

Cape Point Alternative.DRAFT.v092208
****DRAFT DELIBERATIVE DOCUMENT****

DRAFT
ORV Management Alternative for Cape Point

GOAL

- Protect natural resources and maintain some sort of access to Cape Point, to the greatest extent possible, year-round.

DEFINITION OF AREA

- Cape Point is defined as from Ramp 44 to Ramp 45 (where access route meets the beach).

MEASURES

- Designate as a non-ORV area March 15 – August 31 (15?), except for east side access corridor along ocean shoreline to 0.2 mile west of the hook. No pets allowed at Cape Point during this period.
- Width of access corridor along eastern shoreline would be up to 100 m at start of the breeding season to allow room for incremental buffer expansions, as needed, as the season progresses.
- PIPL: Implement prescribed buffers as needed for all phases of PIPL breeding cycle.
- AMOY and CWB prenesting and nesting: Within or along the access corridor provide a 50 m buffer and daily monitoring of observed pre-nesting and nesting behavior for non-listed species. Expand buffers if needed to minimize disturbance. During pre-nesting and incubation period, if due to buffer expansions the corridor width is reduced to 30 m (50 m?) or less, restrict access to Cape Point to only ORVs in a “pass through” corridor, with no stopping or disembarking of passengers and no pedestrians in the “pass through” area. Once the pass-through corridor goes into effect, ORV access is restricted to 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Reduce pass-through corridor as needed for buffer expansions. If/when width is reduced to less than 10 m above the high tide line, close the pass-through corridor.
- PIPL and AMOY chicks: Follow prescribed buffer distances for PIPL and AMOY chicks.
- CWB chicks: Along the access corridor, provide 100 m buffer for CWB chicks and monitor daily. Consider chick fencing (a single line of small mesh plastic poultry fencing) between the colony and the corridor at least 50 m above the high tide line if no PIPL or AMOY chicks are in the area. If fencing used, monitor daily. Fencing would be removed if PIPL or AMOY chicks are in the area, if predation or sea turtle problems occur related to the fencing, or once the colony has fledged.
- Pedestrian access to Cape Point: If/when ORV access is closed due to buffer expansion or chicks in the area, allow pedestrian-only access below the high tide line (or, below the existing tide line; i.e., must keep feet wet) from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., unless PIPL or AMOY chicks are foraging in the eastern inter-tidal zone. Monitor daily. Re-open to pedestrian access when no foraging has occurred within 1 week period.
- NPS retains the right to impose further restrictions than described above if necessary for resource protection.

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HABITAT ASSESSMENT

- Conduct annual habitat assessment of Cape Point interior (i.e., west of the access corridor) to determine best available site for targeted CWB nesting habitat enhancement prior to the breeding season, which may include:
 - Improvement of CWB nesting substrate (shell, cobble, etc.) by introducing or relocating shell/cobble and disbursing it across the site.
 - Use CWB decoys and audio-attraction to help establish colony at the targeted site.
- Develop adaptive management objectives and conduct monitoring/research to determine effects of management actions described above (access corridor, chick fencing and habitat enhancement). After analysis, modify measures if needed, to meet objectives and improve results.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT

- In general, rely on natural processes to create and maintain nesting and foraging habitat, except for the following:
 - Develop a plan to improve habitat and wildlife access to available habitat in the dredge pond area. The objective would be to develop a self-sustaining system to the extent possible that would not be dependent upon heavy duty annual manipulation by the NPS. The most desirable approach would be to create a “system” that connects the dredge pond to the beach environment south of the dredge pond and allows for natural processes such as overwash and fluctuations in water level to set back or slow plant succession and maintain early successional nesting habitat as well as MOSH for foraging. Options could include: modifying the landscape to allow inter-connectivity of the westerly end of the dredge pond with the upper beach south of it; and shaping the landscape to create ephemeral pools on the upper beach that are directly connected to the dredge pond water supply.

INTERDUNAL ROAD

- The interdunal road should be maintained and open for two-way traffic.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS FOR ACCESS

- Open Ramp 45 from campground during off-season? As needed? Not at all?
- Open parking area at Ramp 45 during the off-season.
- Develop a pedestrian access route to the dredge pond with suitable nearby parking to facilitate access for bird watching enthusiasts.
- Expand parking at Ramp 43 and provide toilets in an appropriate site nearby. (*The Ramp 43 parking area is subject to overwash and flooding and may not be an appropriate site for toilets.*)
- Increase the width of pavement in the approach to Ramp 44 for airing down.
- Improve the design/construction of Ramp 44 (west of the dune crossing) to increase usability and reliability of the access route during wet or flooded conditions.