

From: [Mike Murray](#)
To: [Paul Stevens](#)
Cc: [Cyndy Holda](#)
Subject: Re: Better Signage?
Date: 04/22/2011 11:04 AM
Attachments: [NPS closure letter.docx](#)

Paul,

I think some of the suggested wording has merit. I would strike the wording about pets though. Due to the history of poor compliance with pet regulations, I don't see how we can authorize pets to by-pass closures in sensitive resource areas to reach limited access areas beyond a closure. We may also need to add symbols for no vehicles, no pets, not kites, etc.

We have already designed a "Shoreline Open to Pedestrian Access" sign (Drawing 6.0 in the attachment) for shoreline access adjacent to prenesting areas. Not sure if we should develop a second, but different version of that sign (that says "no footprints" etc.) to use only in situations when it is okay to by-pass a closure in the water, OR would it be better to revise wording of the shoreline access sign so that we have one "pedestrian access, no footprints" sign to use in either/both situations. Whether we decide on 1 or 2 signs, we need to have an opposite sign that clearly states :shoreline Closed. which I believe is covered in Drawing 5.0 in the attachment. I do think it may be worthwhile to revise the wording as follows (so the closure is absolute):

Shoreline Closed

*At all **times and tides** to:*

(Pedestrians, Vehicles Pets with symbols)

Please think about it and decide if we should create a special "no footprint" sign to use only for pass-by situations, or tweak the wording for the last version of the "shoreline open to pedestrian" signs so that the message on it includes "leave no footprints". Once you decide which you prefer, let's meet to discuss it (so we can decide how to proceed and, if appropriate, let John Wescott know to revise the sign order, etc.).

Leave No Footprints Behind

when walking past closure.

Please walk **in water** where

footprints wash away.

**~~Animals shall be on tight leash thru
closure and leashed at all
times while in area.~~**

Violations are subject to
fine and additional beach
closing. Thank You

0030787

Mike Murray
Superintendent
Cape Hatteras NS/ Wright Brothers NMem/ Ft. Raleigh NHS
(w) 252-473-2111, ext. 148
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▼ [Cyndy Holda/CAHA/NPS](#)

**Cyndy
Holda/CAHA/NPS**

To "Darr" <darbar@netscape.com>

cc Paul Stevens/CAHA/NPS@NPS

04/22/2011 08:41 AM

Subject Re: Better Signage? 

Darr,

Thank you for taking the time to communicate your concerns with us. Your "eyes and ears" of on-site observations are valuable to us. I will share the attached document with the Chief Ranger who supervises the law enforcement staff in the park and assist in the installation the park regulatory signs. We thank you for your efforts to comply with park regulations and for attempting to inform others to do the same. You are absolutely correct that education of the visiting public is a critical key to the success....and I might add....**correct information** is key. Once the final rule and a permit system are finalized and implemented, the opportunity to inform the visiting public will increase. Again, we appreciate your efforts and willingness to communicate with us.

Would you like for me to add your email address to my mailing list? We send out a great deal of information and press releases on all types of events and happenings that occur in the three units that comprise the Outer Banks Group. Please advise.

Cyndy M. Holda
Public Affairs Specialist
Cape Hatteras NS/Fort Raleigh NHS/Wright Brothers NM
252-473-2111 ext. 148
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▼ ["Darr" <darbar@netscape.com>](mailto:darbar@netscape.com)

0030788

"Darr"
<darbar@netscape.com> To <Cyndy_Holda@nps.gov>
cc
04/21/2011 07:52 PM Subject Re: Better Signage?

Cyndy,

I have attached my comments in a word document. Thanks for the opportunity to work with you.

Darr Barshis

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

From: Cyndy_Holda@nps.gov
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2011 12:15 PM
To: darbar@netscape.com
Subject: Better Signage?

Hello!

Sorry I didn't catch your name this morning....but if you would like to send suggested language and/or placement of signs that would possibly improve on the situation you encountered at Cape Point in the past few days, please feel free to email me your suggestions.

Thank you for your interest in Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

Cyndy M. Holda
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NPS closure letter.docx

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss what I see happening in practice in our closure areas and advance suggestions that may help resolve some of the problems. Many of us fishermen understand the difficulty NPS is having in enforcement, and want to help keep your jobs as simple as possible, and our beaches open as much as possible.

