

BUREAU: National Park Service

ISSUE: Cape Hatteras Traditional Cultural Properties (TCP) issue

PARK: Cape Hatteras National Seashore

DATE: December 10, 2008

Key Points:

- The REG-NEG Committee/Subcommittee asked the CACH Superintendent to look into the possibility that specific areas of CACH are potentially eligible for the National Register (NR) of Historic Places as Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs).
- The Park is currently in the process of preparing an Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) management plan and a resource management plan (RMP) which will address the issues and concerns between the National Park Service (NPS) and the Outer Bank residents.

Background:

- Parker and King in Bulletin # 38 (1998) defined TCPs, however, TCPs are not applicable to purely "intangible" resources but must be property referent, e.g. there must be some traditional cultural value attached to tangible properties. It is the cultural values that make the property "historic" for purpose of the NR.
- An Ethnographic Overview and Assessment (EOA) for CACH was completed in 2005. Archival/documentary research and ethnographic fieldwork was completed as part of the study to further socio-cultural understanding of the villages adjoining the National Seashore.
- The REG-NEG Committee/Subcommittee maintains that "continued open access" to the CACH National Seashore is essential in "preserving the traditions and maintaining the historic identity of the Outer Banks and its people."
- The Park and the REG-NEG Committee/Subcommittee have been meeting monthly to discuss these issues.

Current Status:

- The Park presently estimates that the ORV and RMP will be completed in 2010, with input from the communities and residents of the National Seashore area. The Park will seek input from these groups to create a document which will comply with NPS policy and laws as well as recognize the concerns of the communities.
- If desired, the REG-NEG Committee/Subcommittee can prepare a National Register nomination. There are three basic elements to consider in nominating TCPs: place, community and cultural/traditional significance.
- Suggestions on developing the historic context should consider the following::

Step one: ensure that the entity under consideration is a property. The entity evaluated must be a tangible property--that is, a district, site (or place), building, structure, or object. The relationship between the property and the beliefs or practices need to be examined, because it may be that the beliefs and practices give the property its significance and make it eligible for the Register. In the instance of Cape Hatteras, the beach may be classified as a "site" that is the location of a community activity, like beach-haul seine fishing. The question would be: is this type of commercial fishing a cultural activity, and is there a recognizable community that has this type of fishing as an important cultural or economic activity that is integral to its cultural integrity.

Interested Parties/Interests: REG-NEG Committee and Subcommittees and local communities.

Next Steps/Strategy: Continue NPS participation with CACH communities.

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