

**Draft Subcommittee Document for Discussion Purposes Only
Does not Represent Agreement
Rev. 1/19/09**

**SITE SPECIFIC NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES
HATTERAS INLET**

GOAL: Protect natural resources and maintain access.

DEFINITION OF AREA: Hatteras Inlet is defined as from Ramp 55 to Hatteras Inlet. Hatteras Inlet includes the ocean, inlet and sound shorelines and all land in between.

INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES: Hatteras Inlet is valued for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to:

- Fishing for Red Drum off of “false point” in April and May.
- Fishing for flounder, Spanish Mackerel, and other species.
- Accessible area for seniors who fish but have limited ability for walking.
- Major fishing tournament area the length from Ramp 55 to the Inlet.
- Commercial cast netting on the sound side.
- Children playing and bathing.
- Walking.
- A breeding area for colonial water birds and occasionally American Oyster catchers.
- Potential breeding and winter habitat for PIPL.
- Non-breeding area for resting and foraging for migratory shorebirds.

ROUTES AND AREAS: The following routes and areas would be established.

- The Pole Road and Spur Road to the Sound, preferably a two-lane route to allow driving in two directions.
- From as early as July 31 to March 14, from Pole Road’s termination on the oceanside beach, a route 10 m from the toe of the dune to the tide line would be established heading west and continuing to and around the Point for about .8 miles. The termination of this route would depend on the width of the dynamic beach around the point. There may be a pedestrian-accessible safety closure at or around the point of about .25 miles.
- The route from the Pole Road termination point to around the point would be closed, based on an annual habitat assessment, from March 15 until as late as August 31.
- Year-round sound side access would be provided via the Spur Road route. In addition, a route would be established from the termination of the Spur Road at the sound side, heading west to and around the point. This area may connect to the oceanside access, dependent on a possible safety closure due to the width of the dynamic beach.
- Due to the dynamic area of the Outer Banks, a periodic review process needs to be established to address changing habitat and geomorphological conditions.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- There would be a seamless transition from breeding to migratory/winter closures (when one opens the other closes).
- These routes and areas are subject to closure due to natural resource protection measures.
- Several fishing tournaments take place from Ramp 55 to the Inlet, particularly in the fall. These tournaments are important to fishermen and the local economy and need to have access to oceanside, perhaps through special permit conditions, if needed.
- There is an interest by some in an pedestrian-only area for migratory bird non-breeding resting and foraging somewhere on or near Hatteras Inlet. Others are opposed to this kind of resource closure and do not believe sufficient data nor regulatory drivers exist to close existing beach. Options, not agreed to, but suggested include:
 - No closures for this purpose.
 - A length of beach from the Pole Road termination on the ocean side beach heading east from the date of the opening of the breeding closure on the ocean side until March 14.
 - Keep the breeding closure on the oceanside in effect until 31 August.
 - Alter the route from the Pole Road termination heading west to the point so that at some length its ends some 50 m from the tide line to allow for shorebird foraging in wet and “hummocky” sands along the ocean side.

CAVEATS

- For some stakeholders, agreement to these routes and areas are pending sufficient natural resource protection measures.
- This does not take into account potential pedestrian-only area interest by some stakeholders and is without input from water sports.