

From: [Cyndy Holda](#)
To: [Larry Hardham](#)
Cc: [Darrell Echols](#); [Thayer Broili](#)
Bcc: [Mike Murray](#)
Subject: Re: Fw: Ramp 34 turtle nest
Date: 01/13/2012 10:01 AM

Good Morning Larry,

I've been in and out of the office quite a bit this week and therefore my delayed response. First, let me acknowledge that there are sometimes philosophical differences between how stakeholders want the National Park Service (NPS) to manage park resources and how the NPS actually manages the resources in accordance with the agency's mission and policy requirements.

Our decisions are based on law, policy, scientific knowledge, professional training, experience, and guidance obtained from consultation with state and federal sea turtle scientists. A primary management objective for the National Park Service is to help ensure that natural processes such as sea turtle nesting continue. Our procedures conform to state and federal guidance on sea turtle nest management. In brief, the NPS resource management staff follows scientifically established procedures. When they encounter a non-routine situation, such as a late season turtle nest, they consult with and follow expert advice for how to address the situation in a way that is consistent with existing guidance. This year's Ramp 34 nest was indeed an anomaly, but it is those types of situations that help us better understand the species that we, as federal land managers, are legally responsible for and tasked with managing.

We received several inquiries expressing interest in the late season turtle nest and therefore Superintendent Murray has asked staff to include information about the nests in the 2011 annual sea turtle report, which is due for completion by January 31, 2012. As in recent years, once we have submitted the report as required by the Consent Decree, we will make it available to the public.

I hope this is helpful information. Unless new information surfaces that would change our management practices, it seems fruitless to continue to entertain discussions that are contrary to how we manage sea turtles, shorebirds, or other natural resources and values. If you have further questions regarding sea turtle management practices at Cape Hatteras National Seashore, please direct them to our Chief of Resource Management, Thayer Broili, or our Deputy Superintendent, Darrell Echols who supervises the resource management operations of the Seashore.

Cyndy M. Holda
Public Affairs Specialist
Outer Banks Group
1401 National Park Drive
Manteo, NC 27954
252-473-2111 ext. 148
252-216-6455 cell
cyndy_holda@nps.gov

▼ "[Larry Hardham](#)" <hardhead@embarqmail.com>

0031994

"Larry Hardham"
<hardhead@embarqmail.com> To "Cyndy Holda" <cyndy_holda@nps.gov>
cc
01/04/2012 02:48 PM Subject Fw: Ramp 34 turtle nest

Was there a temperature logger placed in the nest north of 34? If so will temperatures be made public? If not why not?

What was water and air temperature when hatchlings from nest at ramp 38 released? Had these hatchlings started their way to surface or were they still in nest chamber?

Thank you,
Larry

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

From: ackleybc@aol.com
To: hardhead@embarqmail.com ; davisrb@embarqmail.com ;
twodeobx@hotmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 04, 2012 12:04 PM
Subject: Fwd: Ramp 34 turtle nest

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

From: ackleybc <ackleybc@aol.com>
To: Cyndy_Holda <Cyndy_Holda@nps.gov>
Sent: Wed, Jan 4, 2012 12:03 pm
Subject: Re: Ramp 34 turtle nest

Cyndy,

Who is the person responsible for these decisions? Who is the person who examined the nest last week? What are his qualifications? He reportedly told bystanders that he "felt" movement. How is viability determined? Was a temperature probe used? Do you have sand temperature statistics from the nearby area?

Here is what Matthew Godfrey wrote in 2010, paraphrased: In a mid-October 2010 email from Matthew Godfrey, he stated that egg development will cease below constant 25C (77F) degrees. In a few laboratory experiments of fluctuating temps they survived 18-19C (64-66F). These were brief periods of cold. Temperatures at egg depth in nests is usually warmer this time of year than the surface. In mid October of 2010 hatchlings emerged from a nest north of Oregon Inlet after a cold snap.

This was an excellent opportunity for research on our beaches. It is extremely rare that a nest hatches if laid after beginning of Sept. What do our records show for date of hatching after Nov. 1st?

And even more important to survival of the species is: what is the necessary air temperature for survival to the water and ocean temperature after entering it?

Barbara

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

From: Cyndy_Holda <Cyndy_Holda@nps.gov>

To: ackleybc <ackleybc@aol.com>

Sent: Wed, Jan 4, 2012 8:45 am

Subject: Re: Ramp 34 turtle nest

Barbara,

For the past few months resources management staff have been checking late season turtle nests regularly (approximately weekly) for viable eggs and if viable eggs are found the nest protection is left in place to give the eggs a chance to hatch. As one might expect, hatch success for such nests is often less than 100%, but the hatching results can be better than you might expect. For example, the second-to-last remaining nest of the season, which was located 0.5 miles south of Ramp 38, was excavated on 11/28/2011. Even though no hatchlings had emerged from the nest cavity, 15 live hatchlings were found inside the nest cavity and were released into the water.

The nest 1.4 miles north of Ramp 34 has had viable eggs each time it was checked in December, including as recently as December 27. The nest was checked again yesterday morning (Jan 3), but no longer had viable eggs, so the nest was excavated and the closure removed. The results are not surprising given the late date, but the policy is to give the nest a chance to hatch as long as there are viable eggs present.

The nest was indeed an anomaly and has sparked interest from many folks. I hope this is helpful information for you.

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Cyndy M. Holda
Public Affairs Specialist
Cape Hatteras NS/Fort Raleigh NHS/Wright Brothers NM
252-473-2111 ext. 148
252-216-6455 cell
252-473-2595 fax
Email: cyndy_holda@nps.gov

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"ackleybc@aol.com

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<ackleybc@aol.com

To

>

cyndy_holda@nps.gov

cc

01/04/2012 08:02
AM

Subject

Ramp 34 turtle nest

Hi Cyndy,

There has been a lot of concern lately about the turtle nest closure north of Ramp 34. The viability of this nest goes against all "best available science". Why is the beach still closed?

Thank you,
Barbara