



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DIVISION
DENVER, COLORADO



Fax

To:	Jeff Cobb	From:	Miranda Thomas
Fax:	252 - 473 - 2595	Pages:	9 (w/ cover)
Phone:		Date:	
Re:	ORV conference call	CC:	

Urgent For Review Please Comment Please Reply Please Recycle

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CAHA ORV Data Collected to Date – DRAFT
August 16, 2004

Features	ORV Use as Currently Managed
ORV engine technology	
General vehicle restrictions	Each vehicle shall have met all vehicular licensing and inspection requirements of its state.
Vehicle tire restrictions	Vehicles must have a minimum of four weight-bearing tires
Vehicle weight restrictions	none
Location Restrictions	<p>Zone 1, Ocean Beach: ORVs will be permitted within 150 feet of the existing tideline, but no closer to the toe of the dune or vegetation than 20 feet. Portions of Zone 1 may be closed seasonally (May 15 through September 15), or closed temporarily to protect nesting birds or sea turtles, or when the distance between the existing tide and the toe of the dune or the vegetation line is reduced to less than 100 feet. No vehicle may enter any portion of Zone 1 when the distance from existing tide to the toe of the dune or vegetation line is less than 60 feet (18 meters), or any area posted or marked as a no vehicular travel area. Exception: In pursuit of their livelihood commercial fisherman may enter those portions of Zone 1 less than 60 feet (18 meters) in width but shall not pass closer than 20 feet (six meters) from base of dune or vegetation line.</p> <p>Zone 2, Soundside: Marsh and fast land west and northwest of North Carolina State Highway 12. ORV use will be allowed only on designated and marked trails</p> <p>Zone 3, Buxton Woods – Open Ponds:</p> <p>Zone 4 – Dunes and Sand Plain: All land and dune areas seaward of the right of way of North Carolina State Highway 12 except Zone 1 and 3 lands. ORV use will be permitted only on marked trails.</p> <p>Closures are posted as news releases on the CAHA public website. Such closures are mostly for the purpose of protecting threatened or special concern species during their breeding season.</p>
Can park elaborate? Info was → deleted from interim plan online	

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Access	27 designated and signed ramps or routes for ORV access to the beach
Camping	Camping is permitted only in designated campgrounds. From Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend, all camping is limited to 14 days within a 30-day period. At all campgrounds, campsite occupancy is limited to 6 persons per campsite. Exceptions: a family group (i.e. parents & children) of more than 6 individuals. No more than two camping units may occupy one campsite. All vehicles must be parked on the parking pad, not on the grass or extending into the roadway.
Need to know capacity of campgrounds.	
Age Restrictions and certification requirements	All operators of ORVs within the boundaries of Cape Hatteras National Seashore must possess a current driver's permit from their state of origin.
Speed restrictions	The speed limit is 25mph.
Operating restrictions	
Daylight restrictions	
Alcohol and drugs	
Carrying capacity	
Noise	
Insurance requirements	Vehicles and drivers must be insured.
Enforcement	Maximum efforts will be made to identify, apprehend and take appropriate action on violators of rules and regulations promulgated to implement this plan. The staff shall seek higher collateral fines (presently \$25.00) for non-mandatory appearance citations issued and may require mandatory appearance of violators if circumstances warrant.
Education	
Sanitation	Visitors are asked to use facilities provided (none are located on the beach proper.)
Monitoring and sampling	
Beach management plan	
Permits	Zone 1: no permit required Zone 2: no permit required
Park needs to	

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clarify on permits. # issued/year for both types.	<p>Zone 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commercial fisherman permit, issued annually to commercial fishermen • A special vehicle permit (short term, restricted permit issued to special non-licensable vehicles for limited periods and areas of use). The intent of this special permit is to allow aged, infirm, or physically handicapped persons motorized access to the beach
Weekly Visitor Use	Based on survey and multiple assumptions listed below, EQD calculates that 594 people (135 groups) would participate in beach driving during the course of one non-holiday July week.

Types of visitors' vehicles – percentages are simple 'guesstimates' provided by Jeff Cobb; they are not based on statistical data but on personal observation. Over 90% of vehicles observed driving on the beach are 4WD vehicles. Most are pick-up trucks, but there are also SUVs like the Chevy Expedition and old Chevy Blazer in use. Vehicles with less clearance and only 2WD tend to bottom out and get stuck. Dune buggies (VW engines in a 4-wheel open body vehicle) are occasionally observed, but they must be highway legal, registered, licensed, and insured in order to operate on the beach. No vehicle that is not legal for the highway is permitted on the beach.

