



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Outer Banks Group:
· Cape Hatteras National
Seashore
· Fort Raleigh National
Historic Site
· Wright Brothers National
Memorial

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National Park Service Beach Access Report for July 17, 2008

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***Bold, blue print = updated news.**

****Report resource protection area violations to:**

Dare Central Communications Center: 252-473-3444

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Ocracoke Sheriff Dept: 252-928-7301

During the remainder of July, August and September, park visitors will experience a shift in the resource protection areas as birds fledge and sea turtle nests approach their expected hatch dates. As experienced in 2007 under the Interim Strategy, and again this season, some full beach closures will be implemented as turtle nest approach “day 50” (from the date when the nest was laid) in expectation of hatching. Under the terms of the Consent Decree, beginning September 15, all sea turtle nests that have reached their hatch window at day 50 will result in full beach closures.

The ORV Access Mileage list accompanies the Beach Access Report weekly as a separate attached document. This is an effort to provide a concise, simplified list of approximate ORV access, north and south of existing ramps. In both reports, the mileages, distances and descriptions in both reports are APPROXIMATE and reflect the best information available at the time the weekly reports are prepared. The marked boundaries found in the field are the actual, legal boundaries of the closed areas and supersede any information in this report. Park visitors MUST pay close attention to and comply with resource protection area boundaries as found in the field. All resource protection areas are clearly marked with carsonite posts, signs, string, wooden poles or other markers.

Google Earth maps are available at:
www.nps.gov/caha

Go to the park website and click on the “Off-Road Vehicle Information – More...” Link in the top middle of the page, click on “Current ORV Access Information (Reports and Maps),” click on “Current Interactive Beach Access Map using Google Earth.” A free download of Google Earth is available for first time users or click on “(date) current beach access map” link for repeat users. The program allows you to zoom into any stretch of beach in the National Seashore to check the status of access and protection resource areas. The underlying Google Earth map imagery is dated (2004-2006) and may not always match the actual, current shoreline. The National Park Service color-coded line overlays are based on recent/current GPS readings and reflect actual shoreline locations and access status. In other words, the color coded lines (green, yellow, red) indicate the actual shoreline access status, even though in some cases it appears on the image that the line is located landward or seaward of the outdated base image of the shoreline. (See disclaimer on the maps) We are working with Google Earth to acquire more current

base maps. The maps are updated periodically and the **date** of the most recent update is indicated on the link. The weekly Beach Access Report will continue to be issued on Thursdays.

The park is operating under a Consent Decree signed by U.S. District Court Judge Terrence W. Boyle on April 30, 2008. The Consent Decree adopts the NPS Interim Strategy, with a number of modifications including a prohibition on night driving on Seashore beaches between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6 a.m. from May 1 through November 15. Between those dates, the public is expected to remove ORVs from the beach by 10:00 p.m. and may not enter the beach with vehicles until 6 a.m.; however, between September 16 and November 15, NPS may issue permits to authorize night driving between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. The night driving permitting process will be developed and available by September 16. No fee or limit on the number of 2008 night driving permits is anticipated.

The Consent Decree states that if NPS observes prenesting and/or breeding behavior of colonial waterbirds, piping plovers, or American oystercatchers, NPS shall establish the appropriate buffer within 8 daylight hours. Upon discovery of an active nest or chicks that are outside an existing closure, protective measures shall be taken immediately to close the area and establish the buffers described above, and the related fencing around the site shall be installed as soon as NPS staff can reasonably be mobilized, but always within 6 daylight hours. As a result of these required buffer distances and the time frames within which NPS must install them, beach access status can change quickly.

On National Seashore beaches pets must be physically restrained at all times on a leash no greater than 6 feet.

Bodie Island (Coquina Beach to Oregon Inlet)

There are approximately 5.6 miles of ocean shoreline from Ramp 1 to Oregon Inlet. Approximately **3.8** miles are open to pedestrian access. There is no pedestrian access along the ocean shoreline from 0.1 mile south of Ramp 4 to Oregon Inlet. Approximately **2.5** miles are open to ORV access in Bodie Island and approximately **1.8** miles are closed to all access for RESOURCE PROTECTION areas.

