



"Wetmore, Doug"
<dwetmore@louisberger.com>

11/19/2009 05:13 PM

To <Sandra_Hamilton@nps.gov>

cc "Fox, Lori" <lfox@louisberger.com>

Subject RE: SHNA

Hi Sandy.

Here's the revision:

North Carolina Natural Heritage Program

Among other responsibilities, the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP) identifies the most important places for the conservation of rare species and high quality natural communities in the state. As of January 2008, the NCNHP had identified more than 2,400 of these places, officially referred to as Significant Natural Heritage Areas (SHNAs). If a natural area cannot be purchased by NCNHP, its ecological significance can be recognized through a registry agreement, which is a voluntary agreement with the landowner that provides limited protection but recognizes the owner's commitment to conservation of the area. There are 10 SHNAs located within the boundaries of the Seashore. The NPS signed two agreements with NCNHP for the formal protection of nine of these areas. The Buxton Woods SHNA became registered in 1979 and eight other SHNAs were registered in the 1987 agreement. The purpose of the agreements was to "express the sincere intentions of the National Park Service to refrain from making or permitting changes that negatively affect the natural values for which this area was registered within the boundaries outlined". It specifically stated that "Vehicular traffic on beach locations will be regulated to prevent damage to nesting colonies of water birds". Among the registered SHNAs potentially relevant to this ORV Management Plan/EIS are Cape Hatteras Point, Hatteras Sand Flats, Ocracoke Island - Eastern End, and Ocracoke Island - Western End Sand Flats. The significance of these SHNAs is primarily the habitat that they provide for shorebirds such as piping plover, American oystercatchers, and several species of colonial waterbirds, although several sensitive plant communities are also identified as part of these ecological communities. All of the action alternatives in this EIS provide increased levels of shorebird protection than what was occurring at the time the NPS and NCNHP signed the agreement to register and protect these natural areas. However, at this time, the exact location of any proposed improvements is not known. The NPS will consult with NCNHP when the Seashore has identified specific locations for constructing or relocating ramps, interdunal roads, or parking lots that are in an SHNA to ensure that the construction avoids impacts to any sensitive species.

Doug Wetmore
Environmental Planner

Direct 303-985-6611
Mobile 303-905-6128
Fax 303-984-4942

The Louis Berger Group, Inc. | 12596 West Bayaud Ave | Suite 201 | Lakewood, CO 80228 | www.louisberger.com

This message, including any attachments hereto, may contain privileged and/or confidential information and is intended solely for the attention and use of the intended addressee(s). If you are not the intended addressee, you may neither use, copy, nor deliver to anyone this message or any of its attachments. In such case, you should immediately destroy this message and its attachments and kindly notify the sender by reply mail. Unless made

by a person with actual authority conferred by The Louis Berger Group, Inc., (Berger) the information and statements herein do not constitute a binding commitment or warranty by Berger. Berger assumes no responsibility for any misperceptions, errors or misunderstandings. You are urged to verify any information that is confusing and report any errors/concerns to us in writing.

From: Wetmore, Doug
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2009 4:36 PM
To: 'Sandra_Hamilton@nps.gov'
Cc: Fox, Lori
Subject: SHNA

Hi Sandy.

Here's my first shot at addressing SHNAs in chapter 1.

Relationship to Other State and Local Planning Documents, Policies, Actions, Laws, and Regulations

North Carolina Natural Heritage Program

The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP) identifies the most important places for the conservation of rare species and high quality natural communities, which are called Significant Natural Heritage Areas (SHNAs). The NCNHP prioritizes these natural areas to help focus conservation planning efforts and direct financial resources where they bring the most ecological benefit. There are 10 SHNAs located within the boundaries of the Seashore. In 1979 and 1987, the NPS signed agreements with NCNHP for the formal protection of nine of these areas, establishing them as "Registered." The purpose of the agreement was to "express the sincere intentions of the National Park Service to refrain from making or permitting changes that negatively affect the natural values for which this area was registered within the boundaries outlined". It specifically stated that "vehicular traffic on beach locations will be regulated to prevent damage to nesting colonies of water birds". Among the registered SHNAs potentially relevant to this ORV Management Plan/EIS are Cape Hatteras Point, Hatteras Sand Flats, Ocracoke Island - Eastern End, and Ocracoke Island - Western End Sand Flats. The significance of these SHNAs is primarily the habitat that they provide for shorebirds such as piping plover, American oystercatchers, and several species of colonial waterbirds, although several sensitive plant communities are also identified as part of these ecological communities. All of the action alternatives in this EIS provide increased levels of shorebird protection than what was occurring at the time the NPS and NCNHP signed the agreement to register and protect these natural areas. However, at this time, the exact location of any proposed improvements is not known. The NPS will consult with NCNHP when the Seashore has identified specific locations for constructing or relocating ramps, interdunal roads, or parking lots that are in an SHNA to ensure that the construction avoids impacts to any sensitive species.

Doug Wetmore
Environmental Planner

Direct 303-985-6611
Mobile 303-905-6128
Fax 303-984-4942