

From: [Mike Murray](#)
To: [Patrick Field](#)
Cc: [Thayer Broili](#); [Britta Muiznieks](#)
Subject: Re: Bird dates before 8/31
Date: 11/25/2008 03:36 PM
Attachments: [July 31 vs Aug 31.11.25.08.doc](#)

Patrick,

Here are some quick comments. Overall, the concept is workable. Some specifics need to be better defined so all will fully understand exactly what we/they are agreeing to. Not sure who you should credit with this version of the draft. For now, I would not call this an NPS approved concept, but it is something I think has potential.

Questions/Comments

- Does it apply only to the spits and Cape Point, or to all Resource Areas (which as designed by NPS are *de facto* prenesting areas)?
- We don't have GPS data or staff institutional memory of all the black skimmer nesting sites since 2000 (due to staff turnover and sparse BLSK nesting in recent years). The sites need to be specifically identified so we can understand the potential impact on access if we agree to this provision.
- Migrating/Wintering Habitat Protection - Needs to be better defined or quantified, since it could be interpreted very strictly or very liberally by competing stakeholders. Perhaps, a relative quantification (proportion of % of the area) could work.
- Not sure why the rest of the prenesting area(s) would remain closed until November 15. Would it apply to all Resource Areas?). August 31 seems reasonable to me. Needs to be discussed.
- NPS is committed to conducting an annual seabeach amaranth survey in August, that needs to be done prior to an area being reopened. Should only be done after all bird breeding activity is completed, chicks fledged, etc., so we are concerned about people's expectations that an area will reopen as soon as bird breeding activity is completed. That is why NPS went with a later date for reopening Resource Areas to ORV Use.



July 31 vs Aug 31.11.25.08.doc

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To Mike Murray <Mike_Murray@nps.gov>
cc

11/25/2008 09:00 AM

Subject Bird dates before 8/31

MIKE

I received this draft suggestion on potentially opening areas prior to 8/31 from a stakeholder. Would you be willing to modify this as you see fit and then I can send it out to the NR Committee for consideration?

PAT

[attachment "July 31 vs Aug 31.doc" deleted by Mike Murray/CAHA/NPS]

July 31 vs. August 31

Question: Can the date for removal of bird closures be changed to an earlier date, such as July 31 vs. August 31.

Benefits:

- Selected areas within the Seashore might be opened for recreation activities prior to August 31 if all nesting activities have ended for the season.

Problems:

- Some species initiate nesting in late July and August; Black Skimmers, for example.
- Eliminates protection for migrant shorebirds; shorebird fall migration = 1 July to 1 December, peak migration time is variable/species
- Requires more frequent and intensive monitoring
- Require additional staff time and resources for NPS

Requirements to remove bird closures prior to August 31:

- Closure removed no earlier than July 31.
- July 31 to Aug 31—Closure removed only if no breeding activity, unfledged chicks, broods, family groups, or breeding species present within previous two weeks.
- Sites with history (2000-present) of nesting Black Skimmers excluded.
- Habitats for fall migrant shorebirds are protected at Bodie Island Spit, Cape Point, Cape Point South Beach, Hatteras Inlet, eastern end of Ocracoke, and Ocracoke South Point. Protected habitats must include areas of ocean intertidal zone with 50 buffer, ~~all~~ soundside wet sand flats and other MOSH at inlets, and ~~wet~~ sand flats and other MOSH at Cape Point with 50m buffer.
- Only corridors to Cape Point and inlets opened, pre-nesting closures remain closed as delineated in Alternative E until 31 August ~~15 November~~.
- Monitored daily for 7 days prior to removing closure to detect the presence of unfledged chicks or other nesting activity.
- Surveys for seabeach amaranth must be conducted prior to reopening any area to ORV use.

Comment [MSOffice1]: Locations need to be identified.

Comment [MSOffice2]: Quantity or proportion of the areas to be closed needs to be better defined

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