Ramp 1 – Ramp 2 (Coquina Beach Area) – 1.4 miles

The beach is open for pedestrian access but no ORV access. Annual seasonal closures went into effect on May 15, 2008 and extend from Ramp 1 to 0.1 of a mile south of Ramp 2.

Ramp 2 – Ramp 4 to Bodie Island Spit – 4.2 miles

The beach is open for ORV and pedestrian access along the ocean shoreline for 2.3 miles north of Ramp 4 and 0.1 of a mile south of Ramp 4. There is no through access to Oregon Inlet.

- A RESOURCE protection (prenesting) area was established at Bodie Island Spit the week of March 24, 2008. It includes interior areas of the spit and the “pond” shoreline. Access to pond from the northeast side is closed as part of the RESOURCE protection area.
The full beach closure of the small strip of soundside beach that runs parallel to the Herbert C. Bonner Bridge has been reinstated on July 10, 2008 for American Oystercatcher chicks in the area. Red carsonite posts (visible in the water) will mark the area as closed to all public access, including boat landing, until the chicks are fledged.
- A RESOURCE protection (prenesting) area was established on Green Island during the week of April 7th. The island is closed to landing of any craft.
- A RESOURCE protection area was established 0.2 of a mile south of Ramp 4 and extends for 0.25 of a mile for American Oystercatchers. **A 200 meter buffer was expanded on July 10, 2008 on the**

southern end of this closure to protect foraging chicks and adults. This is a full beach closure that restricts access to Bodie Island Spit.

- A RESOURCE protection area was established 0.9 of a mile south of Ramp 4 (within an existing closure) for a nesting least tern colony. This is a full beach shoreline closure.
- A RESOURCE protection area was established 1.3 miles south of Ramp 4 and extends for 0.25 of a mile. This is a full beach closure (within a closure) for American Oystercatchers.
- **On June 22 there was a deliberate violation of three closures in the Bodie Island area south of Ramp 4 and as a result of an intentional entry violation the buffer of the three closures at Bodie Island Spit were modified on June 23, 2008. As a result, there is now a continuous closure along this shoreline beginning 0.1 mile south of Ramp 4 and extending to Oregon Inlet.

Hatteras Island (South Boundary of PINWR south to Hatteras Inlet)

Hatteras Island has a total distance of 42.8 miles of ocean shoreline. Approximately **35.4** miles of ocean shoreline are open to pedestrian access though some areas (approximately **2.7** miles total) that are “open,” are not readily accessible by pedestrians. Approximately **15.8** miles open for ORV access on Hatteras Island. In addition, to the annual seasonal ORV closures, ORV use is restricted by **6.3** miles of SAFETY closures and **7.4** miles of RESOURCE PROTECTION closures. Approximately **7.4** miles is closed to all access for RESOURCE PROTECTION areas. **Beginning the week of July 20th through September, as turtle nest “hatch window” dates approach, the visiting public can expect to see additional full beach closures on Hatteras Island.**

Villages of Rodanthe, Waves, and Salvo: (north of Ramp 23 for 3 miles to Pea Island NWR boundary)

The annual seasonal village ORV closures went into effect May 15, 2008 and the beaches in front of Rodanthe, Waves, and Salvo are open to pedestrian but not for ORV access.

Ramp 23 – Ramp 27: (4.3 miles)

Currently, there is no through access for ORVs between Ramp 23 and Ramp 27 due to resource closures.

