

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Park staff place a high priority on meeting the intent of public involvement in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and giving the public an opportunity to comment on proposed actions. As part of the National Park Service (NPS) NEPA process, issues associated with the actions were identified during scoping meetings with NPS staff, coordination with other affected agencies including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (see appendix B), public meetings, and public comment.

The Cape Hatteras National Seashore goals for public involvement included: acceptance of the management strategy by the public, substantive and valuable input to help guide seashore decisions, and minimization of conflicts through dissemination of information and starting discussion. The seashore places a high value on maintaining a meaningful dialogue with interested parties and organizations. The seashore elicited public participation in the discussion of issues, areas to be studied, and alternatives. Scoping and public involvement efforts included public meetings and open-houses, flyers and press releases, website postings, and dissemination of information and gathering of comments through the internet. Several public information sessions and public scoping meetings were held and are detailed below.

INFORMATION SESSIONS

The public was given the opportunity to learn about the planning process during seven information sessions held in October 2005. The primary goal of the sessions was to answer questions about the planning process and get input on how the process could best be used to address any public concerns or potential outcomes of the process.

Three of the sessions were more formal in style and held from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on October 3 at the Wright Brothers National Memorial First Flight Centennial Pavilion, October 4 at the Dare County Fessenden Center in Buxton, and October 5 at the Ocracoke Community Center. A facilitator led a question and answer (Q&A) meeting format at the sessions and a court reporter accurately captured a record of questions asked and NPS responses. Individuals were generally given two minutes to comment, identify their issue, and ask a question, and NPS was given two minutes to respond. Nearly 120 people attended the Q&A sessions—16 people attended the meeting at Wright Brothers National Memorial First Flight Centennial Pavilion, 96 people attended the meeting in Buxton, and 6 attended the meeting in Ocracoke.

In addition, four open-house style sessions allowed the public to ask park staff questions and provide input to the park in a more informal atmosphere. These sessions occurred on October 5 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Rodanthe/Waves/Salvo Community Building, October 6 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Wright Brothers National Memorial First Flight Centennial Pavilion, October 6 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum, and October 11 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the NPS Ocracoke Maintenance Building. These sessions were not recorded and a facilitator was not present, however, NPS representatives did take notes. Approximately 35 people attended one of these four sessions.

Notices for these meetings were posted on the NPS Cape Hatteras National Seashore website and at local post offices, emailed, or mailed to people on the mailing lists, and press releases were sent to the following media/newspapers:

Associated Press

Beaufort - Hyde County News

Charlotte Observer
Coastland Times
Elizabeth City Advance
Hatteras Monitor
Island Breeze
North Beach Sun
Ocracoke Observer
Outer Banks Sentinel
Raleigh News and Observer
Richmond Times Dispatch

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS

In early November 2005, three public scoping meetings were held to solicit public input, especially on issues and ideas for alternatives. Public participation is vital to the NPS NEPA planning process and public scoping is an early and open process used to determine the scope of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the strategy/EA. The goal of the meetings was to receive input from everyone, particularly on issues identified, concerns, and any ideas for alternatives that would meet the need, purpose, and objectives of this planning process.

The meetings were held on November 1 from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Dare County Fessenden Center in Buxton, November 2 from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Wright Brothers National Memorial First Flight Centennial Pavilion, and November 3 from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the City Museum in Washington, D.C. A total of 140 people attended the meeting in Buxton, 33 attended the meetings at the Wright Brothers National Memorial First Flight Centennial Pavilion, and 18 people attended the meeting in Washington, D.C.

To facilitate input, each meeting started with an open house, and was followed by a short presentation, public hearing, and second open house. During the open house portion of the meetings, the public was encouraged to interact with NPS staff and look at large displays that provided background on the strategy and its alternatives. NPS staff recorded public comments on flip charts. Additionally, a court reporter was available to record public input in a private setting during the open houses. For the public hearing portion of the meetings, a facilitator provided individual citizens the opportunity to speak in front of everyone for a few minutes with a court reporter capturing their input. NPS staff did not respond, as they did during Q&A sessions held in October 2005.

Notices for these meetings were posted on the NPS Cape Hatteras National Seashore website and at local post offices, emailed, or mailed to citizens on the mailing lists, and press releases were sent to the following media/newspapers:

Associated Press
Beaufort - Hyde County News
Charlotte Observer
Coastland Times
Elizabeth City Advance
Hatteras Monitor

Island Breeze
North Beach Sun
Ocracoke Observer
Outer Banks Sentinel
Raleigh News and Observer
Richmond Times Dispatch

In addition, a meeting notice was published in the Washington Post on November 1, 2005 for the Washington, D.C. meeting.

To keep the public involved and informed following the public scoping meetings, individuals were given the option to receive notification of the availability of the Interim Protected Species Management Strategy/EA by either e-mail or mail and the option to either download a copy or have a hardcopy mailed. Individuals were also given the option not to be placed on the mailing list, and an option to keep their name and address private.

NPS also provided a 30-day public comment period through which the public could participate by mail or on the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website. NPS also posted information on the public scoping meetings and additional comment opportunities on October 17, 2005, with a November 17, 2005, deadline for comments.

