe Basilone and then Bonny Basilone.

MR. ALFRED NUGENT: Good evening. My name's Alfred Nugent. My family's relationship with the Outer Banks started when my father served there for a short period of time in the second world war as a Coast Guardsman before he went to the Pacific. Like a lot of guys from that time, he went home and got married. When we were old enough, he brought myself and the other seven children in our family

to

the beach. We went there on and off for a number of years to Buxton, and eventually, when he got the money together

in

the '70s, he bought one of the doublewides that Mr. Beckham was putting up in Avon, and we've had the house ever since. All of us go there routinely. We don't rent the place. We use it as a way to get down there and enjoy the beach. He picked to go there because he thought it was a good place for us as children, and if he'd lived, to stay retired with my mother. I'm -- I can't do as nearly an eloquent as Ted Hamilton endorsing the position of the Coalition for Beach Access, which I think is the only reasonable version of

this

that I've seen on the -- on the plate. I contest the



assertion in the DEIS that there was no plan in place. There was a plan in place by those of us who were down there in the '70s, that was put together by old EPA and the other people access groups at the time. It's not the fault of the people that live on that island that did what they were supposed to do, that the federal government lost and failed to implement their plan. But, having said that, I'll go to the one substantive point I want to raise, and I think just got addressed, more than adequately by Mr. Wojcik, is handicapped access. My mother is still alive. You have in this plan, four places for people to get on the beach on a wheel chair who have to be helped. For all practical purposes, ORV access is handicapped access. If I want to take her to the places we went when we were kids, I need to drive her there. Because in your 80s, you're not walking to the beach. And I'll tell you, as a father, if you're hauling a bunch of very small children, you're not walking pretty far to the beach with a bunch of three and four-year olds, either. So, by taking away ORV access and not providing reasonable access that way, you're destroying the chance -- the choice -- the chance of the two groups of people that should get access to this, which is the young and the old. And the final piece, I guess is, where you've limited access to the bay, you've limited access to the place people with children go to swim, because it's a safe place to take them, besides in the surf. That's all I've got to say.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you very much. Next is Joe Basilone, followed by Bonny Baselone, and then Archie Tripp.

MR. JOE BASILONE: My name is Joe Basilone. I live in Williamsburg, Virginia. I'm also lucky enough to have a home in Avon, North Carolina. I do not agree with the impact -- the Draft Impact Statements. Failure to adequately recognize the cultural considerations inherent in combined ORV use, surf fishing and the Cape Hatteras National Seashore. The statement lacks meaningful content dedicated to cultural resource issues.

Dictionary.com defines "culture" as, "The behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic or age group."

National Park Service 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." The behaviors and beliefs of off-road vehicle surf fishermen are definitely

those of a particular social group. And, it is a group that has been established for almost a century. Our very presence here tonight is indisputable testimony to our dedication to the tradition and economics important in maintaining our historic identity. The first book about surf fishing, *The Call of the Surf* written by Van Campen Heilner and Frank Stick was copyrighted in 1920. The first ferries at Hatteras began in the mid-'20s, when Captain Toby Tillett established a tug and barge service across Oregon Inlet to Hatteras Island. The motor vehicles that Captain Tillett brought to Hatteras all drove on the sand. There were no roads. Heilner's best-selling book, *Salt Water Fishing*, first copyrighted in 1937, in which print until 1956, contains a photograph of a Model-T Ford on the beach at Hatteras. The Model-T has balloon tires and tackle boxes. A surf fisherman is standing beside it with a big drum. And Heilner refers to it as a beach buggy. The North Carolina Beach Buggy Association and the Cape Hatteras Angler's Club are two of the largest organized groups that are particular to this social group. These groups and others have been sharing the camaraderie and energy of fishing on the beach for many decades. The National Park Service is in conflict with itself, when it simultaneously advocates severely restricted access and yet, acknowledges on page 83 of the statement that ORV access is historical in nature. I have other comments. I've submitted them in writing, and many of the other presenters have expressed them before me. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Joe. Bonny Basilone is next, followed by Archie Tripp, and then John Ewell.

MS. BONNY BASILONE: I'm Bonny Basilone. I disagree with the DEIS concerning a pet policy as stated on page 136.

The policy prohibits pets on the Seashore from March 15 to July 31. The Park Service already has regulations concerning unleashed pets, and these regulations should be enforced. Additional extremely restrictive pet regulations are not justified by the available data. I disagree with the DEIS proposed restrictive measures and inflexible buffers as found on pages 121 through 127, and page 468. These will prevent off-road vehicle use on large portions of the National Seashore. I agree with efforts to establish reasonable access corridors, so that ORVs can access the surf zone in the National Seashore, and I am in favor of the Coalition for Access 77-page proposal. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Bonny. Next is Archie Tripp, followed by John Ewell, and Alan Bartlett.

MR. ARCHIE TRIPP: Good afternoon. And thank you for coming and thank you for giving us this opportunity to speak. I am Archie Tripp. I'm also a scientist, retired. A nature lover. A past member of the Audubon Society. A wildlife photographer. And, most importantly, a full-time beach bum. I want to see all wildlife thrive on the Outer Banks. And I have supported in the past, beach closings,

to

I

see it, the proposed plan goes far beyond what I can support. And support of moderate people is vital to successful implementation of any plan. Specifically, items that really hit me were the 1,000-meter closure per nest. As pointed out earlier, depending on how you do the math,

63

nests could close the entire beach. I don't think that would happen, but that still comes out that way. As was so well just stated, what's the purpose of not allowing that the dog could walk on a leash through these areas? I don't know. Not up to the nest, of course, but outside of some boundary. Other things were -- it seems like large

sections

of beach are going to be closed to pedestrians -- even pedestrians during this time. And I'm not talking about

the

specific areas around the nest, but broad areas. And then, part of the beach is to be closed to all -- the off-range vehicles full-time. I -- I see that as excessive. I urge you to protect the plover, but such protection must be supported by the body politic. These proposed rules do not meet that criteria. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Archie. John Ewell, followed by Alan Bartlett, and Chip Pitts.

MR. JOHN EWELL: I've got to change glasses. My name is John Ewell. I'm not an expert. I'm not a scientist. I just love to surf fish. I'm sort of selfish tonight, because I'm speaking for me and for friends I've fished with for 25 years on the Outer Banks. I'm a surf fisherman during April, May, October and November. I want to reference the closures due to birds on page 468. ORV corridors are very important. I agree that birds need to

be

protected, but the DEIS goes too far. I'm not smart enough to determine how big a buffer needs to be. I only know

that

there has to be a way that we can work together to protect the birds and still give us fisherman an ORV corridor, or a bypass around the buffer, so we can reach our favorite fishing spots, like Cape Point, Hatteras Island, and the south end of Ocracoke. Next, I want to talk about the

closure due to turtles, page 125 in the report. Here again,  
 I want turtles protected, but again, the DEIS goes too far. As a fisherman, I think if the closure runs to the surf line, we should have an ORV corridor behind the nest and the  
 Service dunes, or around -- established by the National Park around the dunes, so we can again, reach our favorite fishing spots. In closing, I want to say that this -- that it is my opinion that surf fishermen did not have any input into the DEIS report. If they did have input, none of it ended up in this report. In other words, I believe that the  
 report as written is biased. All I'm asking for is consideration and objectivity in the final report. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, John. Next is Alan Bartlett, then Chip Pitts, and Chris Egghart.

