

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This draft *Cape Hatteras National Seashore Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* (plan/EIS) analyzes a range of alternatives and actions for the management of off-road vehicles (ORVs) at Cape Hatteras National Seashore (the Seashore). The plan/EIS assesses the impacts that could result from continuation of current management actions in existence during the planning period for this plan/EIS (the two “no-action” alternatives) or implementation of any of the four action alternatives.

Upon conclusion of the planning and decision-making process, the alternative selected for implementation will become the ORV management plan, which will guide the management and control of ORVs at the Seashore for the next 10 to 15 years. It will also form the basis for a special regulation to manage ORV use at the Seashore.

## BACKGROUND

Officially authorized in 1937 along the Outer Banks of North Carolina, Cape Hatteras is the nation’s first national seashore. Consisting of more than 30,000 acres distributed along approximately 68 miles of shoreline, the Seashore is part of a dynamic barrier island system.

The Seashore serves as a popular recreation destination with more than 2.1 million visitors in 2008 (NPS 2008e), showing an 8-fold increase in visitation since 1955 (NPS 2007f). Seashore visitors participate in a variety of recreational activities, including beach recreation (sunbathing, swimming, shell collecting, etc.), fishing (surf and boat), hiking, hunting, motorized boating, non-motorized boating (sailing, kayaking, canoeing), nature study, photography, ORV use (beach driving), shellfishing, sightseeing, watersports (surfing, windsurfing, kiteboarding, etc.), and wildlife viewing. Seashore visitors use ORVs for traveling to and from swimming, fishing, and surfing areas and for pleasure driving.

Current management practices at the Seashore allow ORV users to drive on the beach seaward of the primary dune line, with a 10-meter backshore area seaward of the primary dune line protected seasonally. Drivers must use designated ramps to cross between the beach and NC-12 that runs behind the primary dune line. In addition to a multitude of visitor opportunities, the Seashore provides a variety of important habitats created by its dynamic environmental processes, including habitats for the federally listed piping plover; sea turtles; and one listed plant species, the seabeach amaranth. The Seashore contains ecologically important habitats such as marshes, tidal flats, and riparian areas, and hosts various species of concern such as colonial waterbirds (least terns, common terns, and black skimmers), American oystercatcher, and Wilson’s plover, all of which are listed by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) as species of special concern. In addition, the gull-billed tern, also found at the Seashore, is listed by the NCWRC as threatened.

Historically, beach driving at the Seashore was for the purpose of transportation, and not recreation. The paving of NC-12, the completion of the Bonner Bridge connecting Bodie and Hatteras islands in 1963, and the introduction of the State of North Carolina ferry system to Ocracoke Island facilitated visitor access to the sound and ocean beaches. Improved access, increased population, and the popularity of the sport utility vehicle have resulted in a dramatic increase in vehicle use on Seashore beaches. There has also been a decline in most beach nesting bird populations on the Seashore since the 1990s.

ORV use at the Seashore has historically been managed since the 1970s through various draft or proposed plans, though none were ever finalized or published as a special regulation as required by Executive Orders 11644 and 11989 and 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 4.10. The National Park Service (NPS) issued the Interim Protected Species Management Strategy (Interim Strategy) in 2006 to provide

resource protection guidance until the long-term ORV management plan and regulation could be completed. The Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued for the Interim Strategy in July 2007. In October 2007, a lawsuit was filed on the Interim Strategy that resulted in a consent decree in April 2008. As a part of the consent decree, the court ordered deadlines for completion of an ORV management plan/EIS and special regulation. This document, once finalized and approved, will serve as the ORV management plan and will form the basis for the special regulation governing ORV use at the Seashore.

## **PURPOSE OF THE PLAN**

The purpose of this plan is to develop regulations and procedures that carefully manage ORV use/access in the Seashore to protect and preserve natural and cultural resources and natural processes, to provide a variety of visitor use experiences while minimizing conflicts among various users, and to promote the safety of all visitors.

## **NEED FOR ACTION**

Cape Hatteras National Seashore provides a variety of visitor experiences. It is a long, essentially linear park, visitation is high, and parking spaces near roads are limited. Some popular beach sites, particularly those near the inlets and Cape Point, are a distance from established or possible parking spaces. Visitors who come for some popular recreational activities such as surf fishing and picnicking are accustomed to using large amounts and types of recreational equipment that cannot practically be hauled over these distances by most visitors without some form of motorized access. For many visitors, the time needed and the physical challenge of hiking to the distant sites, or for some even to close sites, can discourage or preclude access by non-motorized means. As a result, ORVs have long served as a primary form of access for many portions of the beach in the Seashore, and continue to be the most practical available means of access and parking for many visitors.

