

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**National Park Service****Notice of Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for an Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan (ORV Management Plan) for Cape Lookout National Seashore (Seashore), NC**

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4332) and Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1506.6), the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS) will prepare an ORV Management Plan/DEIS. The ORV Management Plan/DEIS will be used to guide the management and control of ORVs at the Seashore for approximately the next 15 to 20 years. It will also form the basis for a special regulation that will regulate ORV use at the Seashore. The ORV Management Plan/DEIS will assess potential environmental impacts associated with a range of reasonable alternatives for managing ORV impacts on park resources such as threatened and endangered species, soils, wetlands, wildlife, and cultural resources. Socioeconomic impacts and effects on visitor experience and public safety will also be analyzed. In addition, the plan will focus on issues that have a direct bearing on ORV management, including management of threatened and endangered species and species of special concern, as well as predator management.

DATES: To determine the scope of issues to be addressed in the ORV Management Plan/DEIS and to identify significant issues related to the ORV management at the Seashore, NPS anticipates conducting public scoping meetings in September 2007. The NPS is tentatively planning to conduct one meeting in Charlotte, Raleigh and Morehead City or Beaufort, North Carolina, respectively. Representatives of the NPS will be available to discuss issues, resource concerns, and the planning process at each of the public meetings. Once public meetings have been scheduled, their locations, dates, and times will be published in local newspapers and posted on the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) Web site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/CALO>.

ADDRESSES AND FURTHER INFORMATION: Written comments or requests for information should be addressed to Wouter Ketel, Management Assistant, Cape Lookout National Seashore, 131 Charles St., Harkers Island, North

Carolina 28531. Comments may also be hand-delivered to the attention of Wouter Ketel. In addition, comments may be entered online in the NPS PEPC Web site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/CALO>. To comment using PEPC, select the "Cape Lookout National Seashore ORV Management Plan/EIS project," select "documents," select this "Notice of Intent," and then select "comment" and enter your comments. Further information about this project may also be found on the PEPC Web site listed above, including links to information about the NEPA planning process.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, please be aware that our practice is to make comments, including names, home addresses, home phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of respondents, available for public review. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their names and/or home addresses, etc., but if you wish us to consider withholding this information you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. We will always make submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives of or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The ORV use on the Seashore predates establishment of the park in 1966. The State of North Carolina turned over the lands of Core Banks to the NPS in 1976. Shackleford Banks was acquired from 1984 to 1986. Beginning in the 1940s, vehicles were transported to the banks by shallow draft ferries, and were used to provide access to productive commercial and recreational fishing spots as well as for camping and sightseeing. Today ORVs are used to provide vehicular access onto the Seashore beaches for recreational purposes, including surf-fishing, surfing, sunbathing, swimming, bird-watching, scenic driving, camping, etc. It is estimated that up to 5500 ORVs are transported by ferry to the Seashore each year.

Executive Order 11644, issued in 1972 and amended by Executive Order 11989 in 1977, states that Federal agencies allowing ORV use must designate the specific areas and trails on public lands on which the use of ORVs may be permitted, and areas in which the use of ORVs may not be permitted. Agency regulations to authorize ORV use provide that designation of such

areas and trails will be based upon the protection of the resources of the public lands, promotion of the safety of all users of those lands, and minimization of conflicts among the various uses of those lands. Executive Order 11644 was issued in response to the widespread and rapidly increasing use of ORVs on the public lands—"often for legitimate purposes but also in frequent conflict with wise land and resource management practices, environmental values, and other types of recreational activity." 36 CFR 4.10(b) requires that "routes and areas designated for off-road motor vehicle use shall be promulgated as special regulations." In addition, such routes and areas may only be designated in national recreation areas, national seashores, national lakeshores and national preserves. Therefore, in accordance with the Executive Order, the purpose of this Plan/DEIS is to manage ORV use in compliance with the Seashore's enabling legislation, NPS management policies, and other laws and regulations to ensure protection of the natural, cultural, and recreational values of the Seashore's dynamic coastal barrier island environment for present and future generations.

An ORV Management Plan is needed because lack of an approved plan over time has led to inconsistent management of ORV use. Related to the need to provide consistency in ORV management is the need to provide consistency in resource protection in areas of ORV use, particularly as required under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Compounding these issues, the Seashore is also subject to dynamic weather-related events that continually change the beach, and sometimes limit the area that can be accessed safely by ORVs. Therefore, an ORV Management Plan is needed to: (1) Comply with Executive Orders 11644 and 11989 respecting ORV use, and with NPS laws, regulations (36 CFR 4.10), and policies to minimize impacts to Seashore resources and values; (2) Establish an approved plan incorporating public input that reduces the potential for inconsistent management of ORV use, user conflicts, and safety concerns; (3) Provide for sustainable recreational use; (4) Protect natural and cultural resources from potential effects of ORV use; and (5) Provide for protected species management in relation to ORV and other uses that replaces the Cape Lookout National Seashore Interim Protected Species Management Plan/EA and associated Biological Opinion.