- A RESOURCE protection area was established 1.7 miles south of Ramp 23 and 1.9 miles north of Ramp 27 and extends for 350 meters. This is a full beach closure for American Oystercatchers and a least tern colony. On May 26 there was a deliberate violation of this closure and as a result of an intentional entry violation (campfire/violation notice issued), the buffer was modified on May 27, 2008. This closure was expanded by 70 meters to the south to ensure that least tern chicks have a 200 meter buffer.
- A RESOURCE protection area was REMOVED on June 3, 2008 that had been established 10 meters north of Ramp 27 for a least tern colony that moved into an adjacent closure. This removal opens approximately 1 mile of ORV and pedestrian access north of Ramp 27.
- A RESOURCE protection area was expanded to 200 meters 0.9 of a mile north of Ramp 27 when a small least tern colony with chicks was discovered. There are five additional nests yet to hatch and this is a full beach closure. This closure was expanded by 40 meters to the north to ensure that least tern chicks have a 200 meter buffer.
- A RESOURCE protection area was established 1 mile north of Ramp 27 with a 100 meter buffer. This is a full beach closure for American Oystercatchers.

Ramp 27 – Ramp 30: (2.2 miles)

The beach is open for ORV and pedestrian access along the ocean shoreline for 0.1 of mile south of Ramp 27 and 0.6 mile north of Ramp 30. Currently there is no through access for ORVs between the ramps due to resource closures. Colonial waterbirds, least terns, are scraping and established nesting colonies in the resource protection areas described below. The protection areas and associated buffers for colonial waterbirds essentially leave 0.5 of a mile open to both ORV and pedestrian access between Ramp 27 and Ramp 30.

- A RESOURCE protection area begins immediately south of Ramp 27 and extends for 0.5 of a mile. This is a full beach closure for American Oystercatchers and a nesting least tern colony. The closure was expanded 0.1 of a mile to the north for nesting least terns. The modification closes the pedestrian boardwalk from the Hwy. 12 parking lot. Pedestrians can access the beach via Ramp 27.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins 0.2 mile south of Ramp 27 and extends for 0.25 of a mile. This is a full beach closure for a least tern colony. This closure was combined for a total length of 0.7 of a mile with the closure listed above.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins 0.6 mile south of Ramp 27. This is a full beach closure for American Oystercatchers and a least tern colony. The closure was expanded 75 meters to the north to ensure that American Oystercatcher chicks have a 200 meter buffer.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins 0.6 mile north of Ramp 30 and extends for 0.25 of a mile. This is a full beach closure for American Oystercatchers.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins 0.5 mile north of Ramp 30 and extends for 0.25 of a mile. This is a full beach closure for American Oystercatchers.

Ramp 30 – Ramp 34: (4.3 miles)

The beach is open for ORV and pedestrian access 3.6 miles south of Ramp 30. Ramp 34 is closed to ORV and pedestrian access. Currently there is no through access for ORVs between Ramps 30 and 34 due to a resource closure.

- **A RESOURCE protection area (turtle nest site) is located approximately 2.0 miles south of Ramp 30. This is a full beach closure and there is no ORV by-pass. Therefore no through ORV access is available until the nest hatches. Pedestrian access is available behind the nest closure outside of the signed protected area. The nest is within the expected “hatch window.”**
- A RESOURCE protection area was REMOVED that began 2.4 miles south of Ramp 30 or 1.7 miles north of Ramp 34.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins 3.6 miles south of Ramp 30 was expanded to 200 meters. This is a full beach closure for nesting American Oystercatchers.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins at Ramp 34 for nesting least tern colony. This full beach closure for the nesting least tern colony with chicks and was expanded on July 10 by 250 meters to the south and closes Ramp 34 to ORV and pedestrian access. The parking lot adjacent to Hwy. 12 at Ramp 34 is still open.

Ramp 34 - Ramp 38: (beaches in front of Avon = 4.0 miles)

The annual seasonal village closures went into effect on May 15, 2008. The beach is open for 4.0 miles for pedestrian access from Ramp 34 to Ramp 38. There is no ORV access.

Ramp 38 - Ramp 43: (6.0 miles)

The beach is open to ORV access for 2.0 miles south of Ramp 38. Currently there is no through access for ORVs between Ramp 38 and Ramp 43. Pedestrian access is open for 6.0 miles between Ramp 38 and Ramp 43. .

