

John Couch
President, Outer Banks Preservation Association
P.O. Box 1355
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May 5, 2011

Mr. Jonathan Jarvis
Director, National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Director Jarvis:

My name is John B. Couch and I am President of the Outer Banks Preservation Association (OBPA). I write you today to voice my concerns on the recent National Park Service brochure entitled "Off- Road Driving." A copy of this brochure is provided with this letter.

This offensive brochure unfairly depicts off-road vehicle users as lawless thrill seekers that have contempt for the laws, rules and regulations that provide a framework for safe and responsible ORV access on our beaches.

The back page of this brochure contains a photo of a female Loggerhead turtle that was crushed by a vehicle while it was attempting to nest. This unfortunate tragedy occurred on Ocracoke Island beach in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area in the early morning hours, during the summer of 2010.

The individual responsible for this crime was never apprehended, though the groups advocating responsible access, including OBPA, offered a substantial reward for the arrest and conviction of this individual. We will therefore never know the reasoning or affiliation of this individual, whether a visitor illegally driving on the Seashore during hours restricted by the court sanctioned Consent Decree or even a Park Service employee on a night drive.

This photo is disgusting, infuriating, and reflects a deliberate effort to provide extreme environmental groups the ability to further their agenda in banning motorized access to all National Parks.

When we received a copy of this brochure, we raised our concerns to the CHNSRA headquarters in Manteo, North Carolina. They reported that the staff of the NPS in Washington, D.C. developed the brochure as a result of a lawsuit settlement with an environmental group known as "Friends of the Earth." They advised that NPS Washington headquarters called to specifically request the photo of the turtle that was run over for this brochure.

OBPA, along with North Carolina Beach Buggy Association (NCBBA) and the Cape Hatteras Anglers Club (CHAC), are organizations that have always advocated safe and responsible access to the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area for both pedestrians and off-road vehicles. Our motto that has stood for almost 40 years is **Preserve, Protect, Not Prohibit** regarding responsible access to the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area for all.

As you are aware the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area just went through a Negotiated Rulemaking Conflict Resolution Process. OBPA, NCBBA, CHAC and 26 other groups joined with a common purpose to write a reasonable and acceptable ORV Plan. To show commitment to responsible access, OBPA, NCBBA and CHAC developed and financed an ORV brochure under the direction and approval of local NPS staff, a copy of which is also provided with this letter.

A partnership approach by all affected organizations could have made for a more beneficial educational publication. I ask you today to immediately remove these offensive brochures from the Seashore as well as from other NPS locations across the country, and replace them with documents incorporating local knowledge and experience which will more effectively serve to inform the public and protect these valuable resources.

To continue to distribute this deplorable and contemptible brochure serves no beneficial purpose except to unfairly condemn and incite the law abiding public who comprise, by far, the majority of visitors who choose to recreate at our Seashore. Both sides of the access issues currently extant at Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area should work diligently for responsible access for all!

Sincerely,



John Couch
President, Outer Banks Preservation Association

cc:

The Honorable Richard Burr
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kay R. Hagan
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Walter B. Jones, Jr.
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Mr. David Vela, Regional Director
National Park Service
100 Alabama Street, SW
1924 Building
Atlanta, GA 30303

Mr. Mike Murray, Superintendent
Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area
1401 National Park Road
Manteo, NC 27954