

Consultation and Coordination

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INTRODUCTION

This “Consultation and Coordination” chapter describes the public involvement and agency consultation completed during the preparation of this plan/EIS for Fire Island National Seashore. A combination of activities, including public scoping, internal workshops, and agency briefings, has helped to guide the National Park Service in developing this plan/EIS.

BRIEF HISTORY OF PLANNING AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The National Park Service divides the scoping process into two parts: internal scoping and external (public) scoping. Internal scoping involves discussions among NPS personnel regarding the purpose of and need for action, issues, available references and guidance, and other related topics. Public scoping is the early involvement of the interested and affected public in the environmental analysis process. The public scoping process helps ensure that the public has been given an opportunity to comment and contribute early in the decision-making process. For this plan/EIS, project information was distributed to individuals, agencies, and organizations early in the scoping process. These groups were given the opportunity to express their views and identify important issues and alternatives or alternative elements for the purpose of informing the decision-making process.

INTERNAL SCOPING AND PLANNING

An internal scoping meeting was held in October 2010 to provide an opportunity for the NPS team to initiate the NEPA planning process and discuss the management of white-tailed deer and vegetation at the Seashore. Attendees included representatives from the NPS Denver Service Center, NPS Northeast Region Office, NPS Biological Resource Management Division, U.S. Geological Survey Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, the Seashore, and their consultants. Topics discussed during the meeting included the purpose, need, and objectives; public and agency involvement; potential issues; data needs; and preliminary alternative elements.

This group met again in December 2011 and June 2012 to develop the alternatives that are considered in this plan/EIS. The group reviewed the purpose, need, and objectives as well as potential constraints, available management techniques, public input, and science team recommendations to compile a full spectrum of potential alternatives. The alternatives that best met the objectives of the plan/EIS were included in this document. The meeting held in June 2012 also included the cooperating agencies, as described below.

The internal scoping process continued throughout the development of the plan/EIS through regular conference calls.

PUBLIC SCOPING AND OUTREACH

The Seashore published the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS in the *Federal Register* on June 17, 2011. The Seashore also issued a press release on June 17, 2011, which was posted on the Seashore’s website and emailed to the media and the Seashore’s mailing list. Additionally, articles were published in local Fire Island newspapers, and links were shared via Twitter. These documents represented the beginning of the public scoping and outreach process. In addition, the Seashore published three newsletters (summer 2011, fall 2012, and fall 2013) that were provided to known stakeholders and posted on the NPS PEPC website (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/fiis>).

The first newsletter was generated to gather public comments. It provided background information; the purpose, need, and objectives associated with the plan/EIS; information on alternatives development; and instructions about how to provide comments either through the NPS PEPC website or using standard mail. The public comment period was from June 17, 2011, through July 31, 2011. A total of 12 pieces of correspondence were received during the public comment period, comprising approximately 90 comments. Comments received during the public scoping process addressed a variety of issues. Topics included the potential use of volunteers or contractors to assist with deer population management, social impacts, visitor conflicts and safety, the NYS-DEC 4-Poster tick management study, and potential deer population management methods, including public hunting. A public scoping report summarizing these comments was uploaded to the NPS PEPC website for public viewing.

The second and third newsletters provided updates on the planning process. The second newsletter included the status of the planning process, a summary of public comments received on the first newsletter, additional information on the alternatives development process, and a list of preliminary alternatives. The third newsletter focused on what was accomplished in 2013 and the pending project schedule. The second and third newsletters did not solicit public comments.

COOPERATING AGENCIES

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 USC 4321-4370h) and the CEQ regulations sections 1501.5 and 1501.6, the National Park Service invited the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) to be cooperating agencies for the plan/EIS in letters dated November 29, 2011. Each agency accepted this offer in memoranda of understanding which was signed by NYS-DEC on June 8, 2012, and by APHIS on June 19, 2012. The National Park Service finalized the memoranda of understanding on July 3, 2012. The cooperating agencies participated in the monthly interdisciplinary team status calls and the development of alternatives, provided information in their areas of technical expertise, and had the opportunity to comment on the internal review draft plan/EIS as it was prepared.

