

From: [Cyndy Holda](#)
To: [Kim A. Montgomery](#)
Cc: [Paul Stevens](#); [CAHA Chief Ranger@NPS](#); [Cyndy Holda](#); [Darrell Echols](#); [Dennis McGinnis](#); [Ellen Hand](#); [John Wescott](#); [Mary Doll](#); [Mike Murray](#); [Paul Stevens](#); [Thayer Broili](#)
Subject: RE: "Press Release: Dogs Must Be Leashed on National Seashore Beaches"
Date: 04/13/2009 09:48 AM

Kim,

The park boundary along the ocean shore is the mean low tide line. So, as you described below, the owner can take a leashed dog into the ocean, once past the mean low tide line....so it is a safe bet that just before or at about the same time, the dog needs to start swimming (feet no longer touching bottom), the owner can release them from the leash and go further out for a swim; once returning to the shore, the dog should be back on the leash before exiting the water.

On the soundside shoreline, it is a little different.....park boundary is located 150 feet offshore, so dogs must remain on a leash for at least 150 feet from the shoreline. At some soundside access areas the depth does not drop off over a dog's head until well past 150 feet (very shallow for a long way out) but at other soundside access areas, the dog will be over its head if you go out 150 feet. Of course, the pet owner must use discretion as to where/how the dog swims in the sound.....leashed or unleashed.

Thank you for your interest in Cape Hatteras National Seashore and for your interest in compliance with park regulations.

Cyndy M. Holda
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To <Cyndy_Holda@nps.gov>
cc
04/10/2009 12:33 PM Subject RE: "Press Release: Dogs Must Be Leashed on National Seashore Beaches"

Hi Cyndy,

Can dogs swim in Ocean/Sound off-leash? In other words, owner takes dog into water, unleashes dog then re-leashes upon exit from ocean or sound?

Thanks - I know we'll have this question,

Kim

Kim A. Montgomery
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-----Original Message-----

From: Cyndy_Holda@nps.gov [mailto:Cyndy_Holda@nps.gov]
Sent: Thursday, April 09, 2009 8:58 AM
Subject: "Press Release: Dogs Must Be Leashed on National Seashore Beaches"

(See attached file: 040909.Dog Off Leash Violations.doc)

National Park Service News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 9, 2009
CONTACT: 252-473-2111 ext. 148

DOGS ON NATIONAL SEASHORE MUST BE LEASHED

Superintendent Mike Murray announced today that, due to concerns about potential negative impacts to wildlife, there will be a focused effort this season to improve compliance at Cape Hatteras National Seashore with the existing National Park Service (NPS) regulation requiring dogs to be leashed in all units of the national park system.

The national seashore serves as breeding habitat for a variety of protected shorebird and waterbird species and as nesting habitat for several species of sea turtles. Many of these protected bird species nest on bare sandy beaches and the nests are often not readily apparent to park visitors. The disturbance from dogs running off-leash can interrupt breeding behavior and cause incubating birds to leave their nest, which exposes the nest to predators. Once disturbed, birds may abandon nesting at those locations altogether.

In 2008, NPS law enforcement rangers documented over seven hundred cases of dogs off leash at Cape Hatteras National Seashore, which included numerous violations on beaches near resource protection areas that had been established to prevent disturbance or harm to nesting or foraging protected wildlife species.

"To minimize impacts to wildlife and still allow as much visitor access as possible under the terms of the consent decree, we are intent on improving the level of visitor compliance with the leash requirement," said Superintendent Murray. "I have directed park staff to step up their efforts to inform pet owners of the federal leash regulation and to target enforcement of the regulation in wildlife areas."

Park Rangers can issue federal violation notices carrying a \$150.00 fine to any pet owner who does not comply with the leash requirement. Pets are prohibited in resource protection areas. Elsewhere, pets must be physically restrained at all times on a leash not exceeding 6 feet in

length.

--NPS--