In addition to these recreation opportunities, the Seashore is home to important habitats created by the Seashore's dynamic environmental processes, including habitats for several federally listed species including the piping plover and three species of sea turtles. These habitats are also home to numerous other protected species, as well as other wildlife. The NPS is required to conserve and protect all of these species, as well as the other resources and values of the Seashore.

The use of ORVs must therefore be regulated in a manner that is consistent with applicable law, and appropriately addresses resource protection (including protected, threatened, and endangered species), potential conflicts among the various Seashore users, and visitor safety. Section 4.10(b) of the regulations in Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which implements Executive Orders 11644 and 11989, prohibits off-road use of motor vehicles except on designated routes or areas. It requires that "routes and areas designated for ORV use shall be promulgated as special regulations" in compliance with other applicable laws.

Therefore, in order to provide continued visitor access through the use of ORVs, the NPS must promulgate a special regulation authorizing ORV use at the Seashore. In order to ensure that ORV use is consistent with applicable laws and policies, the Seashore has determined that an ORV management plan is necessary as part of this process. Thus, the ORV plan and special regulation will

- Bring the Seashore in compliance 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.

- Address the lack of an approved plan, which has led over time to inconsistent management of ORV use, user conflicts, and safety concerns.
- Provide for protected species management in relation to ORV use upon expiration of the Interim Strategy (NPS 2006a), and associated Biological Opinion and amendments (USFWS 2006a, 2007a, 2008a) as modified by the consent decree.

## **OBJECTIVES IN TAKING ACTION**

### **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.
- Establish a civic engagement component for ORV management.
- Establish procedures for prompt and efficient public notification of beach access status including any temporary ORV use restrictions for such things as ramp maintenance, 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 impacts from ORV use to soils and topographic features, for example, dunes, ocean beach, wetlands, tidal flats, and other features.

### **THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND OTHER PROTECTED SPECIES**

- Provide protection for threatened, endangered, and other protected species (e.g., state-listed species) and their habitats, and minimize 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.

### **VEGETATION**

- Minimize impacts to native plant species related to ORV use.

### **OTHER WILDLIFE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT**

- Minimize impacts to wildlife species and their habitats related to ORV use.

### **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

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

## **VISITOR USE AND EXPERIENCE**

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

## **VISITOR SAFETY**

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

## **SEASHORE OPERATIONS**

- Identify operational needs and costs to fully implement an ORV management plan.
- Identify potential sources of funding necessary to implement an ORV management plan.
- Provide consistent guidelines, according to site conditions, for ORV routes, ramps, and signage.

## **PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CAPE HATTERAS NATIONAL SEASHORE**

### **PARK ENABLING LEGISLATION, PURPOSE, AND SIGNIFICANCE**

All units of the national park system were formed for a specific purpose (the reason they are significant) and to conserve significant resources or values for the enjoyment of future generations. The purpose and significance of the park provides the basis for identifying uses and values that individual NPS plans will support. The following provides background on the purpose and significance of the Seashore.

As stated in the Seashore's enabling legislation (the Act), Congress established the Seashore in 1937 as a national seashore for the enjoyment and benefit of the people, and to preserve the area. The Act states:

Except for certain portions of the area, deemed to be especially adaptable for recreational uses, particularly swimming, boating, sailing, fishing, and other recreational activities of similar nature, which shall be developed for such uses as needed, the said areas shall be permanently reserved as a primitive wilderness and no development of the project or plan for the convenience of visitors shall be undertaken which would be incompatible with the preservation of the unique flora and fauna or the physiographic conditions now prevailing in this area.

The Act also states:

...when title to all the lands, except those within the limits of established villages, within boundaries to be designated by the Secretary of Interior within the area of approximately one hundred square miles on the islands of Chicamacomico [Hatteras], Ocracoke, Bodie, Roanoke, and Collington, and the waters and the lands beneath the waters adjacent there to shall have been vested in the United States, said areas shall be, and is hereby, established, dedicated, and set apart as a national seashore for the benefit and enjoyment of the people and shall be known as the Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

A 1940 amendment to the enabling legislation authorized hunting and re-designated the area as the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area. (Note: The history of the Seashore’s name is described in more detail in chapter 1.)

Park significance statements capture the essence of the park’s importance to the nation’s natural and cultural heritage. Understanding park significance helps managers make decisions that preserve the resources and values necessary to the park’s purpose. The following significance statements recognize the important features of the Seashore. As stated in the 2006–2011 Strategic Plan, the Seashore has the following significance (NPS 2007b):

This dynamic coastal barrier island system continually changes in response to natural forces of wind and wave. The flora and fauna that are found in a variety of habitats at the park include migratory birds and several threatened and endangered species. The islands are rich with maritime history of humankind’s attempt to survive at the edge of the sea, and with accounts of dangerous storms, shipwrecks, and valiant rescue efforts. Today, the Seashore provides unparalleled opportunities for millions to enjoy recreational pursuits in a unique natural seashore setting and to learn of the nation’s unique maritime heritage.