MR. ALAN BARTLETT: Hi. I'm Alan Bartlett from Portsmouth, Virginia. First, let me thank the Park Service for providing a convenient venue for Hampton Roads residents

to attend this Public Comment Session. Second, I'd like to provide a little prospective as to my stake in this whole matter. I live in Virginia, but I spend approximately 90 days per year on Hatteras Island. My wife and I spend 80 percent of our annual recreational budget on the island, primarily investing in local businesses. We have a trailer in Buxton, and, since 2005, have been joined there by four other relatives, their families and two very close friends, with their family of three. Over the last 30 years, we've taught our children how to enjoy, respect, and give back to the Cape Hatteras National Seashore and recreational area. The good memories are innumerable. The local culture is unique. And the people are as spirited as Hatteras and Ocracoke are beautiful. I'm not going to focus primarily

on birds, turtles, enclosures, and such, because I'm not a scientist or a qualified expert. I can offer an opinion based upon what I've read today, but by now, I think we've all heard enough opinions. This whole thing is about people, and I'm qualified to speak about people, because I've had 15 -- 57 years of experience in the role. I believe that the mutual long-range goal of a couple of

well- funded special interest groups is to remove people altogether from Hatteras Island. Their methodologies include marketing and public relations campaigns, investing millions of dollars in lobbying activities and political contributions, and retaining the SELC by -- to repeatedly sue the federal government into submission, in order to eliminate beach access altogether. If these groups

prevail,

there may be no surf fishing, surfing, kite-boarding, swimming, sunbathing, pets, picnics, and family activities on federal land, originally set aside for the recreation

and

enjoyment of tax-paying American citizens, and their guests.

Short term, and at a minimum, I oppose any plan that includes the following found in the DEIS: permanent closings; Hatteras Inlet, north end of Ocracoke, and ramps 27 and 30; 1,000 meter plover buffers; prohibition of pets from March 15 through July 31, and the elimination of predators by the NPS in the name of conversation. Long term, I call upon our government agencies: to recognize

the

intended use of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore and recreational area, and to reinstate common-sense access policies before special interests force the local economy

to

fail; force state and local tax bases to disappear; and residents to be deprived of the ability to make sustainable living. This is about people.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you very much. Next is Chip Pitts, who will be followed by Chris Egghart, and Jean Fripp.

MR. CHIP PITTS: Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I had prepared statements, but everything I was going to say has already been pretty well stated eloquently and passionately by the speakers before me. But I've driven all the way over here, and I'm going

to

say something. My name is Chip Pitts. I live in Virginia Beach. My house is two blocks from the ocean. I can walk out my front door, walk two blocks and stand in the

Atlantic

Ocean. We have a cottage in Buxton. It's been in my

wife's

family for over 50 years, and when we think about going to the beach, we think about driving two and a half hours to

go

to Buxton. We don't think about walking two blocks to go

to

the beach. Buxton is a jewel on the east coast, and that -

-

that has been passionately stated by the speakers here. But, as I've sat out there, one of the things that has kind of come to my mind, is I'm glad I'm not you people. And I say that with all sincerity. I -- I did not participate in or attend the Neg-Reg [sic] meetings -- Reg-Neg meetings, but I followed them. And you have a situation where you have stakeholders on the one side, that are occupied by people who believe that there should be open access to the beach, that there should be reasonable, responsible, traditional uses of the beach, that 70 years of that access

has proven to provide a healthy ecosystem on the beach.

And

they believe that people should be allowed to go there to recreate, and are part of the stewardship of the beach, to maintain that healthy ecosystem. On the other side, you have stakeholders whose published literature indicates that human activity on the beach is the problem. And they have really not spent their effort in trying to find a way that includes human activity in preservation of -- of the resource. Those two bodies are not going to agree. You have to come up with a plan that will manage the beach for 10 to 15 years. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement addresses what we can do, when can we do it, and how we can do it. It doesn't say why. You have not noted the scientific methodology, the peer-reviewed data, why you are making the decisions. The closure boundaries. The time of year of the closure boundaries. If you expect public acceptance of your plan, it needs to be reasoned. It needs to be specific. It needs to be scientifically supportable. And it can't smack of the Park Service being intimidated by special interest groups.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you. The next speaker is

Chris

Egghart, followed by Jean Fripp and Buddy Krise.

MR. CHRIS EGGHART: My name is Chris Egghart. I'm from Richmond. I'm a cultural resource and environmental professional. And I've read the entire DEIS and let me

tell

you, three minutes is not enough to talk about everything

in

that -- three hours might not be enough. But I'm here to talk about -- specifically, about the traditional cultural value of -- of the Outer Banks beaches, particularly the spit and inlet areas. I disagree with the DEIS in that it

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- it does not address the issue of these areas that is traditional cultural properties, despite them being formally identified to the Park Service and requested to be evaluated. This, despite that the spit and inlet areas to

a

"T" meet the published guidelines -- the definitions of traditional cultural properties, published by the Park Service. It's National Register Bulletin 38. This situation is even more perplexing, as when the then

Director

of the National Park Service, when the Cape Hatteras National Seashore recreation area was being formed,

promised

the people of the Outer Banks that they would have --

always

have access to their beaches. And he did this out of recognition of the traditional cultural value of these beaches and the access to those beaches -- that importance. That traditional cultural importance has only grown since

then. Access to the beach is part of what it means to be  
an  
Outer Banker, or to have an Outer Banks experience. A  
previous speaker mentioned the historic aspect of beach  
buggy use. Well, it goes that much further. For the local  
communities, the Outer Banks is the beach for the -- excuse  
me, the Outer Banks communities -- the beaches are a  
meeting  
place. A social gathering place. In a very real -- in a  
very real sense, it helps define what it means to be a  
member of that traditional community. Alternative F in the  
DEIS completely takes that away. The surf zone activities  
are components of an unbroken pattern of land use that  
spans  
back many generations before the establishment of the  
Seashore, and remain integral to the fabric of the  
historically unique Outer Banks communities. In short,  
it's  
about the people. And, thank you very much.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Chris. Next will be Jean  
Frapp, followed by -- I'm going to try a different  
pronunciation -- Buddy Krise, and then Jennifer Brinkley.

