

0027614

From: [Mike Murray](#)
To: [Cyndy Holda](#)
Subject: Re: Fw: From NPS.gov: Resource Management Field Summary
Date: 07/20/2010 05:24 PM

I made a few additions to the draft explanations (my edits are also shown in BLUE, so you won't be able to see the changes, but use the text as revised).

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▼ [Cyndy Holda/CAHA/NPS](#)

**Cyndy
Holda/CAHA/NPS**

To Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS@NPS
cc

07/20/2010 04:37 PM

Subject Fw: From NPS.gov: Resource Management Field
Summary

Mike.....for your review before I respond. Britta provided the factual content of the answers directly to me.

Dear Mr. Goellner:
Please see response to your questions below in **BOLD, BLUE** text.

Thank you for your interest in Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

Cyndy M. Holda
Public Affairs Specialist
Outer Banks Group
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----- Forwarded by Denise Heinrich/CAHA/NPS on 07/14/2010 09:00 AM -----

tgoellner@sbcglobal.net

To caha_information@nps.gov
cc

07/13/2010 05:09 PM

Subject From NPS.gov: Resource Management Field

Summary

Email submitted from: tgoellner@sbcglobal.net at /caha/contacts.htm

The weekly observation report you provide is informative and I appreciate the NPS posting the info. I visit Ocracoke once a year. I favor limited ORV use of the beach, but I can't quite understand some of the pedestrian closures at the points. I believe folks should have access below the high tide line.

Questions:

1. Do you also count the number of PIPL and other nesting birds that use areas other than the beaches? Areas such as the top of flat buildings, smaller inshore islands and Portsmouth? If so, is that info available to the public?

NPS does not monitor bird nesting activities outside the boundary of Cape Hatteras National Seashore since we have no jurisdiction or authority to do so. The North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission monitors bird nesting on some of the nearby spoil islands in Pamlico Sound and would have jurisdiction for wildlife management activities in the villages within or adjacent to the Seashore. Cape Lookout National Seashore, a separate unit of the national park system that is administered by a park manager based in Harker's Island, monitors nesting activities on Portsmouth Island. Information about nesting activities at those locations is generally available through those agencies. Within Cape Hatteras National Seashore, emphasis is currently placed on monitoring the ocean shoreline for beach nesting shorebirds to fulfill our monitoring requirements for the court-ordered consent decree as well as the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Biological Opinion. NPS has also started some baseline monitoring of non-beach nesting birds at the National Seashore. We are not aware of any nesting that occurs on the roofs of any NPS building. In general, piping plover do not nest on rooftops (their chicks, which feed themselves and must walk to foraging areas, would not survive); however, least terns have been known to do so (as the adults fly off to foraging areas and bring food back to the chicks). The only inshore island that NPS monitors is Green Island located in the southwest corner of Oregon Inlet.

2. Do all PIPL chicks at the points of Ocracoke die from unknown causes?

Many of the PIPL chicks disappear during night-time hours and because NPS staff have not observed the "taking" of the chicks, we have to attribute the losses to unknown causes. In recent years (e.g., 2008-2009),

chicks have survived and fledged at South Point. At North Ocracoke, prior to there being a PIPL nest this year, the most recent PIPL nest occurred in 1996 and the most recent year that a chick fledged was in 1995.

3. If the eggs & chicks are in such peril and the population so threatened would relocation to a safer place or a fenced nursery be helpful?

Piping plover nests and chicks are typically not relocated, as there would be issues with nest abandonment and chick survival. The focus of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's piping plover recovery plan is in protecting and managing suitable breeding habitat where it naturally occurs, so that piping plovers have the opportunity to nest successfully in the wild. At this point in time, the park, in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service which would have to permit such a program, is not considering nest relocation or the creation of a nursery as a viable option for the recovery of the species.

From a layman's point of view it appears that an enormous amount of resources and beach closures aren't achieving their set goals.

We can understand your point of view; however, from a biological point of view, the beach nesting bird species have been in decline at the Seashore since the early 1990's for a variety of reasons, so it is not reasonable to expect recent changes in management procedures to immediately change that trend. By some standards, such as the number of breeding pairs and chicks fledged, there have been positive signs in recent years that the breeding success of piping plover and other species has been improving at the Seashore.