As discussed with you on the phone this morning, I was at "The Point" when some of the abuses you described occurred. In particular, a family of 5 walked across a closure area carrying a cooler, and had no clue they were violating anything. Those of us fishing knew they were in violation and tried to waive them back to the water's edge, but they had no idea what we were signaling. Once they reached the "fishing hole" they were educated about what they had done, and were remorseful, but the violation was evident and the damage already done. Additionally, I saw 2 black "lab like" dogs walking in the closure that day. I saw a blue collar on one of the dogs. But, they were on the other side of the pond and not close enough to read a tag. Regarding the dogs, I am going to ask around to see if they may have been local dogs released into the closure to spite NPS. If I find that to be the case, I and others will have a serious talk with the owners. Regarding the ignorance of the people I saw violating the closed space, I thought better signage would help considerably in keeping people informed of current regulations.

Before going any further, I want to thank you profusely for the most recent interpretation of the regulations regarding passage around a closure. The prior requirement to walk in rough water below the low tide line was not only unreasonable, it was also dangerous. Last year I saw a father and his 2 sons (maybe 8 & 10 years old) walking out to the point. They were trying to comply with the interpretation at the time by walking below the sand drop in the water. The water was rough. He tried carrying his equipment and holding the hands of the 2 boys. When one of the boys got swamped, panic erupted for a few moments. The father then looked around to see if he saw any enforcement officials and took both his boys up to the wash to walk the rest of the distance. I have felt from the beginning this is a more reasonable, and safe, requirement. I believe the policy of "Leave No Footprints Behind" can be easily explained, and is not intrusive to our nesting neighbors.

Regarding signage, I believe something like the following, posted at the lowest stake near the water where a person would enter the closure, would work.

Leave No Footprints Behind

when walking past closure.

Please walk **in water** where

footprints wash away.

**Animals shall be on tight leash thru
closure and leashed at all
times while in area.**

Violations are subject to
fine and additional beach
closing. Thank You

We might also post a diagram below this sign (on the same post) showing what the person will encounter in front of them. For instance, there were 2 separate closures at The Point recently. A diagram showing the 2 closures, and the open area in between, with a dashed red mark along the water edge inside the closures (showing where we should walk) would help those of us that are more visually inclined.

In the warmer weather months when there are numerous tourists on the beach, I have seen countless violations in the turtle nesting sites. I see people walking on the dry sand in the closure, I see them walking up into the closure to explore, and I have even seen a dog released to explore a closure. God help us. I have seen violations like this occur while NPS personnel are on site!! Signage, like previously shown, would educate tourists as to **their** requirements. Do not get me wrong. As a resident here, who understands the value of the tourist experience on the Outer Banks, I appreciate the patience NPS has shown when trying to educate and work with the public. I feel things work best though if everyone is more informed about what is expected. As you said on the phone, confrontations on the beach are not welcome events.

I spoke with Britta Muiznieks a few weeks ago. We talked about trying to more definitively define the rules. There are a number of "grey areas" in the regulations. The more we can define them, the fewer uncomfortable encounters we will have. The recent closures for "nesting activity" seem reasonable to me. But, there is no time line to reopen an area when "nesting activity" subsides. Britta and I talked about the many variables to consider in this, how many pairs, are they the same pairs, weather affecting identification, etc., but definitive rules are good for both sides and prevent accusations of unreasonableness.

On another tack, I think the recent regulation interpretation is a welcome event to residents and fishermen - at least I have been touting your effort to cooperate the past few days to those I know. I mentioned in the comment session, when we were formulating the Management Plan, I felt volunteer interpreters at the closures might be a possibility. I still think that is a good way to work directly with locals in a public/private partnership to help keep beaches open and educate the public at the same time. NPS puts on many programs. I think one where volunteers are educated to sit at closure entrances to answer questions and educate the public about what is going on, and how they can access areas beyond the closure if they choose, is a great way to work with the locals on this. Maybe I'm wrong, but, if presented right, I think there would be a good turnout of locals wanting to help. I believe locals on locals is the best way to "spread the word".

I have given you enough food for thought for one day. Hopefully we can keep this line of communication open to help resolve differences we are going to have over time. Certainly not everyone is going to be happy all the time. We can only work to keep everyone informed as best as possible, keep our tourists educated, and make the rules as clear as possible.

Thank You,
Darr Barshis