MS. JEAN FRIPP: Thank you. Thank you for allowing  
us to speak. I'm Jean Frapp. I live in Williamsburg,  
Virginia. I'm also a property owner on Hatteras Island.  
And I will be brief. I believe we're all stewards of the  
environment. No one wants to see an animal become  
endangered. However, I strongly believe the dynamic beauty  
of the Outer Banks can be shared and enjoyed by families,  
fishermen, and wildlife. I do not support the closing of  
the beaches on Hatteras Island to the vehicular traffic. I  
do not support closing the beaches to leashed pets. And I  
do not support fencing off a square mile of beach for a  
bird's nest. These things are not necessary and they are  
not realistic. We need a rational plan that protects  
wildlife and recognizes the recreational and economic value  
of the Outer Banks. Thank you for letting me speak.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you very much. Buddy will be  
followed by Jennifer Brinkley and James Higham.

MR. A. E. "BUDDY" KRISSE: My name is Buddy Krise.

I  
knew you wouldn't spell it -- say it right, but that's all  
right. Don't worry about it. If you did, I'd be scared.  
I'm not a speaker and I'm not really prepared like I'd like  
to be. But, we are letting people who are in another part  
of the world dictate us what we should be doing. If we  
took

their hobby -- whatever it may be -- golfing, hang-gliding  
and told them they couldn't do that, they'd have a whole  
different picture about this thing. You're taking -- I'm  
not a surf fisherman. I love the beach. I love anything I  
do in water, but a lot of these fellows have said more than  
I can say. You take that from them, you're taking their  
thing for them to live, to work for, and struggle for. And

we  
 are -- and I say we as the public -- spending a lot of  
 money, trying to decide what should happen -- to be done to  
 that beach could be spent better in the parks. The marina  
 at Cape -- at Ocracoke -- that needs -- federal park needs  
 a  
 ton of work done there. This money we're spending for this  
 could be put in down there. So, like somebody at Hatteras  
 said a couple years ago about this thing, why are we

letting  
 somebody who lives in Tennessee, Kentucky, Arizona or  
 wherever they may be across the country, tell us how to  
 live? We've got enough of this federal government telling  
 us how to live. Thank you. And I appreciate the time.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Buddy. Next is Jennifer  
 Brinkley, followed by John Higham, and Richard Kittrell.

MS. JENNIFER BRINKLEY: Hello. My name is Jennifer  
 Brinkley. I grew up in the Tidewater. I have been going  
 down to Cape Hatteras since before I was born. And I fully  
 support keeping the beaches open. I think that the

National  
 Park Service should be ashamed of themselves. And --  
 COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: The audience applause  
 drowned out the final words of her statement.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you. Next is James Higham.

Beach,  
 MR. JAMES HIGHAM: James Higham from Virginia  
 Virginia. The first thing I'd like to point out is that  
 Conrad Wirth promised all visitors and residents access to  
 the beach. And the Park Service has not kept that promise.  
 I don't hear enough stressed about the people and the  
 economy of Hatteras Island. I feel that is very, very  
 important. Another thing that I think is also extremely  
 important is the enabling legislation, which created the  
 Seashore for the benefit and enjoyment of the people. I'm  
 very disappointed with the Park Service's laziness, as it  
 pertains to habitat degradation. Places that used to  
 support vast colonies of the colonial waterbirds are now  
 overgrown with vegetation, so the birds have no place left  
 to go but on the beach, where human disturbance and  
 predation and weather are a problem. I think the Park  
 Service should really work on that. Your adaptive  
 management and pilot programs, I think could be implemented  
 much earlier. The access groups have stated that they're  
 ready to do habitat management or manipulation, whatever

you  
 want to call it, at the time, so that the birds can have a  
 place and we can access the beaches. It seems like a win-  
 win situation. I don't know why the need to have pilot  
 programs and studies, when they're already in place. Also,  
 I'm a big fan of using the beach at night, and there have  
 been no studies done to date to qualify or quantify the  
 effects that nighttime beach use has on nesting sea turtles



at Cape Hatteras. I really believe that Species [sic] Management Areas is just another tool to keep people off the beach. I mean, the birds have wings. They're going to nest where they want -- the Dredge Islands, you know. I mean, so, if you could have an SMA, you know, it's only coming up for review for every five years, and all the birds are going elsewhere. The area's going to be closed. We're just to have nowhere to go. I -- it's ridiculous. I think this game is rigged. I really do. Also, the Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife have target numbers for piping plovers, and whatnot. I'd like to know the target numbers for foxes, raccoons, possums, minx. I want to know how many in the Park Service thinks it's viable in that ecosystem, so we're not killing too many. Also, I think three minutes is just a joke -- 800 pages -- three minutes. That's ridiculous. I fully support no action Alternative A. I believe that is the best balance between resource protection and recreation. I think it's ridiculous that we have a Consent Decree. I think this 800 pages is just insane. I can't believe this is happening here. Mike Murray, I don't -- I don't know what to tell you, man, but I'm not very happy with you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you. Please submit any additional comments you have in writing. Next is Richard Kittrew, or Kittrell, followed by Mark Feltner and Dean Johnson.

MR. RICHARD KITTRELL: I'm Rick Kittrell. I'm a home owner on the Outer Banks. Been going down there over 50 years, like the other lady said, even before I was born. It goes back -- I think part of this goes back to what -- what was the original intent for this land? At least part of that intent is what has been said a half a dozen times, at least, that I've heard tonight. And that was for the benefit and enjoyment of the people. So, how is it possible, if we're going to close the beaches, that we're going to get that enjoyment and benefit? My experience watching the fowl and the other creatures down there is, by driving, walking and so forth, and observing them. Cormorants, plover or other birds, they pick up and move. They move out of the traffic areas and so forth. So, that kind of brings me to my next point. And that is, these creatures can move to the thousands of other acres that are available and at the disposal of the National Park Service. And some of those areas are either -- either not visited by humans or rarely visited by humans. The ramps and the recreational areas that people traverse, drive and so forth, and go fishing on, are but a small percentage of the total

acreage that's available to the National Park Service. Discrete areas can certainly be cordoned off for the wildlife and to protect those animals and creatures. So,

in  
open.

summary, this is about people. I say keep the beaches

Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Richard. Next is Mark Feltner, followed by Dean Johnson, and Scott Almond.

the

MR. MARK FELTNER: Good evening. And thanks for

opportunity to comment. For the public record, I'm Mark Feltner, President of Virginia Coastal Access Now, VCAN, 1356 Pamlico Boulevard, Chesapeake, Virginia, 22332. VCAN is our 300-member, non-profit group that represents salt-water recreational anglers, beachgoers, and the public, including many Virginia residents, working to protect

public

access and ORV use at Cape Hatteras National Seashore. I

am

also a scientist, and a surf fisherman, for what that's worth. In review of the options in the DEIS, VCAN cannot support any of the alternatives as they are all flawed in diminishing visitor experience, and do not recognize the socio-economic and cultural resource impacts. Our non-profit does support the hard work by and the position of

the

Hatteras Coalition in their fight to restore public access to the beaches of Cape Hatteras. Everyone, including the Park Service, needs to remember first and foremost, that Hatteras is a National Seashore or Park. Not a National Wildlife Refuge, like Pea Island embedded in Hatteras, or our own Back Bay here in Virginia Beach. At a National Wildlife Refuge, the wildlife comes first; public access