## ISSUES AND IMPACT TOPICS

Issues associated with implementing an ORV management plan at Cape Hatteras National Seashore were initially identified by Seashore staff during internal scoping and were further refined through the public scoping and negotiated rulemaking processes. Table ES-1 details the issues that were discussed and analyzed in the plan/EIS.

**TABLE ES-1. ISSUES AND IMPACT TOPICS**

Issue	Reason for Analysis
Wetlands and Floodplains	<p>Vegetated wetlands along the soundside and interior of the islands are susceptible to direct damage from ORV use.</p> <p>Estuarine wetlands can be denuded of vegetation when ORVs are driven and parked along the soundside shoreline.</p> <p>Many of the interior or interdunal roads are located near wetland areas that are often not noticeable to visitors. When standing water is present along these ORV routes, visitors may drive over adjacent vegetated areas in an attempt to avoid the standing water. This results in wider roads, new vehicle routes, and crushed or dead vegetation.</p> <p>Construction of new parking areas is of concern for wetlands that may be located nearby.</p> <p>Nearly all of the Seashore is located within the 100-year floodplain, with the exception of a small area at the Navy tower site on Bodie Island and larger areas around Buxton, and could be impacted by the proposed development of ramps and parking areas under this plan/EIS.</p>
Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species	<p>The Seashore is home to federally threatened and endangered species year-round. Increased year-round visitation results in a greater potential for conflicts between visitor use and listed species. Conflicts between listed species and recreational use (including ORV use) could create direct or indirect losses to a listed species.</p> <p>The Seashore is used by both the threatened Atlantic Coast population of piping plover for breeding and wintering and by the endangered Great Lakes population (considered threatened on its wintering grounds) for wintering. Seabeach amaranth, a federally listed threatened plant species, has been found in limited numbers at the Seashore in the recent past. Three species of federally listed sea turtles (loggerhead, green, and leatherback) nest on Seashore beaches, with loggerhead being the most common.</p>

Issue	Reason for Analysis
State-Listed and Special Status Species	<p>Habitat for state-listed and special status species, such as the American oystercatcher and several species of colonial waterbirds, may be vulnerable to disturbances caused by recreational uses, including ORV use.</p> <p>The gull-billed tern is a state-listed threatened species in North Carolina. American oystercatcher, Wilson's plover, least tern, common tern, and black skimmer are listed by the NCWRC as species of special concern.</p> <p>In addition, the American oystercatcher is listed as a species of concern by the Southeastern Shorebird Conservation Plan, and both the American oystercatcher and the Wilson's plover are identified in the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan as "Species of High Concern." All these state-listed or special status species have had historically low reproductive rates.</p>
Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat	<p>ORV use along the Seashore can disrupt habitat or cause a loss of habitat in high use areas. Habitat loss due to ORV use could also occur indirectly as a result of the noise and disturbance from this activity, specifically for other bird species (those not federally protected or of special concern) and invertebrates.</p>
Soundscapes	<p>Impacts related to soundscapes could occur wherever ORVs are allowed on the oceanside or the soundside. Vehicular noise has the potential to impact other recreational uses, such as bird watching or enjoying the solitude and natural soundscape of the Seashore. In addition to impacting soundscapes in relation to visitor enjoyment, vehicular noise could create unsuitable habitat for Seashore wildlife.</p>
Visitor Use and Experience	<p>ORV use at the Seashore is an integral component of the experience for some visitors and may be impacted by ORV management activities. Other Seashore visitors who are not using ORVs may be impacted by ORV use.</p> <p>Although some visitors want to use an ORV to access the Seashore, other visitors wish to engage in recreational activities on foot and away from the presence of motorized vehicles. Restricting ORVs from areas of the Seashore could enhance the recreational experience for some and diminish the experience for others. Visitor experience could be affected by conflicts between motorized and non-motorized recreation users. A further component of visitor experience is providing for the safety of all visitors at the Seashore.</p> <p>Other issues related to visitor use and experience include viewsheds, aesthetics, and night skies. While the sight of ORVs can destroy the viewshed and aesthetics for some visitors, they also change the viewshed by altering the natural landscape.</p>
Socioeconomics	<p>Management or regulation of ORV use at the Seashore could impact the local economy by changing the demand for goods and services from ORV users in these communities. The eight villages located within the Seashore boundaries serve as access points to the Seashore for visitors, including ORV users. These villages receive economic benefit from the ORV users who take advantage of the goods and services these communities offer. The communities are concerned that if a permit system or other ORV restrictions are implemented that make it harder for ORV users to use the area, fewer tourists may come to the villages, resulting in impacts to the local economy.</p>
Seashore Management and Operations	<p>Accommodating recreational uses while protecting sensitive species requires a sufficient number of personnel and an adequate level of funding. Past anecdotal evidence suggested that the Seashore did not have enough personnel to properly enforce existing ORV management decisions. If operational requirements increase under the new ORV management plan, it would require an increased commitment of limited NPS resources (staff, money, time, and equipment).</p>

