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To: [Mike Murray](#)
Cc: [Ona Ferguson](#); [Robert Fisher](#)
Subject: Turtles
Date: 11/17/2008 10:40 AM
Attachments: [TurtleNightConceptApproach.doc](#)

MIKE

Can you review this when you get back and get me any changes. I would like to send it to the NR Subcommittee by end of week as a starting point/written draft of our discussions on turtles and night driving.

Thanks.

PAT

Hours of Allowable ORV Operation on the Beach

Acknowledgement

Numerous factors may affect turtles, turtle, behavior, and turtle habitat including ocean factors (water quality, water temperature, predators, etc.), general human activity of any kind on beaches, lighting, stationary in particular, and ORV vehicles. Though the scope and focus of this plan is ORV management, this is not to imply numerous other management actions are not necessary and important to maintain and improve turtle populations on CAHA.

Intent of Hours of Allowable ORV Operation

The overall goal of turtle management at CAHA is to maintain and increase the number of vigorous hatchlings making their way into the waters in order to help achieve recovery of the species.

The specific intents of restricted night hours are to:

- Reduce the potential for false crawls due to night activity on the beach;
- Reduce the potential for female turtles not entering onto the beach due to night activity on the beach;
- Reduce potential impact to hatchlings from unmarked nests seeking to return to the ocean.

What is Not Restricted

Night restrictions will not affect:

- Sound side access;
- Night driving between X Date and 30 April.

Night Driving Restriction Options

The following are options under discussion for night driving restrictions. The subcommittee needs to further discuss these issues, dates, and times, so that the ideas below are a record of where we are in the conversation at this time.

- Efficient, effective turtle patrol in order to identify and protect all nests along the Seashore and to open the beach as early as possible in the ORV to human uses (*more detailed discussion may be useful on this topic*).
 - Begin turtle patrols prior to sunrise.
 - Utilize volunteers for increasing resources, expertise, and interest.
 - Mark nests first with a simple flag, then return as needed to establish more secure protection (symbolic fencing).

- Non-essential ORV use restricted as follows:
 - From May 1 until September 15 (*we should discuss why these two dates*), 30 minutes after sunset until _____?
 - From September 16 until (October 31, November 15, other), driving is allowed via a special use night time driving permit, which includes education, control of lights, etc.
- Potential control of vehicle lights through filters or other devices.
- Manage early morning driving (*to be defined*) regarding where it occurs, such as at or below the high tide line so as not to obscure turtle crawl marks.
- Build additional ramps to reduce impacts of any closures (*perhaps coordinated with the Routes and Areas subcommittee*).
- For select locations/routes during select times, allow a limited number of special use permits for overnight fishing during restricted times. As one example, from May 1 until 15 June and from August 15 until September 15, issue special use permits for nighttime fishing for Cape Point (assuming Point is not closed due to bird closures). Special Use permit would require user to park vehicle prior to sunset, remain stationary, with all vehicles lights off until dawn, to be actively fishing through the night, to manage all human waste/trash within the vehicle, and to remain in place until an appropriate time or the turtle patrol has passed. Any emergencies requiring exits from the beach during this time would at least require a 911 call.
- Consider locations that have few to no turtle nests according to multi-year data, and allow night driving in these areas.
- Support for further work among the villages, the Counties, and the appropriate agencies and stakeholders regarding improving lighting control within villages to reduce this potential hazard to turtles.

Legal Authorities

The following are statutes and policies that may apply are: