

0075806

From: [Lynne Belanich](#)
To: [Mike Murray](#)
Cc: [Paul Stevens](#)
Subject: Re: Fw: Vehicle Characteristics & Operations - feedback from NPS
Date: 11/10/2008 09:57 AM
Attachments: [ASIS BULL PEN BASICS.doc](#)

Here is my best response!
Hope it helps!

Lynne Belanich
LE Ranger
Cape Hatteras National Seashore
work 252-441-7425
cell 252 -475-8308

-----Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS wrote: -----

To: Lynne Belanich/CAHA/NPS@NPS
From: Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS
Date: 11/07/2008 01:15PM
cc: Paul Stevens/CAHA/NPS@NPS
Subject: Fw: Vehicle Characteristics & Operations - feedback from NPS

Lynne,

See discussion in messages below. Could you provide Paul and me with information on the following:

- 1.) What is the operating season (dates), length of stay restrictions (# hours of days), use limits (# of vehicles) or other management controls, if any, on the use of the self-contained vehicle "bullpen" at ASIS? In other words, what are the rules that apply?
- 2.) Does operation of the bullpen directly or indirectly create any additional work for park staff, which could include additional permitting, recordkeeping, patrol coverage, trash removal, facility operations (e.g., dump station), or resources protection? If "yes," please provide a bullet list of what those workloads are
- 3.) In general, is operation of the bullpen at ASIS "problem free" or are there any problems or issues that require NPS staff attention? If "yes," what are the kinds of issues that occur?
- 4.) How would you judge the overall cost/benefit ratio for the bullpen? What are the benefits? What are the costs (both financial and operational)? Who benefits and who pays for the costs? And, in your judgment, do the benefits outweigh the costs?

Thanks,

Mike Murray
Superintendent
Cape Hatteras NS/ Wright Brothers NMem/ Ft. Raleigh NHS
(w) 252-473-2111, ext. 148
(c) 252-216-5520
fax 252-473-2595

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE

This message is intended exclusively for the individual or entity to which it is addressed. This communication may contain information that is proprietary, privileged or confidential or otherwise legally exempt from disclosure.

----- Forwarded by Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS on 11/07/2008 01:03 PM -----

"keene9558"
<keene9558@charter.net>

11/06/2008 09:41 AM

Please respond to
<jkeene@franklineq.com>

To "Ona Ferguson"
<oferguson@cbuilding.org>,
<derbc@selcnc.org>,
<Topatneal@aol.com>,
<Paul_Stevens@nps.gov>,
"Patrick Paquette"
<BasicPatrick@aol.com>,
"Renee Cahoon"
<Cahoonr@embarqmail.com>,
<djoyner@beldar.com>
cc "Pat Field"
<pfield@cbuilding.org>,
"Robert Fisher"
<rcf@fisherics.com>, "Cyndy Holda"
<Cyndy_Holda@nps.gov>,
<Mike_Murray@nps.gov>
Subject RE: Vehicle Characteristics &
Operations - feedback from
NPS

ALL

I would ask for a report from P. Parquette & Ronnie Bounds concerning the operation of "self contained" camping. How does this work @ Cape Cod/Assateague National Seashores? The NPS seems to be expanding the perceived burdens for the type of camping experience requested (understanding that trash removal & patrols will be necessary).

With this explanation I would suggest contact with Chamber of Commerce and Business Allies representatives.

