

**From:** [Sandra Hamilton](#)  
**To:** [Britta Muiznieks](#)  
**Cc:** [Mike Murray](#); [Doug Wetmore](#); [lfox@louisberger.com](mailto:lfox@louisberger.com)  
**Subject:** Re: ORVs and Habitat Manipulation (Collazo et al)  
**Date:** 10/04/2010 06:56 AM

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Thanks, Britta.

I re-read the report over the week-end, too. I think that the remaining part of the report that we need addressed is p. 26 of Ch V (Breeding biology and effects of human disturbance on Piping Plovers (*Charadrius melodus*) on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Susan Phlihower, Suzanne Wrenn, and Jeffrey R. Walters) in the paragraph starting "In CAHA and CALO, nesting areas are usually adjacent to ....

The statements we need to address in that paragraph are "...human disturbance does not significantly affect piping plover breeding activity...An important conclusion is that conditions in North Carolina are very different than those in other areas, notably the northeast, in which piping plovers have been studied, and based on which the species recovery plan has been structured (USFWS 1994). Effective management likely will differ between North Carolina and other areas as a result. For example, beach closures, which are effective in other areas, likely will have little impact in North Carolina. It is not clear that ocean intertidal zone will be used much even if such habitat is closed to humans....

Thank you very much for your help with this, Britta.

Sandy

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To Sandra Hamilton/DENVER/NPS@NPS  
cc Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS@NPS  
10/03/2010 09:01 PM Subject ORVs and Habitat Manipulation (Collazo et al)

Sandy-

Over the weekend I reviewed the Collazo, Walters and Parnell study that was conducted 15+ years ago. These combined studies looked at many species including the nesting populations of gulls, terns, and skimmers. The

objective of these studies was not to determine the best ways of manipulating vegetation to improve nesting habitat but rather focused on the nesting populations themselves. One of the recommendations made was to allow ORVs to continue driving on the upper beach to maintain the bare or nearly bare upper beach habitat for nesting terns and skimmers. While the park does agree that vegetation encroachment may result in a decline of the number beach nesting birds, encroachment of beach nesting sites by plants is a normal part of succession of overwash communities. Unfortunately, the dune stabilization that has occurred throughout much of the park, often inhibits the formation of new washover areas and the creation of new nesting habitat once vegetation starts encroaching on current nesting habitat. The Park is willing to consider habitat manipulation for the benefit of nesting species however the haphazard use of ORVs to control vegetation is not the preferred method for accomplishing this goal. The park is considering mechanical and hydrological methods for manipulating vegetation to improve potential foraging and nesting habitat however the timeframe for accomplishing this is currently not known.

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