

From: [Mike Murray](#)  
 To: [David Barna](#)  
 Cc: [David Vela](#); [Gordon Wasinger](#); [Gault Hazelwood](#); [Don Hellmann](#)  
 Bcc: [Candy Hesse](#)  
 Subject: Re: Fw: Request for assistance from Congressman Walter B. Jones  
 Date: 03/12/2010 08:27 PM

David,

Thanks for forwarding this. My recommendation is that the NPS (and the park) stay out of it. Background: In late December, NC Audubon sent me a letter from 90+ concerned scientists who urged NPS to employ sound science in developing the CAHA ORV mgt plan and regulation. They copied Will Shafroth, Dan Wenk, Bert Frost, David Vela, etc. Apparently, "signing the letter" was conducted over the internet via some sort of mailing list or professional network; and most of the names on the letter also showed what agency or organization they worked for. The letter was clear that it represented the professional opinions of the individuals involved and not the official position of the respective agencies or organizations that they work for. The Outer Banks Sentinel heard about the letter and broke the news. The reporter early on was apparently checking individual names on the letter to determine their background and who they worked, because she contacted me about one of the signers who (when Googled) had apparently worked at CAHA. The reporter thought the individual might be a current employee, but it turns out the individual had been a seasonal at CAHA in 2003 and now worked as a marine biologist for a private, non-profit marine research institute in Florida. News of the letter quickly led to assertions by Dare County officials and ORV advocates that NC Audubon was advocating for elimination of all visitor access at the Seashore (a significant overstatement if one understands the specifics of what the letter said). Then the Dare County Commissioners sent me (and copied everyone else, Will Shafroth, etc.) a rebuttal letter. ORV advocates and County commissioners then apparently contacted some of the individual scientists who signed the letter, particularly ones who identified who they work for, and some of the organizations that the scientists work for, and apparently accused at least some of those scientists of unethical conduct, a story which the same newspaper has covered. Thus far, one scientist with Ducks Unlimited has recanted support for the Audubon letter and one from NOAA has clarified that the opinion expressed is personal. Then the Director of NC Audubon sent an email to the Chairman of the Dare Co Commission that included an email chain of some of the messages one of the scientists had received from several of the County commissioners (with messages along the lines of "I'm a taxpayer, I pay your salary, you should be fired"). In the email to the commission chairman, the Audubon director pointed out that the scientists' letter had clearly stated it represented the professional opinions of the individuals involved and not the position(s) of the various (numerous) agencies they work for, appealed for respect of the individuals' right to express their opinions without being harassed, set the record straight that Audubon was not advocating for complete closure of the Seashore, and appealed for civil and responsible dialogue, positive leadership, etc. That response, including the background emails, received no press coverage. In any case, the newspaper and the County commissioners seemed to be trying to make a case that anyone who signed the letter and identified the agency they work for is somehow in violation of federal or professional ethics standards and should be disciplined or fired. It appears the reporter is asking for a DOI opinion about whether FWS scientists who signed the letter have violated DOI ethics standards and is not asking a specific question about ORV management at CAHA.

Such is the nature of our highly polarized stakeholder situation. I've stayed out of it and recommend NPS WASO does to.

Mike Murray  
 Superintendent  
 Cape Hatteras NS/ Wright Brothers NMem/ Ft. Raleigh NHS  
 (w) 252-473-2111, ext. 148  
 (c) 252-216-5520  
 fax 252-473-2595

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-----David Barna/WASO/NPS wrote: -----

To: "Mike Murray" <[Mike\\_Murray@nps.gov](mailto:Mike_Murray@nps.gov)>  
 From: David Barna/WASO/NPS  
 Date: 03/12/2010 06:56PM  
 Subject: Fw: Request for assistance from Congressman Walter B. Jones

----- Original Message -----  
 From: Don Hellmann  
 Sent: 03/12/2010 06:43 PM EST  
 To: David Barna  
 Subject: Fw: Request for assistance from Congressman Walter B. Jones

Just thought you should know about this.

Don Hellmann  
 Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs  
 National Park Service  
 1848 C Street, N.W., Room 7257  
 Washington, D.C. 20540  
 Phone 202-208-5656  
 Fax: 202-208-5683  
 e-mail: [Don.Hellmann@nps.gov](mailto:Don.Hellmann@nps.gov)

----- Original Message -----  
 From: "Kendira Barhoff" <[Kendira.Barhoff@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Kendira.Barhoff@ios.doi.gov)>  
 Sent: 03/12/2010 05:55 PM EST  
 To: Lara Levinson; Matt Lee-Ashley  
 Cc: Don Hellmann  
 Subject: Re: Request for assistance from Congressman Walter B. Jones

This is the first I have seen anything from this reporter. I will call.

----- Original Message -----  
 From: Gordon, Lara  
 To: Barhoff, Kendira; Lee-Ashley, Matt  
 Cc: Hellmann, Don  
 Sent: Fri Mar 12 17:45:17 2010  
 Subject: Fw: Request for assistance from Congressman Walter B. Jones

Hi, Kendira and Matt,

Josh with Rep. Walter Jones just called me and forwarded this request for DOI Public Affairs to talk to this reporter with the Outer Banks Sentinel.

The reporter told the Congressman that she has not been able to get a response from DOI on her question and asked him to help her. Her question is in her email, below, and concerns the attached letter, spearheaded by Audubon, and signed by several federal employees using their agency affiliations. The topic is ORVs.

Thanks,

Lara

-----Original Message-----  
 From: Bowen, Joshua | <mailto:joshua.bowen@mail.house.gov> |  
 Sent: Friday, March 12, 2010 5:15 PM  
 To: Levinson, Lara  
 Subject: Fw: Request for assistance from Congressman Walter B. Jones

-----Original Message-----  
 From: Bowen, Joshua  
 Sent: Tuesday, March 09, 2010 5:17 PM  
 To: Hunt, Matt  
 Subject: Request for assistance from Congressman Walter B. Jones

Hi Matt, Congressman Jones has a reporter from a paper in his district that has been trying to talk to a live body in DOI Public Affairs for a couple weeks but has yet to get a call back. The reporter is Sandy Semans, and she writes for the Outer Banks Sentinel. Her email address is [editors@obsentinel.com](mailto:editors@obsentinel.com), and her phone number is 252-480-2244. I've attached the email that she submitted to DOI Public Affairs two weeks ago. If there's anyway you could forward this to the appropriate person to respond to her inquiry, that would be great. Thanks!

Joshua Bowen  
 Legislative Director  
 Congressman Walter B. Jones (NC-3)  
 (202) 225-3415

-----Original Message-----  
 From: Sandy Semans | [sallyseditors@obsentinel.com](mailto:sallyseditors@obsentinel.com) |  
 Sent: Tuesday, March 09, 2010 3:50 PM  
 To: Bowen, Joshua  
 Subject: Fwd: Questions about employee ethical standards

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sandy Semans <[editors@obsentinel.com](mailto:editors@obsentinel.com)>  
 Date: February 21, 2010 11:42 PM EST  
 To: interior\_pseves@ios.doi.gov  
 Subject: Questions about employee ethical standards

Recently a letter circulated by Audubon was signed by a number of FWS employees -- along with their names was their agency designations. The letter was sent to a number of NPS officials in an attempt to influence the inclusion of what are some controversial measures to close popular areas of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore. None of the FWS signers are from this region. Is it ethical for federal employees to advocate the actions of one of its agencies? The letter is attached.

Thanks

Sandy Semans