and

use, second. At a National Park or Seashore, public access and use comes first, and wildlife, second. That is not to say and/or ignore the fact that we're all stewards of these natural resources, including the habitat and the wildlife

at

Hatteras. The greatest conservationists, environmental stewards and guardians of Hatteras are the people who rely on and access it the most, be it for commercial,

residential

or recreational reasons. No real scientific data demonstrates any loss to critical habitat or wildlife from normal ORV usage at Hatteras -- a prime example being that Hatteras is at the southern end of the piping plover's

range

and the documented population trends, including plover population decreases, correlate better to hurricanes, Nor'easters, and habitat destruction, due to storm damage and not ORV use at the beach. Remember also, that Hatteras natives, North Carolinians and the public were utilizing

motorized vehicles on the Outer Banks before the establishment of Cape Hatteras National Seashore in 1953, and the current legal ORV and access condition brought

about

from the Hatteras Consent Decree, which inherently violates the cultural heritage that is Hatteras. Lastly, we have

all

lost too much public access to our nation's coastal waters, from both the extremes -- private developers and environmental zealots -- to accept any more. The nation's first National Seashore was meant for the people. Let's keep it that way. Thank you for your time.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Mark. Dean Johnson is next, followed by Scott Almond, and Gary Gross.

MR. DEAN JOHNSON: I'd like to reiterate what he just said. And I guess I've been to too many of these things, when your staff recognizes me at the door, and

says,

"This guy knows the drill." I'm Dean Johnson and I'm a vendor, of course, that does business on Ocracoke and Hatteras Island. And I've stated at the other meetings in Buxton, and Ocracoke and Kill Devil Hills that I'm totally against what's written in Alternative F, on the socio-economic impact. I believe, in Kill Devil Hills, I gave numbers into the record that shows 100 percent increase in products sold with beaches open as opposed to closed. The economic impact is going to be detrimental to the

businesses

on Hatteras, which in turn affects vendors like myself. But, I just want to reiterate, Mr. Murray, that I took my time to go to Ocracoke, to go to the Buxton meeting, to go to the Kill Devil Hills meeting, couldn't make Raleigh, but made it up here tonight, to show you the importance that it is, that we use some common-sense approaches to this, so that it does not put people like myself out of business. I'm 43. Maybe I could learn a new trade, but I'm pretty daggone good at what I do, and if those beaches are open, then a lot of people will -- will prosper. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Dean. Next is Scott Almond, followed by Gary Gross, and Dave Vachet.

MR. SCOTT ALMOND: My name is Scott Almond and I live in Virginia Beach, Virginia. I'd like to thank the National Park Service for having this public meeting here

in

Hampton, Virginia, to hear my comments. My wife, son, and myself, enjoy visiting the beaches of Cape Hatteras

National

Seashore and access to the beach with our vehicle's the

very

reason my family chooses to vacation in that area. I will offer a few comments on the DEIS with respect to

Alternative

F, the NPS preferred alternative, as described on xi and xii, the executive summary that directly relates to vehicle

I access to the beach. On page 15 of the executive summary, respectfully disagree with ML1 closure restrictions. Under Alternative F for Cape Point, .2 mile west of the hook to ramp 45, and onto new ramp 47, from March 15 through July 31. I believe this area should remain an ORV route year-round. On page 16 of the executive summary, I respectfully disagree with ML1 closure restriction under Alternative F. The ocean shore line from .2 miles southwest of Bone Road to the inlet. I believe this area should remain open and an ORV route year-round. On page 123, which is a part of Table 10, Species Management Strategies for Action Alternatives, I respectfully disagree with the buffer of 1,000 meters for unfledged chick buffers for the piping plover. Considering that 1,500 meters is known as the metric mile, this 1,000 meter buffer is, indeed, about two-thirds of a mile. I believe that 200 meters is a more reasonable distance, which would still be about twice the length of a football field. Thank you for your time.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Scott. Gary will be followed by Dave Vachet and Howard Quillon.

MR. GARY GROSS: My name is Gary Gross. Tonight at the final public meeting, I'd like to thank you, Mr. Superintendent, for the way these meetings have been conducted, and the opportunity that you've given all of us to speak. I've heard many people talk from the heart about the importance of preserving beach access. Their message has been clear and consistent about what they want you to change or add to Alternative F. The people want protection of resources, but ask you to base it on peer-reviewed science with reasonable buffers. The people want you to have the flexibility to establish common-sense corridors throughout the seashore that would provide access without harming wildlife. The people want you to reconsider the economic impact. The government did not do a very good job on the socio-economic section of the DEIS. They farmed out a bunch of it to outside contractors, rather than connect with the community and find out for themselves. At best, the economic impact section's superficial and incomplete. It was not well-thought out. I say that, Mr. Murray, not

to criticize, but to remind you that it can be fixed. Please listen to the people and make the critical changes to Alternative F that you have heard over and over again, from the heart of the people. During these meetings, along with you, I've listened to the razzle-dazzle from SELC. They said, "We've looked at the five other National Seashores on the Atlantic coast that have ORV plans. There's 150 miles in those seashores. They allow ORV use in 26 miles." Not true. On just the Padre Island National Seashore, 63.5 of

the 70 miles are open to beach driving year-round. In Kill Devil Hills, I heard them say, "They would like to see equal access for pedestrian users of the beach as well as ORV." Then, last night in Raleigh, we heard them talk out of the other side of their mouth, saying, "We believe a true no-action alternative would look at no driving on the seashore, and that there would be the proper environmental base-line." Their message changes like the tides on the seashores of Hatteras. But, from the people, you have heard one consistent theme: protect resources, balance it with reasonable access, and reconsider the economic impact. Tonight, we look to you. As the Superintendent, you're the one that we look to, to guide this thing through the rest of the federal process, and have it come out later this year in a way that properly balances resource protection with reasonable recreational access. Mr. Superintendent, we are entrusting our future to you. Please do the right thing. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Gary. Dave Vachet, followed by Howard Quillon and Sheila Scoville.

MR. DAVE VACHET: Thanks for the opportunity to speak. I'm also opposed to all of the alternatives presented --

MR. SKIDMORE: Excuse me, sir. Would you say your name?

MR. VACHET: Oh, I'm sorry. My name's Dave Vachet. I live in Norfolk, Virginia.

MR. SKIDMORE: Make sure we have the right pronunciation.

MR. VACHET: Gotcha. I'm opposed to all the alternatives, as well, presented in the DEIS, because they are not -- they are flawed in the fact that they diminish the existing visitor experience, and do not recognize the socio-economic and cultural resource impacts. And, in an effort to manage wildlife, pedestrian and ORV usage is being nesting unfairly portrayed as a significant factor affecting success of birds. The proposed buster -- buffers for nesting birds are not based on peer-reviewed science, and are not standards used anywhere else in NPS-managed lands. In essence, the public is being penalized where predation and storms are the true factors to the lack of success. This diminishes the existing visitor experience. This Seashore is also unique from other Seashores in that multiple villages and communities exist inside the boundaries of the Park. Impacts to these towns and the communities are more acute than to surrounding communities,

whenever the Park Service institutes rules. I don't believe

the alternatives in this document have properly evaluated the socio-economic and historical and cultural impacts to these communities contained therein. The large ROI mentioned is too large to adequately assess the economic impacts to the villages. And, very little is addressed in terms of historic access to the shoreline. Please address these deficiencies in the final document. Thanks.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Dave. Next is Howard Quillon, followed by Sheila Scoville, and Peter Doherty.

