

Sheely, Jo

From: Van Dyke, Nancy
Sent: Wednesday, June 09, 2010 2:18 PM
To: Byron, Rebecca; Smith, Spence
Cc: Fox, Lori
Subject: FW: Ocracoke Questions

FYI

-----Original Message-----

From: Sandra_Hamilton@nps.gov [mailto:Sandra_Hamilton@nps.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, June 09, 2010 3:18 PM
To: Van Dyke, Nancy
Cc: Doug_Wetmore@nps.gov
Subject: Fw: Ocracoke Questions

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----- Forwarded by Sandra Hamilton/DENVER/NPS on 06/09/2010 01:18 PM -----

Mike
Murray/CAHA/NPS

06/09/2010 10:07
AM

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Fw: Ocracoke Questions

To

cc

Subject

See Kenny's input below . Will consider this information when we discuss
the Routes and Areas Issues on June 11.

Mike Murray
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----- Forwarded by Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS on 06/09/2010 12:03 PM -----

Kenny
Ballance/CAHA/NPS

06/09/2010 11:29
AM

Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS@NPS, Paul
Stevens/CAHA/NPS@NPS

To

cc

Subject

Ocracoke Questions

Mike & Paul.... hope that these answers or suggestions will help some. I have tried to be fair for both sides of our groups. If there area any answers that you don't understand then just let me know and I will try and make myself more clear. Thanks for allowing me to give my thoughts and suggestions on these topics.

Question # 1 - At this time we have five Sound side roads open to the public. All of these have access for Pedestrians and ORV visitors. There are two that are closed to the pubic - Quork Hammock and Hammock Road . These two areas I feel very strongly about opening up to the public. These are the two areas that locals have had for many years to protection their boats and equipment to maintain a living on the water. If we include the Hammock Oak Nature Trail as another Pedestrian area then there would be six areas for people to walk and enjoy the sound side. I feel also these comments have come from the fact that we only have one sound side access covering the South Point area. This I would say is the area that they are more concern about as far as not having enough soundside access. In the summer time when most of our usage is taking place these sound side areas that we offer now are use more at the north end than another other areas. So to finish up on this topic I have discuss this with my LE Rangers and they agree that we supply plenty of areas for both use on the soundside other than Sound Point area.

Question # 2 - I would look at trying to give more ORV area if possible South of Ramp 59 & North of Ramp 67. Both of these areas could possibly have about 0.2 miles extra for their usage. I totally understand that both of these areas could be closed down due to bird nesting but when these areas could be expanded then we should maybe consider doing so when both South and North Points are closed in the breeding season. This way we are showing on Ocracoke some relief to the more popular areas that are being smother but ORV use due to both points being closed. Last of all if both points were to be open in the off season then I feel the amount that we have at this time would be plenty for both Pedestrians and ORV usage.

Question # 3 - My opinion of new ramps is that looking at Alternative F it shows a New Ramp 62 and 64. I feel that we could possibly combine these two ramps and make just one ramp in that area. This would save on having to install two parking lots and the expense of putting in two ramps.

Question # 4 - Ocracoke is only so long and the areas that we have in the summer for Pedestrian access is great. Pedestrians can go to the life guarded parking lot and walk north. This area is the most use area for Pedestrians on Ocracoke. We have the whole areas in front of the NPS Campground where all Pedestrians (park visitor, locals, and campers) can walk free of ORV traffic. We also have the area at the Pony Pen where they can walk South and North and not have to deal with ORV traffic. If we never go in a partnership with DOT at the very north end and install a board walk across from the ferry operation then this would be another area for them to use. So I feel they are very well taken care of in the spring and summer. In the fall and winter it's open area with very little traffic on the beach anyway.

Question # 5 - This area should be closed due to the campground and life guarded beach operation. The only reason that I asked for this little area to be open was to help take the pressure off of us when we didn't have either point open last summer. I would be happy with this area being closed during the total summer season.

Question # 6 - I feel that there is not much that can be done here... if we have birds then these areas must be protected. I only wish that we could consider some way to be equal to both side of these two demanding groups. Pedestrians I don't worry about as much because I feel they have plenty of areas to go and not have to deal with ORV traffic on Ocracoke Beach. There are times that I do feel for the average person who comes down and wants to enjoy driving on the beach. Ocracoke has up until this year had a equal amount of areas for ORV traffic to go. Now that North Point has closed this makes it more restricted. I often stop and think about the other districts and the fact that they can go much faster to other districts or areas in the park but on Ocracoke they must cross a ferry to even consider using these areas north of Ocracoke.

Last of all Mike and Paul..... Ocracoke is a totally different situation in the park. No Villages which I am very glad of for the amount of trouble they continue to cause. I strongly feel that what seems to kill us more on all of these issues is the size of the closure and the amount of time we are required to keep these areas closed. I being a local can understand where both sides are coming from. If we could even consider walk through areas I feel there would be less issues and problems when our North and South points area closed. I often think back to years back when we allowed day time driving and walking through these area which seem to make our park

visitors, and locals much happen to know that they were not being forced to stay out of areas. As my time in the government gets closer to the end I often wonder where I will stand on these issues once I leave. I can only hope that the final decision will be as fair as possible for both sides once I am gone.

----- Pasted by Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS on 06/09/2010 12:05 PM -----

Mike
Murray/CAHA/NPS

05/21/2010 02:14
PM

Kenny Ballance/CAHA/NPS

Paul Stevens/CAHA/NPS@NPS

please review

To

cc

Subject

Kenny,

Please review the attached DEIS maps (just maps 6 and 7 for Ocracoke) and let me know if there is anything you would change on the ORV route designations for Ocracoke in the "final " decision in the FEIS. I would like for Paul and I to have your feedback prior to June 10. Things to think about:

Are any of the soundside access points that are not designated as open to the public that are suitable for being open to the public? (Some of the comments received were about the lack of soundside access on Ocracoke).

Would you change (fine tune, etc.) any of the ORV YR, ORV seasonal, or non-ORV YR designations, based on what we've seen during the breeding season the past few years, in order to have adequate space open during the summer? For example, we currently are allowing ORVs for about 0.9 mile south of Ramp 59, but alternative F would only allow ORV use for about 0.25 mile south. Should we designate more beach south of Ramp 59 as open to ORVs?

Can we reduce the number or eliminate some of the proposed new ORV ramps? (See Chapter 2, table 7 in the DEIS for what is proposed in alternative F)

Are there any locations that new parking and/or a developed pedestrian access point (i.e., a boardwalk) is needed or would be beneficial for access to vehicle free areas?

Would you change anything between Ramp 68 - Ramp 70 to allow some ORV use during the summer (i.e., to deal with your current situation), rather than have a continuous ORV closure from the north end of the campground to south of the Day Use area?

Any fine tuning of the North End or South Point designations (such as moving the dividing line between ORV and vehicle free areas a little)?

Any other changes you wish to propose?

Caveats: Assume that resource utilization will drive decisions about prenesting areas , particularly at the inlets. Assume that we want to achieve a reasonable balance (e.g., 50/50 split +/- 10%) between ORV miles and vehicle free miles. Assume that we want to simplify the approach, as much as possible (i.e., if we can, reduce the number of seasonally changing designations and different dates for seasonal changes).

Please mark up the maps and send comments for any changes you'd like us to consider. Feel free to call if you have any questions.

[attachment "CAHA Alt F Maps.pdf" deleted by Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS]

Thanks,

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