

2/23/07

To: Mike Murray Superintendent,

Re: Off-road Vehicle Management Plan/EIS Cape Hatteras National Recreation Seashore

Mike, as you know I moved to the Outer Banks (Southern Shores) when my wife & I retired in late 2005. We primarily moved here to fish the surf on Hatteras Island. In 2004 and into 2005 there was (and still is) contentious debate about how much & how long some of the most productive surf fishing beaches should (could, would) be closed to mobile surf fishermen and other beach users. As time progressed you were appointed to *Park Superintendent*. The attention you are giving this thorny issue has given us (mobile surf fishermen) and the anti-ORV groups some light at the end of both of our tunnels. Bringing Thayer Brolic onboard has brought a fresh mind and eyes to sort out the hype from fact into what birds need as well as the mobile surf fishing folks. Both can co-exist on the beaches of the Cape Hatteras National Recreational Seashore.

Putting porta-potties & dumpsters at each access ramp provided us (the beach users) a place to unload, among other things, the trash we pick up daily, when we are out fishing. To me, cleaning up around where I setup to fish is a no-brainer. I try to leave every place I go better than I found it. The storms we have here bring fresh flotsam & jetsam on every high tide. I have pulled very heavy pieces of netting off as well as several large poles out to where a loader could get to them. If this stuff remains on the beach it becomes a place where predators could stalk fledglings or eggs, and detracts from the beauty of the seashore.

The step the N.P.S. (you & Thayer) took in letting us create a route behind the dune line giving all of us access to the "point" at high tide last spring was masterful, thank you. The careful placement of the "symbolic fencing" allowing both birds & us (mere humans) routes to productive feeding & fishing areas by splitting the fine lines of what the U.S.F.W. & the birders wanted, as well as the needs of the mobile beach users, again, was deftly done. We as a group (mobile beach users) are getting through to the individual beach abuser (donut makers, fence crossers, and just plain rude 4x4 drivers, plus the litter'rs) and the amount of damage they do is decreasing. Many of us (if we are *witnesses*) to *blatant law breaking*, would gladly join your Rangers in court to testify, if necessary. Most of us will call and report bad behavior, last spring I called about several Jet Skis romping in the surf neat Hatteras Inlet. To make sure the message is clear, violators should get more than a wrist slap, stiff fines should be given.

The main culprit that keeps birds like the Piping Plover from making a comeback on the beaches of Cape Hatteras National Recreational Seashore is Mother Nature. She's a cruel mother, with regular Nor' Easters & hurricanes overwhelming almost all the beaches in the Park, eggs & fledglings stand poor chances of survival. There is nothing any man can do to prevent nature's wrath. The same forces that make it hard for some birds to make it are what bring the fish to the shores of the Seashore. Two currents colliding into Diamond Shoals bring the largest species of coastal swimming fish (Red Drum, Striped Bass,