

## **IMPORTANT UPDATE FROM REPRESENTATIVE TIM SPEAR**

Dear Friends,

This is to advise you of a pending lawsuit that could affect everyone's right of access and use of public beaches in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore on the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

Please take a moment to visit this website: [www.savehatteras.com](http://www.savehatteras.com) and read the information there. Then click on the web address to [www.islandfreepress.com](http://www.islandfreepress.com) to read a detailed article about what has transpired to this point. The consequences of this lawsuit are much more damaging than what some may think at first glance.

A hearing has been set for April 4<sup>th</sup> in federal court in Raleigh to hear oral arguments and evidence as to whether to enter a temporary order to prohibit ORV (off road vehicle) use on parts of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore until the lawsuit itself is heard. According to Dare County officials, they estimate a loss of \$8 million dollars in revenue and Hyde County has estimated a \$300,000 loss of revenue annually. This loss of revenue coupled with the already slowing economy and high gasoline prices will have a chilling effect on the economies of these two counties and the entire surrounding areas. An adverse ruling would prohibit vehicular access to some of the most beautiful and prime areas of the beach for surfing, shell collecting, fishing, and other water activities.

I have written the Secretary of the Department of Interior in support of the National Park Service and their good faith efforts to resolve this issue and encouraged him to allow the Park Service to continue with the negotiated rule making process. Also because of this impact on our local and North Carolina's economy I have written NC Attorney General Roy Cooper and requested that he evaluate the legal possibility of the State intervening to assist Dare & Hyde counties and the federal government in defending this lawsuit. I believe the loss of access and use of our publicly owned beaches along with the negative impact this will have on North Carolina's economy is more than sufficient reason for the state to get involved. On the website listed above you can read the opposition letters from Sen. Basnight and Congressman Jones. We are all committed to defending this lawsuit on behalf of the residents and visitors to our Outer Banks.

Thank you as always for allowing me to share this information with you. Please contact me any time I may be of assistance.

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