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Visitor Use Summary (as discussed in the Visitor Use Study released in 2002)

A number of visitors to Cape Hatteras National Seashore were surveyed during July of 2002 regarding their experience at and usage of the park. Of visitors given a postcard survey, 263 (73.8%) returned it. The number of questions answered on each card varied from respondent hence the differing numbers of respondents for each of the criteria below.

Top three reasons for visiting CAHA

- Out of 237 group respondents* who gave a top-most reason for coming to CAHA, 13 said that it was Beach Access.
- Out of 121 group respondents who gave a second most important reason for coming to CAHA, 8 said that it was Beach Driving.
- Out of 129 group respondents that gave a third most important reason for coming to CAHA, 3 said that it was Beach Driving.

On this trip, in what activities did you and your group participate at one or more of the Outer Banks Group parks?

- 36% of 254 group respondents who answered this question said they had or would participate in beach driving during the current visit.

On past visits, what activities did you and your group participate in at one or more of the Outer Banks Group Parks?

- 52% of 165 group respondents who answered this question said they had participated in beach driving in the past at CAHA.

Importance of attributes in planning for the preservation of Cape Hatteras NS for future generations:

- Beach driving (n=249)
 - o Extremely important, 37%
 - o Very important, 7%
 - o Moderately important 14%
 - o Somewhat important 10%
 - o Not important 24%
 - o Don't know 8%

Selected factors' effect on visitor experience

- Vehicles on Beach (N=249)
 - o Added to, 20%
 - o No effect, 34%
 - o Detracted from, 18%
 - o Did not experience, 29%

What was liked most?

- driving on the beach
 - o 25 of 370 (some people gave more than one comment)

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What was liked least?

- vehicles on beach
 - o 7 of 172 (some people gave more than one comment)

Survey participants were asked, “If you were a manager planning for the future of the Outer Banks Group parks, what would you propose? Please be specific and **refer to park by name.**” No one mentioned beach driving or vehicles in their response.

* a group respondent is one person representing a group that has participated in a short interview and/or filled out a survey card and returned it.

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Data Lacking:

Vehicle Data

- Break-down of vehicles observed
 - o model – needed for size, weight, and noise estimations,
 - o approximate year – necessary for emissions estimations,
 - o perhaps tire description if different from standard – needed for sand compaction and size estimations.

Visitor Use Data

- How many people total visited the park during the time of study (this was not clearly stated in the CAHA visitor use study.) The total number of groups given a survey is included along with the number of groups that returned a study, but without total visitation data, this cannot be used to predict the number of visitors or how they will recreate.
- Number of vehicles used each day at each of the 27 ramps
 - High end use
 - Low end use
 - Where are rangers typically concentrated? (This could shed light on the above questions.)
- Estimated number of vehicles used during each time of the day (early morning and evening could cause more disturbance to certain species).
- Estimated number of people in each vehicle used for beach driving each day at each location.
- How many users are present only during the day and how many camp overnight?
- Need a comparison drawn between holiday weekends and non-holiday weekends. Particularly heavy use periods, such as Spring Break, would make good data collection points.
- Need to break down numbers by day of the week.

Other uses and their impacts:

- hikers
- backpackers
- bird watchers
- equestrians
- fishermen

Visitor perceptions of conflicts between uses

Scope of work for Visitor Survey

- Who designed the survey?
- Did the park have input in the scope of work?
- Has the report been released to the public?

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FOR: CAHA

DATE START

AUG-16 01:52 PM

- What is the park's ability to gather data, particularly on weekends?
- Are there any fee stations where data could be collected?
- Are all campgrounds accessible by paved road?
- How many campsites does each campground have?
- Are drivers limited to certain hours of operation, such as daylight?
- Are current ORV restrictions and regulations being respected by beach drivers?



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To:	JAY [unclear]	From:	[unclear]
Via:	[unclear]	Priority:	[unclear]
Number:	[unclear]	Date:	[unclear]
Re:	[unclear]	File:	[unclear]

Urgent
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