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From: [Matt Pruett](#)
To: mike_murray@nps.gov
Cc: cyndy_holda@nps.gov; trip@realwatersports.com
Subject: ORV/Pedestrian Access Plan, Cape Hatteras National Park and Recreation Area
Date: 03/25/2009 03:10 PM

Attn: Mike Murray, Superintendent, National Park Service Outer Banks Group
From: Matt Pruett, Editor, *Eastern Surf Magazine*
CC: Trip Forman, Real Watersports
Re: ORV/Pedestrian Access Plan, Cape Hatteras National Park and Recreation Area

Dear Mr. Murray,

Cape Hatteras dictates my life. Having ridden my first wave there, at Frisco Pier in 1985, the barrier island provided a magical escape route from all the childhood tribulations I experienced coming from a broken home in Virginia Beach, VA. From that point on, I made it a paramount goal to call the Outer Banks my home. When I was 17, I did just that, where those sandbars ultimately shaped my educational and career paths. I enrolled at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, where I majored in English-Creative Writing, which led to my current career as a surf journalist, largely due to my expertise on Outer Banks surfing. And, from a waveriding standpoint, there is absolutely not a more iconic destination on the entire Eastern Seaboard than Hatteras.

For over 40 years, the ESA Eastern Surfing Championships have brought hundreds of competitors, spectators, and industry fixtures to the small town of Buxton, along with hundreds of thousands of dollars of revenue in a single week each year. And within the multibillion dollar surf industry as it stands today, these shores remain a preferred target for world-famous professional waveriders seeking the most powerful Atlantic swells meeting their most emphatic endpoint. Meanwhile, the Outer Banks has produced its own share of pro surfers including international icons Jesse Hines and Noah Snyder, Fuel TV host Matt Beacham, and Buxton native Brett Barley.

In 2001, I took my current job as the editor of *Eastern Surf Magazine* — the longest-running and most popular East Coast surf publication, currently celebrating 18 years in business. I've written hardcover books, directed videos, given extensive lectures, and contributed to nearly every major surfing publication, domestic and international. None of this would have been possible had it not been for the Cape Hatteras National Seashore and the spiritual, cerebral, and metaphysical effect the place had on me as a young man and a writer. And though I now live in Melbourne Beach, FL due to my job's location, to this day my fondest memories are of surfing Hatteras' shifting sandbars with close friends and family amidst a truly idyllic natural seascape. In my lifetime, I have traveled to Indonesia, Costa Rica, Barbados, El Salvador, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Mexico, Nova Scotia, and Samoa for surf, and I still consider Cape Hatteras to be the most beautiful place on earth.

I can understand this issue is one of maintaining balance: a balance between conserving a natural resource and allowing the many loving user groups to enjoy its continued survival. My only wish is that, when making the ultimate decision over how to handle long-term access to the Cape Hatteras National Seashore's many resources, you fully recognize how important these relatively few miles are to surfers. Because to us, this is more than just a skinny little stretch of isolated sand; it's a hugely inspiring piece of our culture, crowded with countless individual stories like my own.

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