AGENCY AND TRIBAL CONSULTATION

In addition to establishing which agencies would serve as cooperating agencies, as described above, other agencies were consulted to aid in identification of potential issues to be addressed in the plan/EIS. Agency consultations are summarized below, and copies of relevant correspondence are included in appendix A.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. The Seashore initiated consultation under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act with a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on July 7, 2011. This letter notified the agency of the plan/EIS preparation and invited the agency to provide input and information on the presence of federally listed threatened and endangered species in the vicinity of the Seashore. A search of the USFWS Information, Planning, and Conservation System noted that six federally listed species are potentially found in the project area:

- federally threatened piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*)
- federally proposed threatened red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*)

- federally endangered roseate tern (*Sterna dougallii dougallii*)
- federally endangered sandplain gerardia (*Agalinis acuta*)
- federally threatened seabach amaranth (*Amaranthus pumilus*)
- federally proposed endangered northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)

As discussed in chapter 1, the Seashore has determined that the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect these federally listed species. The Seashore will provide the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with a copy of the plan/EIS and will continue to coordinate with the agency as the project moves forward, as needed.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. When the Seashore initiated consultation under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act with the New York SHPO in July 2011, the Seashore intended to use the plan/EIS for compliance with both section 106 and NEPA; however, based on the potential effects that came to light during the impact analysis, the Seashore sent a revised letter to the New York SHPO on May 30, 2014, to note that section 106 compliance was now being completed separately from but concurrently with the NEPA process. The Seashore will provide the New York State Historic Preservation Officer with a copy of the plan/EIS and will continue to coordinate with the agency as the project moves forward, as needed.

AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regulations, 36 CFR 800, the Seashore initiated consultation under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act with the Unkechaug Indian Nation and the Shinnecock Indian Nation in July 2011. These initial letters notified the American Indian tribes of the Seashore's intent to use the plan/EIS for compliance with both section 106 and the National Environmental Policy Act; however, based on the potential effects that came to light during the impact analysis, the NEPA document, the Seashore sent a revised letter submitted to the aforementioned tribes on May 30, 2014, to note that section 106 compliance was now being completed separately from but concurrently with the NEPA process. The Seashore will provide both the Unkechaug Indian Nation and the Shinnecock Indian Nation with a copy of the plan/EIS and will continue to coordinate with the agency as the project moves forward, as needed.

STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The Seashore initiated consultation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation with a letter dated July 7, 2011. The agency responded on July 22, 2011, suggesting the Seashore review the state's draft deer management plan, seriously consider public hunting as a management alternative, and maintain a cooperative relationship with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. As described above, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is now a cooperating agency on the plan/EIS.

NYS-DEC Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources. The Seashore coordinated with the NYS-DEC Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources on July 14, 2011, to provide input and information on the presence of New York state-listed threatened and endangered species in the vicinity of the project area. The Habitat Inventory Unit responded to the Seashore's request on March 5, 2012. Their report included rare and state-listed animals and plants, significant natural communities, and other significant habitats that, according to the New York Natural Heritage Program database, occur or may occur on or in the vicinity of the project area (see appendix A). As

discussed in chapter 1, the Seashore has determined that the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect these listed species. The Seashore will provide the Habitat Inventory Unit with a copy of the plan/EIS and will continue to coordinate with the agency as the project moves forward, as needed.

New York State Department of State (Coastal Management Program). To comply with the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Seashore will provide the New York State Department of State’s Coastal Management Program office with a copy of the Draft plan/EIS. At that time, the Seashore will request a review of the document (via a coastal consistency determination).

LIST OF PREPARERS

The National Park Service prepared this plan/EIS with assistance from a contractor in accordance with CEQ regulations (1506.5). The National Park Service provided constant guidance and direction to the contractor regarding the scope and content of the plan/EIS. The National Park Service has independently reviewed all sections of the plan/EIS prior to publication and is responsible for the content of the plan/EIS.

TABLE 15. PREPARERS, CONTRIBUTORS, AND REVIEWERS

Name	Title
Contractor Team	
Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB)	
Margaret Beavers	Environmental Scientist, GIS Analysis/Graphics
Nicole Benjamin-Ma	Preservation Planner
Tim Davis	Senior Environmental Scientist, Certified Wildlife Biologist
Douglas DeBerry	Senior Environmental Scientist
Diane Ditzel	Environmental Planner/Scientist
Tracy Hamm	Environmental Planner
Mariah Murphy	Environmental Planner
Kim Threlfall	Senior Environmental Planner
Tricia Wingard	NPS Program Manager, Project Manager
Jacob Hoogland and Associates	
Jacob Hoogland	NPS Market Leader
The Final Word	
Juanita Barboa	Copy Editor
Guttry Writing Services LLC	
Paul Guttry	Copy Editor
Janet Krenn	
Janet Krenn	Copy Editor

TABLE 15. PREPARERS, CONTRIBUTORS, AND REVIEWERS (CONT'D)