MR. HOWARD QUILLON: Good evening. My name is Howard Quillon, and I am the President of the United Mobile Sports Fisherman Association, representing over 50,000 anglers, and the Vice President of the Assateague Mobile Sports Fisherman Association, representing over 1,200 anglers. I've been visiting Cape Hatteras National

Seashore

and recreational area for over 40 years, and I've not heard anything tonight that I disagree with. And, I do disagree with the Preferred Alternative F for the management of Cape Hatteras. As defined, it is over -- over-restrictive and excessive in nature. I believe that a more balanced approach of preservation, conservation and recreation can

be

achieved, and a few examples are as follows. Under Species Management, specifically page 468, piping plover. And I'm only going to cite a few. The current plan, as well as proposed, states that a 1,000 meter buffer zone, that we've heard many times, around the area nest be employed. The suggested parameters are a range of 300 to 1,000 meters. The current maximum practice has not increased the

fledgling

count. It is well known that vehicle traffic is less disturbing to a nest than pedestrian traffic. The primary reason for failing piping plover nests are not due to human intervention. They are due to weather and predation. Furthermore, activity in the area actually helps to

diminish

the predation, due to consistent activity. By reducing or stopping activity in the area, we are increasing the likelihood of predation. Implementing a flexible buffer zone, identified on pages 121 through 127, that allows traffic to pass, will serve to the best of all interests. Starting with a 300-meter zone, and increasing when and if necessary, as the chicks hatch, depending on which way the chicks go to feed, the zone could be expanded. The management process is employed where I live. Assateague Island National Seashore management works very

cooperatively

with the OSV community and routinely has good exhaust -- results. Last year, we averaged 1.38 chicks per nest. The Species Management Analysis. You must include all areas of the region in order to determine the effectiveness of a

management program, and not focus on selected areas. Seashores change daily, thus the habitat changes daily. When areas are created, either by man or by nature, and are conducive to bird procreation, they must be included in the overall management of that species. I'll skip to the

socio-

economic impact. I have provided a full copy of this.

Cape

Hatteras has long been a summertime vacation spot and for -

-

and spring and fall fisherman attraction. This has helped every village and community thrive. The villages' culture activities pre-date the National Park Service by decades. Alternative F's overly restrictive practices of resource management will further cripple the economy and the

peoples'

lives. Under the current Consent Decree, the economic impact has been severe and devastating in many cases. As cited earlier, their -- the answer, "A business will have

to

adapt," page 383, is short-sighted and unacceptable. I see I'm out of time and I'll just simply say that you must use adaptive management in order to achieve a balanced result. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you. Next is Sheila Scoville, followed by Peter Doherty, and Judy Swartwood.

MS. SHEILA SCOVILLE: Good evening. My name is Sheila Scoville. And I'm about to become the most

unpopular

person in the room, but I would ask that you respect my opinions as I'm respecting yours. Thank you for letting me speak. This is, I'm sure, something you're familiar with. It's the U.S. Code that established the National Parks and all of its associated services, such as the National Monuments, and so on. And I'm going to read from it exactly, and I'm not -- this isn't -- I'm not cherrypicking here. This is an exact quotation. "The service thus established shall promote and regulate the use of the federal areas known as National Parks, Monuments, and Reservations herein specified as provided by law by such means and measures as to conform to the fundamental purpose of such said Parks, Monuments and Reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects, and the wildlife therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." Now, I'm not a local. I'm not a member of the Hatteras community, but this is a federal property, and, you know,

it

was turned over to the federal government in, I believe,

the

'30s. And, as everybody knows, if -- if you sell your house, you don't get to tell the next homeowner what color to paint the -- the property. And the mandate for the

operation of a national facility such as this, it's the enjoyment of these -- protection of the scenery and the wildlife is secondary to the protection of the wildlife there. And, as all of you are as passionate about seeing that your children and grandchildren enjoy what you do, I enjoy seeing the birds at Hatteras. And I take my children and I hope to take my grandchildren to see the endangered and threatened species that are represented there. And,

I'm

-- I'm sorry if the locals feel that they've gotten sort of a raw deal. But again, it's a federal facility and I have as much right to enjoyment of the facility as the local people do. And this is also from the -- this -- the Hatteras website. It says, "Cape Hatteras National Seashore, a globally important bird area, is a critical natural landform along the Atlantic flyway, serving as a major resting and feeding grounds for migratory birds."

And

I endorse the strictest preservation of the areas set aside for the shorebirds. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Sheila. Next is Peter Doherty, followed by Judy Swartwood, and David Joyner.

MR. PETER DOHERTY: Thank you. My name is Peter Doherty. I'm a field biologist. I'm a veteran. And I'm a member of the Defenders of Wildlife. I've spent a good

deal

of time at Hatteras as a visitor, and also I've spent a

good

deal of time following piping plovers in various places around its range, including Massachusetts, Oregon Inlet,

and

The Bahamas. There's a lot of misinformation tonight about piping plover, about biology and shorebird biology. It's been uttered here tonight, both about the plover. Indeed, there is a threatened plover, and an endangered plover population in this -- in this United States of America.

And

they all use Hatteras.

MR. SKIDMORE: Sir, please -- please address the Superintendent.

goal

MR. DOHERTY: Yeah. Number two. The long-term

of any biologist that I know and any group in governmental biologists that I've come in contact, and any environmental lawyer, is to do, not as been suggested tonight, but rather it is to get each and every species that is on the threatened endangered list off that list. De-list it.

Like

the eagle. Like the pelican. Number three. Yes, many millions of birds are killed by automobiles, by -- by windows and by feral cats. And -- and many, many people have worked very, very hard and long about it. But it's

not

a germane issue here tonight. We are all here. We all own



this beach. And the purpose we own this beach, this CAHA and this Cape Lookout and Cape Code National Seashore and others, is to pass on, not only its uses, but its wildlife, as Sheila Scoville mentioned just a moment ago. Finally, two points. About this traditional, cultural use argument that I keep hearing, both here and on various websites. Look at the cover that you chose for the -- for the EIS,

and

it shows -- it shows some traditional uses. It also shows

a

large part of Oregon Inlet, looking like a tailgate party

at

an NFL football game on a Sunday morning. This isn't -- this isn't a recreational area in that respect, and -- and it isn't being respected when we use it as it has been for the last 35 years, as ORV usage has increased as our population has increased, et cetera. And one more thing. My major -- my major reservation of this -- of Alternative

F

and there are many good things in Alternative F -- is about -- how -- how poorly, I think, wintering shorebirds and in-transit staging shorebirds have been treated. I would -- I would ask the Park Service to look closely at the methodology that was used in the Oregon Inlet study that I did with Virginia Tech several years back when -- when you, Mr. Superintendent, first came to CAHA. The -- the -- the information there forms -- forms a framework upon which to do it at the other inlets. And -- and thank you very much.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, sir. Next is Judy Swartwood, followed by David Joyner, Darin Knicely, and Christina Knicely.

