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### CAPE HATTERAS REG-NEG CONCLUDES

After 14 months, plus 5 days of intense negotiations in a 9 member integrated subcommittee, the Federal Advisory Committee, formed to advise the National Park Service (NPS) on an ORV management plan for the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area, has concluded with nothing but a matrix of differences and few agreements. What was supposed to be a negotiation, free from litigation, was marred from the beginning when Defenders Of Wildlife and National Audubon Society filed suit, shortly after the announcement of the committee. This suit resulted in a consent decree that took the management of the Seashore out of the hands of the NPS, closed vast areas of the Seashore during the summer tourist season and caused economic loss to the eight villages within the Seashore boundaries, the Outer Banks and the state of North Carolina.

In 1937 Congress established the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area with enabling legislation that states: *“said area shall be, and is, established, dedicated, and set apart as a national seashore recreational area for the benefit and enjoyment of the people and shall be known as the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area.”*

We will now go forward to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process with the anticipation that when the management of this recreational area is returned to the NPS, they will faithfully carry out their dual mandate of resource protection and public access.

We ask the NPS to recognize that the culture and heritage of Bodie Island, Hatteras Island and Ocracoke Island were built on a foundation of vehicle access to the ocean beaches and the unique nature of a park unit that has a robust economy within its jurisdiction.