Jim Keene

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

From: Ona Ferguson [<mailto:oferguson@cbuilding.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, November 05, 2008 11:17 PM
To: derbc@selcnc.org; jkeene@franklineq.com; Topatneal@aol.com;
Paul_Stevens@nps.gov; Patrick Paquette; Renee Cahoon; djoyner@beldar.com
Cc: Pat Field; Robert Fisher; Cyndy Holda; Mike_Murray@nps.gov
Subject: Vehicle Characteristics & Operations - feedback from NPS

Vehicle Characteristics and Operations Subcommittee,

We've gotten some feedback from NPS on the newest iteration of the Document (attached as a reminder - you should already have this). There don't seem to be any concerns about most of the document, which is good. NPS does have several comments/concerns about the self-contained vehicle camping topic, which are as follows:

1. Demand vs. Funding constraints: Historically, the demand for off-season camping has not supported operating the NPS campgrounds beyond the current dates. No matter how "self-contained" the vehicles might be, there are inherent costs (patrol, trash removal, etc.) with operating a self-contained area. Campground facilities, including dump stations, are not winterized and would have to be upgraded. NPS cannot commit to keeping three campgrounds (or even one) open for self-contained units in the off-season, unless the operation is "cost neutral."
2. Competition with local businesses: NPS does not want to compete with local commercial campgrounds for off-season customers, which is a concern already expressed by some business owners. This concern must be addressed.
3. Fairness issue: If NPS opens park campgrounds to provide a low-amenity off-season camping opportunity for self-contained vehicles, then tent campers, who are not necessarily well represented by stakeholders on the committee, will likely request the same opportunity, which leads back to Item # 1 concerns about operating costs.

If you all continue to feel strongly that one or more self-contained camping areas is worth pursuing further, NPS suggests that this group work toward resolving the concerns above. We might start by talking with the business

representatives on the Committee checking with the local campground operators to determine their level of support or opposition to this proposal. If there is significant opposition, then perhaps a win-win solution would be for the committee to work with the campground operators to ensure there are reasonably priced off-season rates for self-contained vehicles (i.e., for RV's that do not need hook-ups). If there is strong support by local businesses for the idea, then focus on resolving items # 1 and 3. Another way to address NPS concerns might be to make a recommendation that NPS address the issue of off-season camping opportunities in its upcoming General Management Plan.

What would you all like to do given this feedback? We could proceed to distribute the document, noting NPS concerns in the distribution email or the document itself. A few of you could talk with Scott or Judy (Chamber of Commerce/Business reps) to get their input in the next day or two then you could let us know what you hear from them. Or there are certainly other ways to proceed - we could have another subcommittee call, say on Monday. Your preferences?

I will be out of the office for the next two days teaching a course, but will be checking email and phone messages. Please let me and the group know your thoughts.

Best,

Ona

ASIS BULL PEN BASICS

- it is located approx 4 miles into the only OSV zone in MD
- the OSV zone in MD has only one entrance
- it is completely in the sand and has no facilities (NO dumpsters, bathrooms, emergency phones or contact areas)
- Ground fires are permitted – (no high tide requirements)
- quiet hours 10pm to 6am
- approx. size ¼ mile long by 100 yards deep
- can hold approx 200 self cont vehicle if they are parked next to each other – comfortable use of the bull pen would be around 100 vehicles
- only carsonites and dune crossing markers designate the bull pen boundary.
- it is described as a large box area that is established at or behind the primary dune line
- No designated parking spots – open beach box – you can park how every you want
- no tents at all and no non-self contained vehicle from 9pm until 6am
- OSV Bull Pen permit is required (\$150)
- original intent was for fisherman a catch a quick nap in-between fishing sessions and has now become a “campground” for anyone with self cont vehicle

1)

Operating season (dates) – There are no seasons or dates. The bullpen is open 24hrs a day 7 days a week as long as the beach is open (accessible). If the OSV/ORV zone is closing due to a storm then the beach and the bullpen are cleared and all vehicles are removed before the closure. As far as I know there are no Seasons or night driving restrictions at ASIS which allows beach access anytime unlike CAHA which has night driving restrictions. Also a beach (safety, bird, turtle) closure could prohibit the access to the bull pen.

Length of stay restrictions (# of hours per day) – There are no length restrictions. Anyone can enter the bullpen during the day/night and stay for as many days as they would like. Non-self contained vehicles are allowed in the bull pen during the day. The only restriction related to this is the fact that from 9pm until 6am only self contained vehicle are allowed in (and adjacent to)the bull pen.