Swartwood.

MS. JUDY SWARTWOOD: Hi. My name is Judy

the

I'm a resident and a business owner in Buxton, North Carolina. And I can't for the life of me figure out why

water,

environmentalists want to teach the next generation that wildlife is something that prevents them from enjoying the seashore. As several speakers have addressed, the reasons that they come down there is to see an osprey dive in

can't

and come out with a fish. Or to a kid from Pennsylvania, who's never seen the ocean, to see a turtle nest enclosure. Those are big deals to people. That's why they come to our beaches. And how're they going to experience these things, pieces of the shipwreck or watching the sandpipers run back and forth in the waves. All these beautiful things that people can no longer enjoy and experience because they

access the beach. They used to have the freedom to come down there and choose what time of day they wanted to go to the beach, what part of the beach they chose to go to, what they chose to do there, and who they chose to take with

dictated

them, including their dog. Now they're going to be to as to when, where, how, why, and what they can do, what they can't do. So, generations are going to learn that a beach is something -- no offense to you Virginia Beach people -- but that's shaded by high-rise buildings, that looks like a patchwork quilt full of towels, and beach umbrellas, something that they can't run around on and play on because they might step on somebody, or somebody's things. Is that what we really want to teach our future generations that the beach is all about? Where the nightlife consists of bars, and drinking, and amusement parks? Or where the nightlife consists of the Milky Ways and shooting stars and the things they can experience out under the dark skies, that they can no longer experience, when they can't go out to the beach in the dark? When people don't have a reason to come down there for a unique visitor experience, they're going to quit coming down

there.

do

As a business owner, we live on our business property, as many business owners have their homes above their restaurants, in their campgrounds, in their hotels.

There's

many self-employed people. People. All of us work hard. We work in the service industry. Service is the word that the Park Service either needs to get back to or take out of its name. And these people are not eligible for unemployment benefits. We don't get sick leave. We don't get vacation. We don't get a check from the federal government or the state government when we lose our businesses, and we have no income. We don't get those things. And this is what's happening to us right now.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Judy. David Joyner is next, followed by Darin Knicely and Christina Knicely, then Carter Ficklen.

MR. DARIN KNICELY: Good evening. I'm Darin Knicely. Thank you, Superintendent, Mr. Skidmore, for having this forum here for us this evening. I'm a resident of Hampton, Virginia. My wife and family are lucky enough to visit the Seashore each summer and quite a few times throughout the year. I'm not naturally from here. Blue Ridge Mountains, Shenandoah Valley is where I grew up. And that's pretty much tattooed across me. And that's what I

go

through life knowing, that that's something we have to preserve. And luckily, through my family and my marriage, we were able to be married in Avon. Hopefully, we'll be able to take our kids back there someday. But through her family, I got to see the joy and love that there is on the beach, especially somewhere like Avon and Salvo, where you don't have all the amenities and you can really figure out how nature was, and how you can interact with it safely. But, a lot of the speaking tonight was around empirical

research and what the findings were. So, I looked at some of the research articles they had. 2005 Journal of Wildlife Management published an article, and that's kind of something I'm concerned with, with this work, is what's published. Because I don't see much citing, other than the NPS services in the manual. The findings work. Yes, there was possibly a regional decline. But let's see where it was. Results indicated an 8.4 increase from 1991 but only a .2 increase since 1996, and this is 2001. Atlantic Coast increased by 78 percent, and 12.4 percent from '91 -- from '96 to 2001. Where are we having trouble? Texas, Great Plains, Saskatchewan, Canada. As we go through, we also see that it's continuing. Sub-regional studies show that the Atlantic coast, 66.2 percent increase, and still from 2000 - - sorry, '96 to 2001, we saw another 12 percent increase. So, my common denominator, when you talk about lobbyists and who they're choosing to change their policies, is the weakest link. And I'm not going after Texas. I'm not going after Michigan if I'm a lobbyist. I'm going after an area that I feel doesn't have the resources or the support. But, unfortunately, what they're going to find out, it's much like the Blue Ridge Mountains, that you don't mess with our land. It's gonna be much like that in the Outer Banks. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: If you could just wait just a minute.

That was Darin; correct?

MR. KNICELY: Yes, sir.

MR. SKIDMORE: Okay. David Joyner.

MR. DAVID JOYNER: Good evening. I'm David Joyner, Vice President of North Carolina Beach Buggy Association, a resident of Franklin, Virginia. Mike, in the DEIS, you have attributed Alternative F as being the result of the advisory committee. I don't know what meetings you were at, but for 18 months that I spent on Reg-Neg, none of that came out of what the North Carolina Beach Buggy Association agreed to. We worked very hard to try to come up with a plan that would reach consensus, and were constantly stonewalled by people with their own special interests. Once again, the North Carolina Beach Buggy Association has worked very hard with other access groups, and come up with a position statement, and it's the Coalition for Beach Access. Please read that because we did write that. We did not do anything with this

and please take our name off of that DEIS. Thank you.

next, MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, David. Christina is

followed by Carter Ficklen, and Bill Mannschreck.

MS. CHRISTINA KNICELY: Hi. Good evening. My name's Christina Knicely. I've lived in Hampton, Virginia for 26 years, my entire life. We've been going down to the Outer Banks since before I was born, as well, and I also have a degree in biology. And as far as I'm concerned, nothing that I do on the island harms the environment. I'm a surfer, and so is my family. I grew up surfing with my father and my sister. I've been doing it since I was 12. And I truly believe that nothing we do on the island at

all, in any way, will harm any animals that inhabit the area. I grew up with parents that instilled in me and my sister,

and our family how to have respect for the environment while we're down there. We don't leave trash. We don't -- we don't destroy anything on the beach. As I've grown up,

I've noticed the restricted areas have increased, the roped off areas on both the north and south side of the island. My father would always joke that one day we would never have the ability to drive on the beach. And I never believed that, at 26 years old, I'd be standing here today defending that right. So, that's all I have to say. Thank you for your time and I really just hope that you make the right decision. Thank you.

