

**From:** [Mike Murray](#)  
**To:** [Sherri Fields](#)  
**Subject:** staffing  
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Sherri,

To follow-up on this morning's call...

In the FEIS, we are going to add/identify the need for an "adaptive management/science coordinator" position. Presumably this would be a GS-11 or GS-12 biologist with a good background in wildlife research (planning, coordinating and/or conducting it), data management and interpretation, and some practical experience in adaptive management (which seems to be difficult to find within the NPS). The plan/EIS calls for a number of "adaptive management initiatives" (essentially research studies) to evaluate certain resource management measures, such as the size of buffers distances for the respective species, as well as habitat modeling. In essence, Britta's position would be the "management biologist" (to manage RM operations) and the new position would be the "science coordinator" to plan and coordinate research and adaptive management, much of it related to the beach issues. We envision the new position doing the planning, coordination, funding requests, etc. as needed to line up an ongoing series of research projects to be implemented through cooperative agreements over the next 10+ years. We can conceivably budget for part of the position and some of the research through ORV permit revenue.

While my preference would be to fund/staff a full time dedicated position for CAHA, because I think we could keep the person busy full time in creating a stronger science program, it is not yet clear if the park can fully fund such a position, even with ORV permit fee revenue. **Do you see any possibility or value in establishing and funding a joint NECN-CAHA position**, that could be based here (in the park or in North Carolina near here, e.g., at a university or FWS office) and would spend 1/2 time on CAHA issues and 1/2 time on SECN issues? Does the network need somebody who is knowledgeable about the application and implementation of adaptive management techniques for wildlife management? (We've found quite a few NPS folks that can talk about adaptive management, but few who with any experience implementing it.)

Other options we have considered: Last year I had a preliminary discussion with Gordon Myers, the Director of NCWRC, about them stationing an adaptive management biologist (WRC employee) on the Outer Banks to work with the Seashore on such issues. The State, like the FWS (and unlike the NPS), is proactively moving forward on the use of adaptive management techniques and have started to make organizational culture changes in that direction (e.g., through training of management staff, etc.). Given the State's current budget situation and WRC's susceptibility to stakeholder pressure and political influence, I'm not sure this option is a good one for our situation. Pete Benjamin says that FWS is in the process of staffing the Landscape Conservation Cooperative function in his office and he understands that NPS will fund a position there too. Do you know anything about it? Is there a possibility of CAHA partially funding such a position and receiving an equivalent amount of support? Or, perhaps, the park could contract (i.e., through a cooperative agreement) with a university to provide the capability (e.g., a professor/researcher as the adaptive management "advisor" to the Seashore, then

grad students would conduct the various research projects.

Please think about it, give me a call if you have any ideas, and in any case let me know what you think about the possibility of a split position. Meanwhile, we'll keep exploring options that would not involve a split position.

Thanks,

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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