The ORV Management Plan/DEIS will cover lands administered by the NPS on North Core Banks, South Core Banks, Middle Core Banks, Ophelia Banks, and

Shackleford Banks. Of the 56-mile long Seashore, about 47 miles spanning North and South Core Banks were identified by the Seashore General Management Plan (December 1982) as appropriate for controlled ORV use; the remaining 9 miles on Shackleford Banks is a proposed wilderness and is closed to vehicle use. However, other potential aspects of the ORV Management Plan, such as species and predator management, will also be addressed for Shackleford Banks, where ORVs are not allowed.

During initial internal scoping the NPS interdisciplinary team identified a number of draft objectives for the ORV Management Plan/DEIS, including:

Management Methodology

- Identify criteria to designate ORV use areas and routes.
- Establish ORV management practices and procedures that have the ability to adapt in response to changes in the Seashore's dynamic physical and biological environment.
- Continue an ongoing and meaningful dialogue with the multiple public groups interested in/affected by ORV management.
- Establish procedures for prompt and efficient public notification of beach access status including any temporary ORV use restrictions for such things as resource and public safety closures, storm events, etc.
- Build stewardship through public awareness and understanding of NPS resource management and visitor use policies and responsibilities as they pertain to the Seashore and ORV management.

Natural Physical Resources

- Minimize adverse impacts from ORV use to soils and topographic features, e.g., dunes, ocean beach, wetlands, tidal flats, etc.

Threatened, Endangered, and Other Protected Species

- Provide protection for threatened, endangered, and other protected species (e.g., State-listed species) and their habitats, minimize adverse impacts related to ORV and other uses as required by laws and policies, such as the Endangered Species Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and NPS laws and management policies.

Other Vegetation and Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

- Minimize adverse impacts to native plant and animal species and their habitats related to ORV and other uses.

Cultural Resources

- Protect cultural resources such as shipwrecks, archeological sites, and cultural landscapes from adverse impacts related to ORV use.

Visitor Use and Experience

- Manage ORV use to allow for a variety of appropriate visitor use experiences.
- Minimize conflicts between ORV use and other uses.
- Ensure that ORV operators are informed about the rules and regulations regarding ORV use at the park.

Visitor Safety

- Ensure that ORV management promotes the safety of all visitors.

Park Operations

- Identify operational needs and costs to fully implement an ORV management plan.

The draft and final ORV Management Plan/DEIS will be made available to all known interested parties and appropriate agencies. Full public participation by Federal, State, and local agencies as well as other concerned organizations and private citizens is invited throughout the preparation process of this document.

Authority: The authority for publishing this notice is 40 CFR 1506.6.

The responsible official for this ORV Management Plan/DEIS is Patricia A. Hooks, Regional Director, Southeast Region, National Park Service, 100 Alabama Street, SW., 1924 Building, Atlanta, Georgia 30303.

Dated: July 13, 2007.

Patricia A. Hooks,

Regional Director, Southeast Region.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

General Management Plan, Environmental Impact Statement, Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, Colorado

AGENCY: National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare a general management plan and environmental impact statement for the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site.

SUMMARY: Under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of

1969, 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C), the National Park Service (NPS) is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a general management plan (GMP) for the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site. This effort will analyze the impacts of a broad range of design alternatives for the national historic site. This effort will result in a comprehensive general management plan that provides a framework for making management decisions regarding the preservation of natural and cultural resources, visitor use and interpretation and development of appropriate park facilities. This plan will be developed in cooperation with the Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma, the Northern Arapaho Tribe of Wyoming, the Northern Cheyenne Tribe of Montana, and the State of Colorado. Alternatives to be considered include no-action, the proposed action and other reasonable alternatives.

The park superintendent will initiate consultation with congressional delegations, tribal representatives, and state and local agencies on the development of the plan. Consultation with these agencies will continue throughout the planning process.

Public involvement in the planning process will include newsletters and open houses that inform the public of the project and provide opportunities for input; press releases in the local media; newsletters and open houses to present and solicit input on the alternatives; a public review draft of the general management plan and environmental impact statement and public meetings to provide additional opportunities to comment on the draft plan. Public involvement is essential for the development of creative and sustainable management alternatives for the national historic site.

A briefing statement has been prepared that summarizes the specific elements of the general management planning process and the EIS. Copies of that information may be obtained from: Superintendent, Alexa Roberts, Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, P.O. Box 249, Eads, CO 81036.

DATES: The Park Service will accept comments from the public through 30 days from date of publication in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: Information will be available for public review and comment in the office of the Superintendent, Alexa Roberts, Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, P.O. Box 249, Eads, CO 81036 and on the NPS Planning Environment and Public Comment site (PEPC) at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>.