Carter MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Christina. Next is

Ficklen, followed by Bill Mannschreck, and then Ernie -- Ernie Styron.

to MR. CARTER FICKLEN: Thank you, Mr. Murray, Mr. Skidmore, and the other staff whose efforts to bring this

a Hampton to an area where lots of stakeholders exist for going to the Outer Banks to enjoy and for our recreations. It's a very important issue to everyone. I've seen lots of passion. Warms my heart, all the folks that have not enjoyed a beautiful evening outside tonight, to sit inside

be room with no windows, to talk about the place that we love. I feel like for the last 32 years, I've lived a dream. My grandfather showed me Hatteras Island. I live in Yorktown, Virginia, and I've had a lease on a camper in North Beach Campground in Rodanthe for 13 years. I kinda woke up from this dream when I read Option F. And, it terrifies me to

-- not be able to show my children, my grandchildren, and hopefully my great-grandchildren, the joy that I've experienced surfing on these beaches for the past 20 some years of my life. Access to the Outer Banks was a key tool in teaching me preservation and understanding our

environment, which led me to a career in environmental health. While I spent a lot of my four and a half years at Old Dominion University cutting classes to go to this seashore to surf, I did learn what is supposed to be in an Environmental Impact Statement, and what a peer-reviewed study is. And I do strongly encourage you to seek quality peer-review data and to review this and to really -- I strongly feel that Option F is not a suitable option. I hope that you'll continue in the National Park Service's mission to provide Cape Hatteras National Seashore for the enjoyment of the people. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Carter. Next is Bill Mannschreck, followed by Ernie Styron, and James Johnston.

MR. BILL MANNSCHRECK: Yes, I'm Bill Mannschreck, from Virginia Beach. There's two issues -- the turtles and the birds. My understanding about the turtles is the Fish and Wildlife Organization is, when they find a nest,

they're

moving it to another area. So, I think that the turtle

area

could be solved easily between them and the Park Service if -- if you would patrol the beach in the morning, then find

a

nest, we move it to an area that's closed, say like north

of

Coquina Beach, or wherever the beach is closed. I know that'd solve the problem, because the turtles will come

back

to the same area, and we'd never would have to close off

the

beach again, in our good fishing areas. The second is, Mike, we've heard all these people talk, and I'm going to -

-

it sounds real logical to me, but I'm on their side. But they all sound like the kind of people that would not be afraid to talk up to their boss if they thought something was going wrong. And that's what I'm asking you to do. I think if you listen to these people, you have to believe that what's going on now is wrong. This -- this plan is -- is wrong. I think I'd like to ask you to speak up. I'd like to ask you to write a letter to the head of Park Service and say, "I'm in this job. I'm in a tough predicament, but after hearing all the people from

Ocracoke,

and so on, I'd like to throw out this plan that we're working with now and let the Coalition Plan be the meat to work with." And I think our people, as they've said

before,

we love the wildlife. We don't want to run over a bird. I -- I think we could draft one heck of a good plan in good English in a brief concise package, that would solve the problem, and I think we'd like to work with a couple of people here from Preservers of Wildlife, work with them to get their input so that we can keep going the way we have

been. I -- I think it would be a crime to have all this  
bureaucracy and closure. So, I ask you Mike, to -- to  
speak  
we've  
up and -- and say, "Damn it, this is not right. We --  
-- we've gotta preserve the beach access like it has been."  
Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Bill. Next is Ernie  
Styron, followed by James Johnston, and Bob Lanore.

MR. ERNIE STYRON: Good evening. My name's Ernie  
Styron. I don't know anybody in the room. This is the  
first meeting I've made. I've been pretty impressed with  
the response and the words that everybody has said.

MR. SKIDMORE: Sir, please address the  
Superintendent.

MR. STYRON: I'll address the Superintendent in a  
minute. Especially the folks that are here from Protected  
Wildlife. I think you have a cause and you have the right  
to say what you've said. I've got 27 years in the  
military.

I grew up at Hatteras village. I was born in Elizabeth  
City. My dad was stationed at Ocracoke village. His  
family

was raised in Hatteras village. I know what this is going  
to do. It's going to destroy a way of life. You're in a  
tough spot. I recognize that. We have a requirement to  
have an off-road vehicle plan. Nobody in this room  
disputes

that. I would encourage you, though, to go back and look  
at

what's the purpose of the park. It's for the people to  
enjoy and see wildlife and participate in it. Taking them  
out of the picture where you can only look at them from  
1,000 yards away, does not help you enjoy life. Looking at  
it through a camera, through a TV is not quite the same.  
So, I ask you to go back. The original off-road plan that  
was submitted was probably pretty good. I didn't read  
through all of it. But, years ago, we had a plan. It did  
get executed. You drive through there today, you don't see  
people down there throwing trash out their windows. If you  
had seen that over the last 70 years, the beach would be a  
mess. You drive down there today, what do you find on the  
beach? You find wildlife. You find fishermen. You find  
families. Preserve that, please. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Ernie. Next is James  
Johnson, followed by Bob Lanore and Matt DesRoches.

MR. JAMES JOHNSTON: Gentlemen and ladies, thank  
you

for this opportunity. I came to express my dissent and  
disagreement, especially with Plan F. And I didn't mean to  
be sarcastic, but it's getting that way. The Park Service  
is managing this just like the guy there that can't even  
pronounce my name. If he reads it, it's Johnston, it's not  
Johnson. Okay? Your turtle plan is totally, totally

insufficient. I was raised on a farm. I've lived on a  
 farm  
 all my life. I still live on a farm in New Jersey. If we  
 raised livestock, poultry and other stuff the way you guys  
 do the turtles down there, we'd be bankrupt. There are  
 other alternatives of what can be done with those turtles  
 to  
 get a much higher hatchery rate. You know, even your own  
 figures show that you don't do a good job. So, I think you  
 should look at hatcheries and other stuff where you can do  
 a  
 better job with those turtles, and still keep the beaches  
 open and not shutting the beaches, just for the turtles and  
 the lousy job that somebody's decided to do, when there's  
 other options available. One thing I didn't expect to talk  
 about tonight, but I'm going to discuss it. I first came  
 to  
 the Outer Banks in the '60s, after coming back from an  
 overseas combat tour with the 82nd Airborne Division. I  
 have, since then, had post-traumatic stress disorder. When  
 I came over there, I found out Hatteras was a spot where  
 you  
 get out on the beach and relax and get rid of some of your  
 nightmares and other problems. I don't think that's been  
 addressed at all in this plan, about what you're going to  
 do  
 with people with these problems, where they need some  
 space,  
 just to get out. I don't fish in a crowd very often. I  
 usually get off by myself, and a lot of people here that  
 know me will tell you the same thing. I don't think it's  
 been addressed. The other thing is, the lack of an  
 American  
 flag here makes me wonder, do you represent the people of  
 the United States who pledge allegiance to it, or is the  
 Park Service representing a few birds? I'm not trying to  
 be  
 sarcastic. That's just the way I see it. Thank you.  
 MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you. Next is Bob Lanore,  
 followed by Matt DesRoches, Sandy -- I'll try Sandy's  
 later.  
 MR. BOB LARNORE: Thank you for the opportunity to  
 speak. Mr. Murray, when you came on board with the Park  
 Service here, or at Hatteras, I took great interest in your  
 attitude and toward your thoughts and the way you went  
 about  
 expressing yourself in publications. I'm a member of the  
 North Carolina Beach Buggy Association, and I have received  
 the newsletter ever since it's been published, I believe.  
 Anyway, having been part of the beach process and beach  
 fishing over the years, your predecessors would skirt  
 around  
 the issues about the off-road plan that was in place, or  
 should be permanent, or at least for a defined period of