- A SAFETY closure is 3.6 miles long, beginning 2.0 miles south of Ramp 38 to 0.4 of a mile north of Ramp 43, was adjusted on May 14. This section is open to pedestrian access, but not ORV access.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins 0.3 of a mile north of the village of Buxton and extends for 0.8 of a mile. This is a full beach closure for American Oystercatchers. This section is within a SAFETY CLOSURE which is not open to ORV access and pedestrian access is restricted through the 0.8 mile closure. This closure was expanded on May 26 when American oystercatcher chicks hatched and moved south to forage.
- On May 16, 2008, a deliberate act of vandalism damaged 1,500 feet of fence protecting an American Oystercatcher nest resulted in a 50 meter expansion of the buffer to the south as is ordered by the Consent Decree. This closure expansion is located in a pedestrian only area and does not affect ORV users.

Ramp 43 - Ramp 44: (0.3 of a mile)

The beach is open for ORV and pedestrian access from Ramp 43 to Ramp 44 and north of Ramp 43 for 0.4 of a mile. Ramp 44 is closed.

- A RESOURCE protection area was REMOVED on June 4, 2008 that had been established for American Oystercatchers between Ramp 43 and 44. No bird breeding activity had been observed in two weeks inside this resource closure.
- A RESOURCE protection area was REMOVED on June 10, 2008 that had been established for American Oystercatchers north of Ramp 43. No bird breeding activity had been observed in two weeks inside this resource closure.
- The 1,000 meter ORV buffer for Cape Point was expanded when piping plover chicks moved to the northernmost area of the small Salt Pond. There is no ORV and no pedestrian access 0.2 of a mile south of Ramp 43.

Ramp 44 - Ramp 45 (Cape Point): (2.4 miles)

Ramp 44 is closed. There is no ORV and pedestrian access south of Ramp 44.

- A RESOURCE protection (prenesting) area was established the week of March 24, 2008. It included interior areas of Cape Point and a complete shoreline closure that started approximately 0.25 miles south/west of Cape Point and ends approximately 0.3 east of Ramp 45. The total closure distance is approximately 1.0 mile in length. Due to the hatching of three piping plover chicks at Cape Point, a 1,000 meter ORV buffer has been established around the chicks, as prescribed by the Consent Decree. A RESOURCE protection area was established between Ramp 44 and the Salt Pond Bypass Road. This is a 150' buffer for foraging piping plover.
- A RESOURCE protection area was established 0.1 mile south of Ramp 44 for American Oystercatchers. There has been bird breeding behavior observed in this closure as recently as June 3, 2008.
- The RESOURCE protection area was established 0.6 of a mile south of Ramp 44 for a breeding least tern colony. This colony was disturbed by a storm/overwash on May 11 resulting in the lost of 6 nests and the colony has since relocated further west. This protection area has been modified and moved back from the shoreline 35 meters.

Ramp 45 to Ramp 49 (South Beach): (3.4 miles)

Ramp 45 is closed. Salt Pond Road is closed due to a RESOURCE protection area. Currently there is no through access for ORVs or pedestrians between the ramps due to resource closures. There is ORV and pedestrian access from Ramp 49 east for approximately 1.6 miles.

- A RESOURCE protection area (prenesting area) was established the week of March 24, 2008. It included upper beach areas that encompass the dunes and extends towards the ocean. On April 21, a modification (150 foot shoreline section) of this prenesting area was installed for American Oystercatchers. This is a full beach closure.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins 0.15 of a mile west of Ramp 45 and extends for 150 meters for American Oystercatchers and a least tern colony. This is located in front of Ramp 45 which closes Ramp 45 and the interdunal road. This is a full beach closure.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins 0.50 mile west of Ramp 45 and extends for 0.25 of a mile along the shoreline. This is a full beach closure for American Oystercatchers.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins 1.0 mile west of Ramp 45 and extends for 0.25 of a mile along the shoreline. This is a full beach closure for American Oystercatchers.
- A RESOURCE protection area was established 1.9 miles East of Ramp 49. This is a full beach closure for a least tern colony and a pair of American Oystercatchers.
- A RESOURCE protection area was established 1.6 miles East of Ramp 49 and extends for 200 meters. This is a full beach closure for a least tern colony and a pair of American Oystercatchers. The closure

