

From: [Michelle Baker](#)
To: [Mike Murray](#)
Cc: [Britta Muiznieks](#); [Cyndy Holda](#)
Subject: Re: please review
Date: 04/27/2009 08:20 AM

Mike,

Here is my revision of the turtle night-driving paragraph. The biggest change is that I added two sentences about the effect of artificial lighting on nesting females (rather than just hatchlings). Let me know if I can help draft anything else or provide any other information.

Cape Hatteras National Seashore provides crucial nesting habitat for loggerhead and green sea turtles, as well as the occasional leatherback. Loggerhead and green turtles are currently listed threatened under the Endangered Species Act and leatherbacks are considered endangered. Sea turtles typically lay nests at night between May and September, when adult turtles come ashore to dig a deep nest cavity in the sand and deposit around 100 ping-pong ball sized eggs into each nest. While nesting, these turtles are susceptible to being disturbed by human activity on the beach. If a nesting turtle is disturbed, it may not nest at all, or may lay a nest in a less than optimal area, resulting in the nest being washed out. Once laid, eggs will incubate in the sand for 50-60 days before the hatchlings emerge and make their way to the ocean. The hatchlings will use light cues in order to find their way from their nest to the sea, making them vulnerable to artificial lights from houses, piers, headlights, beach fires and lanterns. If disoriented by artificial lights, hatchlings may wander away from the ocean and often die from exhaustion or predation as they wander around the beach. Although studies vary, it is estimated that only 1 in 1000 to 1 in 10,000 hatchlings will survive to adulthood. 10 to 15% of the turtle nests laid in North Carolina are laid on Cape Hatteras National Seashore beaches. In 2008, a record 112 sea turtle nests were located and protected at the Seashore.

Thanks,

Michelle Bogardus
Resouce Management

▼ [Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS](#)

**Mike
Murray/CAHA/NPS**

04/24/2009 05:21 PM

To: Michelle Baker/CAHA/NPS@NPS
cc: Britta Muiznieks/CAHA/NPS@NPS, Cyndy Holda/CAHA/NPS@NPS

Subject: please review

Hi Michelle,

We are working on a draft press release to issue no later than Tuesday (April 28) next week to remind visitors that the night driving

restriction goes into effect on May 1. I want to include a paragraph on sea turtles to help explain the reasons for the restriction. **Please review the paragraph below** (which is a synthesis of information in the night driving permit brochure and from some other sources), **and offer any suggestions for improvement or corrections needed.** (Please "Reply to ALL" on your response.)

Cape Hatteras National Seashore provides crucial nesting habitat for three species of sea turtles. Loggerhead and green sea turtles are threatened under the Endangered Species Act and the leatherback is considered endangered. These species typically lay their nests at night, between May (April?) and September, when adult female turtles crawl ashore to excavate cavities in the sand and deposit around 100 eggs in each nest. Eggs will hatch about 60 days later and emerging hatchlings use light cues to find their way to the ocean, making hatchlings vulnerable to artificial lights. By following lights from houses, piers and headlights, the hatchlings may move away from the ocean and can eventually die from exhaustion or predation as they wander about the beach. It is estimated that between one in 1000 and one in 10,000 hatchlings will survive to adulthood. Approximately 10% of the sea turtle nests that occur in North Carolina each year occur on Cape Hatteras National Seashore beaches. In 2008, 112 sea turtle nests occurred at the Seashore.

Thanks!

Mike Murray
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