Use limits (# of vehicles) and other management controls- There are no use limits as far as a specific # of vehicle allowed in the bull pen. The only way it may be limited is due to the fact that the OSV zone in Maryland has a beach vehicle limit of 145 including vehicles in the bull pen. Also there is a specific OSV permit for the Bull pen (\$150 from month of purchase for one year). There is NOT a limited # of bull pen permits available. If there was then this would be another way there could be bull pen limits. Also, the bull pen at ASIS can accommodate more than 145 vehicles but the one at CAHA could be small as to restrict the # of vehicle that could fit.

OSV Permit costs:

VA only (during operational refuge hours) – – 70.00

VA (during operational refuge hours) – & MD (Day5am to midnight) -90.00

MD (24 hour access) VA (during operational refuge hours) – 110.00

Bull Pen/ MD (24 hour access and bull pen access) & VA (during operational refuge hours) – 150.00

Self Contained vehicle def – (per 36 CFR 7.65 ASIS) any towed or self-propelled camping vehicle that is equipped with a toilet and a permanently installed, waste, storage tank capable of holding a minimum of 2 days volume material.

Rules that apply to the bull pen- All vehicles that will get an OSV bull pen permit will be inspected by park personnel to meet the requirements of a self-contained vehicle. Those requirements are as follows:

Self-contained vehicles are allowed to park overnight in the Bull Pen area if they are equipped with an approved toilet and permanently installed waste storage tank capable of holding 2 days volume of waste for all occupants. **Only** self-contained vehicles are permitted overnight in the Bull Pen. Wastewater (including graywater) from self-contained vehicles must be retained in vehicle's holding tank while in the OSV zone and must be emptied in an approved location outside the park or at trailer dump stations located in the Seashore campgrounds.

In addition to the above standard they must also have OSV equipment as follows:

VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS: To obtain an OSV permit, vehicles must meet the following specifications:

Maximum number of wheels per axle 2

Maximum number of axles 2

Maximum vehicle length 26 feet

Minimum vehicle width 5 feet

Maximum vehicle width 8 feet

Minimum vehicle ground clearance 7 inches

Gross vehicle weight rating may not exceed 10,000 pounds

All two-wheel-drive vehicles must have a minimum of 8" width of tire tread in contact with the ground.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT: OSV operators in designated zone must carry and be able to display upon request:

- A shovel with a blade at least 6" square and a handle at least 18" long.
- A vehicle jack sufficient to lift one wheel clear of the sand.
- A jack support that is at least 12" x 12" of non-bending steel, 5/8" plywood or 1½" board.
- A tire gauge with a minimum reading of 15 pounds or less.
- A tow rope or tow strap, chain or cable with a minimum pulling strength of 6,000 pounds and at least 10 feet long.
 - ½" minimum diameter for nylon or Dacron ropes
 - ¾" minimum diameter for all other ropes
 - ¼" minimum diameter for carbon steel cable
 - 5/16" minimum diameter for chain links

2)

Direct and indirect workload for park staff –

All these bullets are based upon 1 bull pen in the park like ASIS is set up. (Any additional bull pens would require more resources and workload.) All of these points could be needed. I tried to list all possibilities we may encounter.

- Bull Pen public information
 - Resources needed for printed pamphlets, permit paperwork, and web based information to educate the public on regulations
- OSV permit for bull pen
 - making/ ordering a paper permit
 - maintain a 24 hour accessible permit data base
 - maintain a signed permit paperwork file
 - Additional employee resources to check the vehicle to make sure they meet the vehicle requirements for the permit (also to train people to check vehicles)
 - additional employees to sell the permits
 - employees to write SOPs relating to the rules, regs, and permit revocation process
 - Additional LE resources to "patrol" the bull pen to check bull pen permits
 - chief, Assistant Sup and Superintendents time to review permit complaints, revocations and suspensions.
- Dump stations
 - must be close and in working order year round to provide a dump location which could mean additional dump stations will need to be added.