was REDUCED by 200 meters when the active portion of the tern colony shifted to the east thus allowing for ORV and pedestrian access to the westernmost section of this closure. The reduction allows the buffer to be reduced but maintains the required 200 meter buffer around the nests/chicks on the westernmost boundary of this closure.

- On May 11, 2008, a deliberate act of vandalism to twelve “Area Closed” signs and several carsonite markers resulted in a 50 meter expansion of the buffer on the easternmost resource protection area as is directed by the Consent Decree.

Ramp 49 - Ramp 55: (5.9 miles; includes Sandy Bay soundside parking area)

The beach is open to ORV for 1.2 miles west of Ramp 49 and 0.1 of a mile east of Ramp 55 (in front of Frisco and Hatteras Villages). Currently, there is no through ORV access between Ramp 49 and Ramp 55 but pedestrian access is open from Ramp 49 to Ramp 55.

- The beach in front of Frisco Village to Hatteras Village is open to pedestrian access, but not ORV access for 4.7 miles.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins on the west side of NC Hwy. 12, 200 meters south of the Sandy Bay parking lot and extends for 0.25 of a mile for American Oystercatchers. This closure was modified and expanded on June 10 to protect American Oystercatcher chicks foraging to the south of the original closure.

Ramp 55 - Hatteras Inlet: (2.7 miles)

ORV and pedestrian access is open along the ocean shoreline from Ramp 55 west to the southernmost exit of the Pole Road, where a RESOURCE protection area begins. The Pole Road is open from Ramp 55 west to the Isabel overwash areas, where traffic is routed onto the beach due to a RESOURCE protection area. South of the overwash areas, the Pole Road and the ocean shoreline is open to the southernmost terminus of the Pole Road. The Cable Crossing route is open to access along the sound shoreline. The Spur Road is open to access to the sound shoreline.

- A RESOURCE protection (prenesting) area was **REMOVED** at the Isabel overwash area from the sound shoreline to the ocean dune on **July 15, 2008. The Pole Road has reopened in front of the overwash fan areas and there is also ocean shoreline access.**
- A RESOURCE protection areas was REMOVED 1.2 miles south/west of Ramp 55 and just south of the Isabel overwash area on June 27, 2008 for nesting American Oystercatchers. The removal of this closure reopens 0.5 miles of ocean shoreline access and 0.3 miles of soundside shoreline access for ORV and pedestrians.
- A RESOURCE protection (prenesting) area was established the week of March 24, 2008 south of the southern exit of Pole Road. The area includes upper beach and interior areas south of Pole Road and a full ocean beach closure beginning approximately 0.1 mile south/west of the southern exit of Pole Road. The full beach closure is approximately 0.8 miles long and continues south/west around the tip of Hatteras Inlet, which encompasses the “Rip.” The Consent Decree states that the pre-nesting areas “shall not be reduced to accommodate an ORV corridor, including in the event of naturally occurring erosion or accretion of the area, except in emergency situations. As a result of the erosion occurring at the “Rip,” this area will not be opened until the later of July 15, 2008 or two weeks after the last chick within the area has fledged.
- A RESOURCE protection area for foraging piping plovers was REMOVED on the sound shoreline on June 11, 2008. This foraging closure had been established on April 9 approximately 0.1 mile southwest of where the Spur Road exits onto the sound shoreline. This allows for a 0.22 mile corridor of shoreline access for boaters on the soundside. Currently, there is no access to the “Rip.”