time. They skirted the issues, dodged the bullets and I compliment you for taking this project on, in the way that you said you would when you came on board. My concern tonight is, somehow along the way, the plan has become imbalanced. And I ask you and your committees or whoever is involved to please look at the peoples' issues and think about the people and not about the politicians, but the people who are living there, who go there for recreation, for numerous reasons already mentioned tonight. I believe you have the capacity to do that, and I have the faith in you to think about and work out a plan that has balance that serve the people and also protect the environment. There's plenty of ways to do that, but you need to have the documented data to make -- help you make the decision and make the committee make the decision. I thank you very much for your time, and I hope, sincerely, that we all can enjoy the beach, whether we're there watching birds or there surf fishing during the year with our families, our fishing teams or whomever it may be. Thank you for your time, and God bless you. I hope you have a successful career. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Bob. Matt DesRoches, to be followed by Sandy and I hope this is it -- Schneirla, and then Ed Hayes.

MR. MATT DESROCHES: First of all, I thank you for saying my name correctly.

COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Activities in the next conference room are disruptive.

MR. SKIDMORE: Can you hear okay?

WOMAN ATTENDEE: No.

WOMAN ATTENDEE: We can only hear the auction going on next door.

MAN ATTENDEE: There's a lot going on over here.

MR. DESROCHES: My name is Matt DesRoches and I'm from Virginia Beach. Been going down to Hatteras Islands since I was a youngster. Brought my kids down there.

We've always enjoyed the many miles of beach that we had access to down there for surfing, fishing, and other beach activities.

I live at Virginia Beach, where, during the summer, we corral all the surfers into a four-block area, and it's madness. And most people, locals like me, don't go even there during the summer. We go to Hatteras. There's miles of beaches that are only accessible by off-road vehicles that families go to and set up camp for the day, picnic,



enjoy the beach, enjoy the surfing. There's many surf spots down there throughout the entire island. I own property down there in Frisco, and property in Hatteras village as well. There's -- I've gotten to know the locals there very intimately, and they are hurting economically right now. And, as a property owner down there, I feel their pain. A fact, as I can see, it has declined since they first started limiting beach access a year or so ago. Down -- last year, we were down 30 percent in occupancy. In Virginia Beach, we have tourists that come into town from all over. On Hatteras Island, we don't have tourists. We have guests. We have visitors. We have vacationers. And there's a big difference there. People don't come down to Hatteras to tour. You're not going to see Seven-Elevens down in Hatteras. You're not going to see McDonald's down in Hatteras. You're not gonna see high-rise hotels crowding the beach. You're not gonna see concrete boardwalks in Hatteras. People come to Hatteras for what it is and what it's always been, historically, and culturally, and the access to the beach is extremely important to that. It's extremely important to the economy down there. We are facing today, probably the worst economic times throughout the country since, arguably, the Great Depression. The federal government is pouring trillions of dollars to try and stimulate the economy. The plan laid forth in this DEIS will cripple and kill, irrevocably, the economy of Hatteras Island and --

COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Mr. DesRoches' final words competed with applause and with noise from next door.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Matt. Sandy? She'll be followed by Ed Hayes.

MS. SANDY SCHNEIRLA: Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. My name is Sandy Schneirla. And I hadn't planned on speaking tonight, so, I'm sorry -- so, I'm a little nervous, to say the least. But, I am a resident of Virginia Beach, Virginia, lived there all my life, and going to the Outer Banks most of my life. When my children were little, I took them. We'd get in the Jeep and ride down there. Now, my husband and our family dog go down in our RV. We stay at a couple of different campgrounds down -- in fact, we were down last weekend for Four Plus' Surf Fishing Tournament. I keep up to date on all the articles from the North Carolina Beach Buggy Association, and also from the Outer Banks Preservation Association. And there were a couple of points. Most of what's been said tonight, I do agree with, about keeping the beaches open. There are lots of ideas and lots of thoughts that came into my head as

people were speaking. But instead of just telling you how we feel about why we want to keep the beaches open, I don't under -- there's a couple things I don't understand. One is, Jack Shea, Commissioner of Dare County wrote an article that was in the Beach Buggy Association Newsletter. Not this past one -- the time before last. And it was about killing the mammals on the beaches. There was a picture of a ranger with a shotgun on the beach, shooting a raccoon.

I

don't understand why the birds are more important than the mammals. Who gives the right to kill these mammals, to try to protect a bird? And then, in the same sense, we have

Pea

Island National Wildlife Refuge area. That was created for the wildlife. Why aren't the wildlife that are on the beaches, being moved to Pea Island so that they can survive there, instead of closing our beaches where we go to enjoy? And I won't even get into the economic issues down there, because that's horrid. But my biggest issue is, if we opened a wildlife area, why isn't the wildlife there? Why are we allowing our beaches to be closed for the wildlife who have their own area already? I do not support closing any of the beaches of the Outer Banks. Thank you for your time.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Sandy. Next is Ed Hayes.

MR. ED HAYES: Hi. My name is Ed Hayes. I live in Virginia Beach. I've been going down to Hatteras for about ten years, pretty much since I moved to Virginia. And I believe it's a special place, like probably most of the people here, and also, as a kite-boarder, it is one of the best places in the world. I consider myself quite sympathetic to environmental causes, but I would like these controls implemented in a reasonable way that take into the consideration all the uses of the National Seashore. This doesn't seem to be the case now. And I haven't read all this 800-page document. I heard about it last -- this meeting last night. And I made the drive here to attend

the

meeting. I would hope -- normally, I would think if

there's

important to say, you could say it in a few pages, rather than 800 pages. I don't mind making accommodations to preserve the beauty and the national -- natural environment of Hatteras. Personally, I don't have strong opinions

about

the off-road use. I think most of the people who do use vehicles on the beach are considerate. Personally, though, I don't mind walking across the dunes to access the beach. My big concern is at least being able to do that. I think restricting even pedestrian access over wide areas is unjustified. And I think this over-stepping in trying to protect the environment causes a resentment and backlash, and reduces the support for environmental causes. I don't know the correct compromise, but I'm just asking that there

are reasonable controls, not total bans. My understanding is the park intent is for the enjoyment of the people. Therefore, I think it should allow people. Thank you.

MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you, Ed. That concludes every card I have. Did I lose or did we lose any cards? Was there anyone who had signed up who was not called upon?

(No

response.) I believe that concludes all of our comments. I'd like to thank the commenters for being on point, and generally adhering to our time limits, and the audience for being very courteous. Superintendent?

SUPERINTENDENT MURRAY: And I want to thank you all for coming tonight. The hearing's hereby closed. Thank you.

\*\*\*\*\*THE HEARING CONCLUDED AT 8:05 P.M.\*\*\*\*\*