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From: [Mike Murray](#)
To: [Jim and Ginny](#)
Subject: Re: Why we visited, retired, and may leave Hatteras Island
Date: 11/13/2006 03:01 PM

Jim and Ginny,

Thank you for your comments about what beach access means to you.

On a related topic, I still owe you a follow-up response on the issue of the current closure in front of Hatteras Village. I have reviewed the information you provided, reviewed the 1978 draft interim ORV plan, talked with some of the stakeholders, and talked with some field and management staff who have been involved with decision making and implementation of safety closures at these locations in recent years. At this point, to be sure I clearly understand what I am being told, I want to schedule a site visit with some of the long-time staff. I'll schedule this after I'm done with a series of budget meetings this week, then will get back to you in the next few weeks. Please know that I have not forgotten about the issue, but am trying to give it a thoughtful, thorough review while juggling a number of other workload demands.

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▼ ["Jim and Ginny" <topsynturvy@earthlink.net>](#)

"Jim and Ginny"
<topsynturvy@earthlink.net>

11/08/2006 03:36 PM EST
Please respond to "Jim and
Ginny"

To: "Mike Murray"
<Mike_Murray@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Why we visited, retired, and
may leave Hatteras Island

Dear Mike,

It has been suggested, in light of the upcoming rulemaking process, that it would be helpful if you heard why many of us visit or choose live on Hatteras Island. As explained below, the primary reason we came here, and the reason many of us endure the challenges of living on a barrier island, is SURF FISHING. In this regard, please be advised that surf fishing and ORV access go together like a horse and carriage. If you are not aware of this fact, then

you have not been here long enough.

The controversy and uncertainty surrounding continued vehicular access to the beaches has prompted us to seriously consider selling out and moving to a more friendly location. We retired here for a laid back, healthy lifestyle without stress. The past two years have been anything but laid back and stress free. We have spent more time providing public comment than we have spent fishing or relaxing.

We started vacationing at CHNS in 1980. Initially, we came here to go off shore on a charter boat and walk over the board walk at the Frisco Campground to surf fish. Surf fishing was something to do while we were on the beach. Because of the difficulty involved in carrying tackle, coolers, etc., we did not take surf fishing very seriously during our early years. Despite the fact that we had the entire summer to do what we liked, we typically limited our visits to 2 weeks each summer.

In 1986 we bought our first 4-wheel drive vehicle. That summer we learned that vehicular access greatly enhanced our surf fishing experience, and we really “got in to” surf fishing. Stated more specifically, we found that vehicular access allowed us:

1. to carry the gear needed to target different species and respond to different surf conditions,
2. to cover more territory in search of fish, and
3. to take shelter during inclement weather.

As we began to take surf fishing more seriously, we increased the length of our visits from two weeks to three full months each year.

In 1984 we bought property on Hatteras Island. In 1988 we built a 1,000 square foot cottage—our present home. Shortly after we built our house we started our winter trips to Hatteras Island. During these winter trips, we were pleasantly surprised to find that we could travel most of the island. We found that many of the seasonally closed areas provided good structure for trout, red drum, striper, and flounder. The expanded access to the beaches, along with the absence of swimmers and sun bathers, quickly made the off season our favorite time of the year for surf fishing. As such, in addition to summering on the Island, we made sure to visit CHNS during the months of December and January. There’s nothing like speck and striper fishing in the winter months on Hatteras Island. In fact, off season surf fishing was a major reason for our decision to retire on Hatteras Island.

We retired to Hatteras Island in 2002. Much to our chagrin, in 2003 the NPS

instituted very heavy-handed resource closure policies. In 2004, the NPS added stringent safety requirements further limiting ORV access. By 2005, ORV access had been reduced to very small areas at the access ramps. The resultant, inevitable, over-crowding made summer fishing awkward and barred access to many of the best winter fishing areas. Frustrated and disgusted, many of my long-time fellow anglers have abandoned Hatteras Island in search of better venues. Worse yet, numerous long-time residents have either sold out or are looking to leave the Island. I cannot believe that this is the desired intent of NPS policy. It is, however, the effect. At present, we have no intent to leave. We are, however, considering our options.

We have made many sacrifices to fulfill our dream of retiring to Hatteras Island. This dream includes, as it had in the past, the ability to fish freely on the beaches of this Island. When we are forced to fight for access, and when our access is restricted to the point of making it next to impossible to catch a few fish for dinner—It may be time to leave. I pray that the upcoming rulemaking process will result in something other than the New Jersification of our PUBLIC beaches. Please do not forget, these are public beaches. As a resident of this Island, I ask that you keep our beaches free and open—and not just to those who are blessed with the means to buy them. Do not deny anyone the opportunity to enjoy our piece of heaven.

Your friends, Jim and Ginny