Ocracoke Island

The Ocracoke Island District has a total distance of 18.4 miles of ocean shoreline. Approximately **16.3** miles are open to pedestrian access, though some areas (approximately **1** mile) that are “open,” such as the southern

end of South Point, are not readily accessible by pedestrians. Approximately 7.8 miles are open to ORV access on Ocracoke Island. ORV use is restricted by a 4.8 mile SAFETY closure. Approximately 2.1 miles are closed to all access for RESOURCE PROTECTION areas. **Beginning the week of July 20th through September, as turtle nest “hatch window” dates approach, the visiting public can expect to see additional full beach closures on Ocracoke Island.**

Ramp 59 - Ramp 67: (7.8 miles; includes North Ocracoke Spit)

There is no through ORV shoreline access between these two ramps. Pedestrian access is open from Ramp 59 to Ramp 67, 6.4 miles in length.

- A RESOURCE protection (prenesting) area was **REMOVED at North Ocracoke Spit on July 15, 2008**. This includes interior areas of the spit and the ocean shoreline.
- A RESOURCE protection area was REMOVED 0.4 of a mile north of Ramp 59.
- A RESOURCE protection area 0.9 of a mile south of Ramp 59 was REMOVED on June 19, 2008. The removal of this closure opened pedestrian access south of Ramp 59 to Ramp 67, which is 6.4 miles in length.
- A RESOURCE protection area was REMOVED on June 3, 2008 that had previously been established 4.5 miles south of Ramp 59 and 3.1 miles north of Ramp 67 for American Oystercatchers.
- A **SAFETY closure** is 4.8 miles long, and begins 1.0 miles south of Ramp 59 to 1.4 miles north of Ramp 67, was adjusted on May 14 **is still in effect**. This section is open to pedestrian access but not to ORV access.
- A RESOURCE protection area was REMOVED on the dredge spoil piles on North Ocracoke. There has been no American Oystercatcher activity.

Ramp 67 - Ramp 70 (includes Ramp 68): (3.8 miles; includes Ramp 68)

There is no through ORV shoreline access between these two ramps. Pedestrian access is open. The annual seasonal beach closure in front of the Ocracoke Campground and Day Use area went into effect on May 15, 2008. The beach from 0.6 of a mile south of Ramp 67 to Ramp 68 is closed to ORV access for 0.9 of a mile.

- A RESOURCE protection area was REMOVED on June 3, 2008 that had been established 0.3 of a mile south of Ramp 68 for American Oystercatchers.
- The RESOURCE protection area 0.8 of a mile south of Ramp 68 was REMOVED.
- A RESOURCE protection area begins 1.4 mile northeast of Ramp 70 and extends for 0.4 of a mile for American Oystercatchers and chicks. This is a full beach closure.

Ramp 70 - Ramp 72 (1.8 miles) and Ramp 72 to South Ocracoke Spit (4.4 miles):

The beach is open to ORV and pedestrian access from Ramp 70 south along ocean shoreline, for approximately 1.8 mile to Ramp 72 and from Ramp 72 south towards South Point for 0.9 of a mile.

- A RESOURCE protection (prenesting) area was established the week of March 24, 2008 that encompasses interior and soundside areas of the spit. There is ocean shoreline access for 0.2 miles from Ramp 72 south. On the soundside shoreline, 1.3 miles of shoreline is closed to ORV and pedestrian access.
- A RESOURCE protection area was **REMOVED to 0.9 of a mile south of Ramp 72. Beyond the 0.9 of a mile there is still a full beach closure in effect that extends for approximately 0.5 of a mile and precludes overland access to South Point**. This full beach closure along the ocean shoreline is for foraging piping plovers, piping plover chicks, and a least tern colony.

Temporary resource protection areas are necessary to protect threatened and endangered species and species of concern including Piping Plovers, American Oystercatchers, Colonial Waterbirds (Terns and Skimmers), and sea turtles. Posted areas are closed to vehicles, pedestrians and pets.

-NPS-