

From: [Mike Murray](#)
To: [Doug McGee](#)
Cc: [Thayer Broili](#)
Subject: Re: Fw: Please review
Date: 10/31/2008 12:02 PM
Attachments: [SOP for Deploying Waterbird Decoys.doc](#)

Thanks Doug. At some point, it would be good to write up a short justification of the site selection to have it in the administrative record, but I don't feel strongly that we need right away to justify the idea of it. I would see the written description more as documentation of why we are choosing the particular spot. Your call on if you want to just your thoughts down on paper sooner rather than later, as a draft. I'll let you know if I hear otherwise (i.e., if anyone want to the see the description before buying into the idea of it).

Mike Murray
Superintendent
Cape Hatteras NS/ Wright Brothers NMem/ Ft. Raleigh NHS
(w) 252-473-2111, ext. 148
(c) 252-216-5520
fax 252-473-2595

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▼ [Doug McGee/CAHA/NPS](#)

Doug McGee/CAHA/NPS

To: Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS@NPS
cc: Thayer Broili/CAHA/NPS@NPS

10/31/2008 10:48 AM

Subject: Re: Fw: Please review 

The SOP looks great and addresses any concerns I would think anyone from the wildlife advocacy groups would have as well. As we get closer do you think I should write up a justification for the site-selection or is that over-kill?

Doug McGee
Lead Avian BioTech
Resource Management Division
Cape Hatteras National Seashore
P.O. Box 190 Buxton, NC 27920
(252) 475-8315

-----Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS wrote: -----

0022169

To: Doug McGee/CAHA/NPS@NPS
From: Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS
Date: 10/31/2008 11:27AM
cc: Thayer Broili/CAHA/NPS@NPS
Subject: Fw: Please review

Doug,

Please take a quick look at David Allen's draft decoy SOP (attached) and provide comments to Thayer and me of any suggestions or concerns.

Thanks,

Mike Murray
Superintendent
Cape Hatteras NS/ Wright Brothers NMem/ Ft. Raleigh NHS
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----- Forwarded by Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS on 10/31/2008 10:26 AM -----

Patrick Field
<pfield@cbuilding.org>

10/31/2008 10:05 AM

To Mike Murray
<Mike_Murray@nps.gov>,
Cyndy Holda
<Cyndy_Holda@nps.gov>,
<Thayer_Broili@nps.gov>

cc

Subject FW: Action items for
Natural Resources
Subcommittee

MIKE AND THAYER

Here's what David put together for decoy SOPs. I thought you guys might want to review this before I send it out to the subcommittee. Let me know when it's ready to go.

PAT

----- Forwarded Message

From: David Allen <allend@coastalnet.com>
Reply-To: <allend@coastalnet.com>
Date: Fri, 31 Oct 2008 10:59:28 -0400
To: Patrick Field <pfield@cbuilding.org>
Subject: RE: Action items for Natural Resources Subcommittee

Enclosed is the SOP for colonial nesting waterbird decoys.

> [Original Message]
> From: Patrick Field <pfield@cbuilding.org>
> To: <allend@coastalnet.com>; <bobeakes@aginet.com>;
> <cahabusinessallies@embarqmail.com>; <camerons@coastalnet.com>;
> <ccboucher@cox.net>; Cyndy Holda <Cyndy_Holda@nps.gov>;
> <Darrell_Echols@nps.gov>; <davandme@embarqmail.com>;
> <david_rabon@fws.gov>;
> <hardhead@embarqmail.com>; <jrylander@defenders.org>;
> <Mike_Murray@nps.gov>; Ona Ferguson <oferguson@cbuilding.org>;
> Patrick
> Field <pfield@cbuilding.org>; <rcmheritage@mac.com>; Robert
> Fisher
> <rcf@fisherics.com>; Sandra_Hamilton@nps.gov
> <Sandra_Hamilton@nps.gov>;
> <Thayer_Broili@nps.gov>; <wgolder@audubon.org>
> Cc: Patrick Field <pfield@cbuilding.org>
> Date: 10/23/2008 9:22:04 PM
> Subject: Action items for Natural Resources Subcommittee
>
> ALL
>
> Here's the action items I have from our meeting yesterday.
> Let me know
> if I
> missed anything?
>
> PAT
>
> - Walker to send to Subcommittee bibliography and abstracts
> related to
> bird species
>
> - David Allen to prepare a Standard Operating Procedure
> (SOP) for using
> decoys
>
> - CBI to work with Park to develop general criteria used
> for developing
> pre-nesting areas and process suggestions for how a small,
> effective group
> might advise the Park on this issue
>
> - NPS to share with subcommittee request for technical
> assistance for
> considering vegetation management
>
> - Destry to prepare list/description of policies that
> support active
> management of vegetation.
>
> - CBI to identify next NR meeting to discuss South Point
> and/or other
> areas.
>
> - NPS to consider short term actions, after reviewing
> policies, that
> might
> allow some kind of modest vegetation management sooner rather
> than later,
> recognizing more intensive action would require a well-
> developed plan.

0022171

>
>

----- End of Forwarded Message



SOP for Deploying Waterbird Decoys.doc

SOP for Deploying Waterbird Decoys

- First rule of thumb when thinking about attracting colonial nesting waterbirds to a new nesting location is “Do no harm”. In other words, don’t attract them to a location unless you know they can be as successful or more successful in the new location. The new site should be free of predators ~~and~~, away from heavy vegetation where predators can hide and sufficiently elevated to reduce the risk of flooding.
- The decoys and sound system should be placed in appropriate habitat about at least two weeks before onset of normal breeding. Therefore, place least tern decoys out around by April 15th and larger tern and skimmer decoys out about by April 30th. The goal is to deploy social attractants early enough to invite prospecting birds with sufficient time for site and pair establishment before breeding.
- Place a minimum of 40-50 decoys near a speaker system that plays an endless loop of appropriate (same as decoys) bird calls. We have decoys and one sound system for loan.
- Common terns, gull-billed terns and black skimmers can be mixed in the same area. These decoys should be placed approximately 5-10 feet apart on bare sand and shell, or in areas with sparse vegetation. The colony should look natural and should provide space to allow prospecting birds to move and nest within the decoys.
- Least tern decoys should be separated from the larger tern and skimmer decoys by at least 100 m., but the birds might nest together anyway. Least tern decoys should be primarily on bare sand and shell and placed 15-30 feet apart.
- All decoys should face in the direction of the prevailing winds.
- Decoys should be filled with sand or placed on stakes to keep them from blowing over. Sand filled decoys can still be blow over in heave winds so placing decoys on wooden dowels may be preferred.
- After wind events or every few days sand should be shook out of speakers and brushed off of solar panels to keep them functional. Decoys should be inspected to make sure they are not getting covered by sand and are sitting properly in incubation posture. A few decoys can be placed on sticks as if they are mates standing nearby.
- The decoys and sound system should remain in place for at least two weeks after the colony is well established. It will do no harm to leave the decoys and sound system out all season as long as theft is not a concern.

- Newly attracted colonies should be monitored to determine number of nesting pairs, hatching success and fledging success. Given variability of reproductive success and influence of factors beyond the managers' control (e.g. weather), it may be necessary to monitor newly established colonies for several years to fully assess the success of the project.

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