Name	Title
NPS Interdisciplinary Team	
NPS – Denver Service Center (DSC)	
Morgan Elmer	Project Manager
Ann Van Huizen	Project Manager (former)
NPS – Fire Island National Seashore (FIIS)	
K. Christopher Soller	Superintendent
Michael Bilecki	Chief of Resource Management
Kaetlyn Kerr	Biological Technician
Kathy Krause	Chief of Interpretation
Christopher Olijnyk	Site Manager, William Floyd Estate
Steve Olijnyk	Park Ranger Law Enforcement
Jordan Raphael	Park Biologist
Lindsay Ries	Wildlife Biologist
Elizabeth Rogers	Science Communications Park Ranger
Paula Valentine	Public Information Officer (former)
NPS – Environmental Quality Division (EQD)	
Dan Niosi	Environmental Protection Specialist
NPS – Northeast Region Office (NER)	
Sheila Colwell	Wildlife Biologist
Mary Foley	Chief Scientist
Kris Heister	Chief, Division of Natural Resources
Jacki Katzmire	Regional Environmental Coordinator
Mary (Missy) Morrison	Environmental Planning Specialist
NPS – Biological Resource Management Division (BRMD)	
Kirsten Leong	Human Dimensions Program Manager
Jenny Powers	Wildlife Veterinarian
Cooperating Agencies	
NYS-DEC	
Gordon Batcheller	Chief Wildlife Biologist
Michelle Gibbons	Wildlife Manager
Jeremy Hurst	Wildlife Biologist
Joshua Stiller	Wildlife Biologist
APHIS	
Martin Lowney	State Director
Other Reviewers and Contributors	
Scott Bates	NPS-National Capital Region, Regional Wildlife Biologist
Ellen Carlson	NPS-NER, Community Planner
John Hammond	NPS, Olmstead Center for Landscape Preservation, Historical Landscape Architect
Rick Kahn	NPS-BRMD, Wildlife Biologist
Brian Underwood	U.S. Geological Service (USGS), Research Wildlife Biologist

SCIENCE TEAM MEMBERS

TABLE 16. SCIENCE TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Affiliation	Role
Myla Aronson	Hofstra University	Native/invasive plants in the wildland/urban interface
Sheila Colwell	NPS-NER	Wildlife biologist
Jodi Forrester	University of Wisconsin-Madison	Research plant biologist
Howard Ginsberg	USGS/University of Rhode Island	Research entomologist, disease ecologist
Bruce Lauber	Cornell University	Human dimensions of natural resources and environmental management
Kirsten Leong	NPS-BRMD	Human dimensions of natural resources and environmental management
Donald Leopold	The State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF)	Research plant biologist
Chris Olijnyk	NPS-FIIS	Cultural resource specialist and site manager, William Floyd Estate
M. Nils Peterson	North Carolina State University	Human dimensions of natural resources and environmental management
Jenny Powers	NPS-BRMD	Fertility control and wildlife veterinarian
Jordan Raphael	NPS-FIIS	Park biologist
Lindsay Ries	NPS-FIIS	Park biologist
Ted Stankowich	University of Massachusetts	Behavior ecologist
Brian Underwood	USGS/SUNY-ESF	Research wildlife biologist

DOCUMENT REVIEW AND LIST OF RECIPIENTS

The draft plan/EIS will be released for a 60-day public and agency review period and will be made available for review on the NPS PEPC website. Hard copies will be made available for review at the Seashore's public facilities and local libraries. The draft plan/EIS will be distributed to the following government officials and agencies, and nongovernmental organizations and agencies. Individuals and other entities will be provided the draft plan/EIS upon request.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
 National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, including National Marine Fisheries Service
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 U.S. Department of Public Health
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES OR GOVERNMENTS

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
New York State Department of Health
New York State Department of State
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
Robert Moses State Park
Suffolk County
Town of Brookhaven
Town of Islip
Smith Point County Park

Village of Patchogue
Village of Mastic Beach
Village of Saltaire
Village of Ocean Beach
Village of Bellport

AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES

Shinnecock Indian Nation
Unkechaug Indian Nation

ORGANIZATIONS/OTHER

Animal Welfare Institute
Appalachian Mountain Club
Audubon Society
Fire Island Association
Fire Island Wilderness Committee
Fire Island Wildlife Foundation, Inc.
Friends of Fire Island National Seashore
Friends of Watch Hill
Humane Society of the United States
National Park Foundation
National Park Conservation Association
The Nature Conservancy
Pattersquash Gun Club
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
Sierra Club
South Shore Estuary Reserve
Wilderness Society

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