Though comments varied greatly, most comments focused on past and future NPS protected species management actions, ORV management actions, visitor use and experience, and concerns over potential economic impacts. Comments also focused on specific actions presented in the initial alternatives. It was explained that comments received should focus on the Interim Protected Species Management Strategy/EA, but may also be applicable to the long-term ORV management plan/EIS that will be handled by a regulation development process. The opportunity for input into that process will be announced in coming months.

PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE STRATEGY/EA

This strategy/EA will be distributed for a 30-day public review and comment period. The strategy/EA will be made available for public review through PEPC, individual mailings, as requested, and hard copies of the document will be placed in local libraries.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGY

Following analysis and response to public comments on the strategy/EA and any revisions needed to the strategy, and conclusion of consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies regarding the strategy, a decision will be made and the strategy will be implemented in the spring of 2006.

OTHER CONSULTATION

Coordination and consultation efforts for this planning process focused on the means or processes to be used to include the public, major interest groups, and local public entities.

Coordination with local and federal agencies and various interest groups was conducted during the NEPA process to identify issues and/or concerns related to protected species management within the Cape Hatteras National Seashore (see appendix B). Notice of the document will be posted on PEPC and the following organizations and the following organizations, agencies, and individuals will be notified of its availability.

CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATES

Elizabeth Dole, Senator

Richard Burr, Senator

Walter B. Jones, 3rd District Representative

STATE REPRESENTATIVES

Marc Basnight, State Senator

Richard Burr, Senator

Walter B. Jones, 3rd District Representative

FEDERAL AGENCIES

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, if adverse effects on objects on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places are identified

National Marine Fisheries Service

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

U.S. Coast Guard

U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Ecological Services, Raleigh Field Office

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge

U.S. Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Dare County Board of Commissioners and Planning Department

Hyde County Board of Commissioners and Planning Department

North Carolina Aquarium

North Carolina Department of Natural Resources

Division of Coastal Management

Coastal Resources Commission

Division of Marine Fisheries

Wildlife Resources Commission

North Carolina Natural Heritage Program

North Carolina Department of Transportation
North Carolina Highway Patrol
North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer

ORGANIZATIONS/OTHER

4 Plus Four Wheel Drive Club
American Sportfishing Association
Avon Property Owners Association
Bluewater Network
Cape Hatteras Anglers Club
Cape Hatteras Bird Club
Cape Hatteras Recreational Alliance
Capital City Four Wheelers
Defenders of Wildlife
Eastern Surfing Association
Environmental Defense
Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum
Hatteras Village Civic Association
Hyde County Chamber of Commerce
Kinnakeet Homeowners Association
League of Conservation Voters
Nags Head Fishing Club
Nags Head Woods Preserve
National Parks Conservation Association
Network for Endangered Sea Turtles
North Carolina Audubon
Natural Resources Defense Council
North Carolina Coastal Federation
North Carolina Beach Buggy Association
Ocracoke Civic Association
Outer Banks Preservation Association
Outer Banks Association of Realtors
Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce
Outer Banks Surf Fishing Schools
Outer Banks Visitor Bureau

Recreational Fishing Alliance
 Rodanthe/Waves/Salvo Civic Association
 Sierra Club, North Carolina Chapter
 Southern Environmental Law Center
 Surf Riders Association
 The American Sportfishing Association
 The Wilderness Society
 United Mobile Surf Fishing Association

LIST OF PREPARERS

Name	Title	Education/ Responsibility	Experience
National Park Service staff from the Environmental Quality Division, Southeast Regional Office and the Outer Banks Group contributed to this document.			
The Louis Berger Group, Inc.			
Gregory Dorn	Senior Planner/GIS Specialist	B.A. Environmental Science, M.S. Geography (emphasis in regional planning). Responsible for mapping and graphics.	7 years
Lori Gutman, AICP	Senior Planner	B.S. Natural Resources and Environmental Policy, M.C.P. Land Use, Environmental and Economic Development Planning. Responsible for park management and operations section.	6 years
Alan Karnovitz	Senior Economist	B.S. Natural Resource Science, M.P.P. Public Policy. Responsible for economics.	24 years
Karen Lusby	Senior Planner	B.A. Outdoor Recreation and Park Administration, M.S. Forest Economics. Responsible for visitor use and portions of cultural resource sections.	22 years
Dana Otto, AICP	Senior Environmental Scientist	B.S. Biological Sciences, M.S. Environmental Planning. Responsible for project management and review of all sections prepared by Louis Berger staff.	12 years
Richard Podolsky, PhD	Avian Species Specialist	B.A. Biological Conservation, M.S. Ecology, Ph.D Ecology, Fisheries, and Wildlife. Responsible for avian federal, state-listed, species of concern, and other avian species.	20 years
Spence Smith	Scientist	B.S. Zoology, M.A. Biology (concentration in marine biology). Responsible for soils and water quality.	9 years

Name	Title	Education/ Responsibility	Experience
Nancy Van Dyke	Senior Consultant	B.A. Biology and Geography, M.S. Environmental Sciences. Responsible for aquatic organisms, wildlife, special status species, general technical review	25 years
The Final Word			
Juanita Barboa	Lead Technical Editor	B.S. Technical Communication. Responsible for technical editing and publication management and coordination.	15 years