- maintenance may have to spend more time upgrading the current ones depend on their condition they may get more use and need more routine maintenance
- Air pumps
 - may need to be added since self-contained vehicles are heavy and they will need to air tires up when they hit pavement so they don't damage their tires
 - Maintenance may need to do routine work on air pumps when they go down
- Bull Pen signage/maint
 - Will need to order signs and carsonites for the boundary
 - May need LE/ RM/ or Maint. To maintain the carsonite/ sign barrier that designates the bull pen boundary since wind and storms can remove them along with general vandalism
 - Plowing and major trash removal every few years if needed
- Bull Pen patrol
 - additional patrol by RM of bull pen to ensure the area is not bird/turtle nesting area depending on where it is originally established.
 - yearly reviews of bull pen locations to determine if it needs to be moved based on beach topography , area impact, and wildlife impacts.
 - additional day and night patrols by LEO's to deal with the bull pen like a campground

3)

“problem free” or “problems”

Special user groups requesting to use bullpen-

- Assateague Mobile Sportsman Association (AMSA), a park special user group, each year has a Camp-a-ree where they are issued a permit to have as many AMSA vehicles as they can fit in the bull pen (no 145 limit) and they have a 3 day long party. There are DUIs, underage drinking, and disorderly conduct related to this party. AMSA provided lots of funding (donations) and support to the park. We may get pressure for these special permits or for special access during fishing tournaments.
- Fishing limits per day -when you stay in the bull pen (if it is on the beach) what do you do with other fish you have caught previous days – LEO's will need to be up on possession limits vs. daily limits
- The “circling of the wagons” friends will park in a circle or group usually creating an area for a group to gather and a “party” atmosphere that can carry on the whole night since they don't have to leave the beach.
- Also promotes excessive drinking since they are parked in the bullpen and know that they don't have to drive.
- Can't check permits (who it is issued to or the vehicle) during night shift unless you have a 24 hour accessible database.
- People driving outside the bull pen boundary and into the dunes or protected area.

- Cell phone coverage during emergency calls was very poor for some cell phone providers at ASIS.
- Quite hour violations – problem like in the campground
- Tents using the area along with non-self –contained vehicles
- The houses, stores and bait shops are all so close by that you need not a place to stay on the beach unlike the ASIS bull pen which is 30-40 minutes from the nearest store, hotel and bait shop.
-

4)

Cost/ Benefit

Benefits

- Provides recreational opportunity for a select group of people
- benefits fisherman b/c they can get out fishing early and can stay late
- additional winter “campgrounds”
- only place you can “camp” on the beach and see the sunrise
- allow access to beach if you are already out there and high tides prevent beach access from ramps
- allow a safe place to stay if caught by high tides
- at ASIS since it was so establish many people self regulated the area with minimal checks by the LEO

Costs

- Additional work staff to address needs in #2
- The park would front the majority of the cost. 100% of the permit should be returned to the OSV/ORV & Bull pen needs. The benefit is for the visitors w/ self-cont. vehicles. A bull pen may slightly increase our visitation which would provide a little more revenue from the permit.
- For public relations it would benefit the park in that we are providing more opportunity at the seashore
- I think that a bull pen would get use in any/all district it was put
- Overall I think the workload and cost to get it started would be more then the benefit. After several years it could then be minimal work and cost for the benefit.

Overall during my LE job at ASIS the majority of my calls and problems were not from the bull pen. At ASIS it has been established for a long time and for the most part the rules and regs were followed. It was a self managed area by the users and if they had a problem they could not deal with then they called the LEOs. You are always going to have a few people who are going to cause problems regardless of where they are in the park.

0075814