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**From:** [Pete\\_Benjamin@fws.gov](mailto:Pete_Benjamin@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Mike\\_Murray@nps.gov](mailto:Mike_Murray@nps.gov)  
**Cc:** [gordon.myers@ncwildlife.org](mailto:gordon.myers@ncwildlife.org)  
**Subject:** Re: Source of help for Cape Hatteras  
**Date:** 11/19/2010 10:04 AM

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I worked on the Cape May Meadows project when I was in our NJ Field Office back in the 90's. It's a nice place, but you're right Mike: there was a huge amount of work involved that was only possible because it was necessary to address not just with the habitat degradation issues, but the very significant flooding problems in Cape May. Without the Federal nexus provided by the Corps of Engineers project, it never would have happened. Also, as you note, the property is managed as a private refuge, not a recreational area, and as such public access is controlled much more tightly than I think you'd want for a National Seashore. You are also correct in pointing out the differences in landscape context between Cape May and Cape Hatteras. Hatteras is very important and special, obviously, but if you had to pin point one place on a map of the East Coast as "bird central" during the migration, it's the tip of Cape May NJ; and the Cape May Meadows provides a mix of freshwater and estuarine marsh, beach, dune and upland habitat at exactly the right spot on the landscape. It's the combination of great habitat and landscape location that makes this small property so important to migratory birds.

Barbara makes a good point in that as NPS continues to explore opportunities for habitat improvement at the Seashore, there are good examples of effective techniques such as Cape May Meadows from which we can learn much.

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P.S. Please note new Mobile Phone number above.

**Mike\_Murray@nps.gov**

11/19/2010 08:40 AM

To Ackleybc@aol.com

cc gordon.myers@ncwildlife.org, Marcb@ncleg.net, Spearla@ncleg.net  
Subject Re: Source of help for Cape Hatteras

Hi Barbara,

Thank you for the information about the Cape May Migratory Bird Refuge. I've forwarded the information to NPS Resources Management staff for their consideration.

Please keep in mind that The Nature Conservancy (TNC), as a private property owner, is not bound by the same policies and requirements as the National Park Service. A large-scale landscape engineering project, such as the one implemented at Cape May to mitigate shoreline erosion linked to the Federal navigation project at Cape May inlet, may not be appropriate at a National Seashore, particularly absent similar circumstances.

In comparing specific management practices used or results (such as piping plover productivity) that occur at different sites managed by different agencies, it is important to understand and consider the underlying management context in which those practices are applied. The information you provided indicates that the Cape May site is managed primarily as a wildlife refuge. During the spring season, the refuge beaches are closed for beachnesting birds. Pets, sunbathing, swimming, camping, fires.

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alcoholic beverages, and motor vehicles are prohibited. With regard to piping plover productivity, a higher average fledge rate is typical of piping plover breeding areas north of the Southern Recovery Unit (which is DE--MD--VA--NC). Given the level of restrictions TNC implements at the Cape May refuge and its location north of the Southern Recovery Unit, it is no wonder that the Cape May refuge has higher piping plover productivity than Cape Hatteras. Our situation at the Seashore is not comparable to Cape May and is more complicated in that we allow many of the recreational activities that are prohibited at Cape May.

In general, NPS recognizes that creation of habitat may be viable under certain circumstances; however, we do not view landscape engineering projects to create new habitat as an appropriate substitute for providing adequate protection of existing habitat. That said, we do plan to further consider methods for improving shorebird nesting or foraging habitat at the Seashore. In the FEIS we have identified habitat restoration as a possible adaptive management initiative (see FEIS, Volume 1, Chapter 2, Table 10-1, p. 141). For further information regarding creation of habitat, also see FEIS, Volume 1, pp. 93-94 and Volume 2, pp. c-151-152.

Thanks again for your comments.

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11/15/2010 02:10  
PM

To  
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gordon.myers@ncwildlife.org,  
mike\_murray@nps.gov

cc

Subject  
Source of help for Cape Hatteras

Dear Sirs,

This spring we visited a refuge in New Jersey where plovers and people co-exist in close proximity. This area adjacent to Cape May and Cape May Point has been constructed with a combination of state and federal funds along with cooperation from Audubon on Nature Conservancy land. It is a protected area for nesting plovers and other shore birds and migratory birds.

This is exactly what we have been asking the National Park Service to do at Cape Hatteras. It would restore bird habitat, eliminate flooding problems, and allow greater access for public recreation.

I urge you to make this a priority for funding. During the last five years the heavily used islands for tourist destination, Hatteras and Ocracoke, have been severely impacted by the National Park Service closures of the most desired beach areas. Visitors have chosen to go elsewhere. The small businesses that serve the tourists have suffered economically. A number have been forced to close and more are not expected to survive.

The American public has been denied the use of a park that was originally set aside for recreation. Large resource closures have been instituted all spring and summer for the few birds that choose to nest here.

Creating habitat such as has been done in New Jersey could provide for greater avian production and allow greater use of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area (the official name). Our economic livelihood depends on the tourist trade. The islands provide tax benefits for Dare and Hyde County. Dare County contributes more revenue that it takes in from the state government.

Please act on this request for funding.

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<http://www.nature.org/wherewework/no.../art21876.html>

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