## ALTERNATIVES

The *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) requires federal agencies to explore a range of reasonable alternatives that address the purpose of and need for the action. The alternatives under consideration must include the "no-action" alternative as prescribed by 40 CFR 1502.14. Two no-action alternatives are included for analysis in this plan/EIS, because management changed part way through the planning process in May 2008, after the consent decree was signed (see chapter 1 for more information).

Action alternatives may originate from the proponent agency, local government officials, or members of the public at public meetings or during the early stages of project development. Alternatives may also be developed in response to comments from coordinating or cooperating agencies.

The alternatives analyzed in this document, in accordance with NEPA, are the result of internal scoping, public scoping meetings, and information developed during the negotiated rulemaking process. These alternatives meet the management objectives of the Seashore, while also meeting the overall purpose of and need for the proposed action. Alternative elements that were considered but were not technically or economically feasible, did not meet the purpose of and need for the project, created unnecessary or excessive adverse impacts to resources, and/or conflicted with the overall management of the Seashore or its resources were dismissed from further analysis.

The elements of all six alternatives are detailed in tables ES-2 and ES-3. How each of these alternatives meets the objectives of the plan/EIS is detailed in table ES-4.

## **ELEMENTS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES**

The following describes elements of the alternatives that are common to all alternatives, including the no-action alternatives.

- **Vehicle/Operator Requirements.** Requirements for operators and their vehicles would be established that would require vehicles to meet all requirements to operate legally on state highways where the vehicle is registered, including any required vehicle equipment, as well as for drivers to have a valid vehicle registration, insurance, and license plate. Operators would also be required to observe any law applicable to vehicle use on a paved road in the State of North Carolina, hold a current driver's license, and use a seatbelt.
- **Prohibited Activities.** Open containers of any type of alcoholic beverage are prohibited in vehicles and ORV drivers and/or passengers are prohibited from sitting on the tailgate or roof or hanging outside of moving vehicles.
- **Right-of-Way Requirements.** Vehicle right-of-way is not defined by the Seashore, and the standard driving rules must be followed.
- **Ramp Configuration.** If Bonner Bridge construction closes ramp 4, a new ramp 3 would be constructed north of the Oregon Inlet campground and day-use parking would be provided.
- **Boat Access.** Launch sites, as designated under 36 CFR 3.8(a)(2), are identified in the Superintendent's Compendium. Launching or recovery of vessels is prohibited within resource closures.
- **NPS Regulations.** Title 36: Parks, Forests, and Public Properties of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations is applicable in all national parks, including Cape Hatteras National Seashore. These regulations include those in Title 36 applicable to the operation of ORVs in the Seashore and those applicable to individuals recreating at the Seashore. Of particular note are the provisions of 36 CFR 1.5 and 1.6, which state that the superintendent may impose public use limits, or close all or a portion of a park area to all public use or to a specific use or activity; designate areas for a specific use or activity; or impose conditions or restrictions on a use or activity, and may establish a permit, registration, or reservation system.
- **Enforcement.** Violations could result in fines or mandatory court appearances as defined in the *Collateral Schedule, Eastern District of North Carolina, National Park Service*.

- Areas of Vehicle Operation. Visitors accessing the Seashore by ORV must drive only on marked ORV routes, comply with posted restrictions, and adhere to the following:
  - Driving or parking outside of marked and maintained ORV routes is prohibited.
  - Operating a vehicle of any type within safety or resource closures is prohibited.
  - Accessing the beach and designated ORV routes is allowed only via designated beach access ramps and soundside access roads.
  - Reckless driving—for example, cutting circles or defacing the beach—is prohibited.
  - Observing pedestrian right-of-way is required.
- Commercial Fishing. Commercial fishing permit holders with ORVs would be allowed to enter administrative and safety closures, but not resource closures or lifeguarded beaches. Two designated commercial fishing access points exist on the soundside of Ocracoke Island, where only vehicular access for commercial fishing is allowed.
- Permitted Uses. Kite flying, kite boards, and ball and Frisbee tossing are prohibited within or above all bird closures.
- Protected Species Management. In general, because of the dynamic nature of the Seashore beaches and inlets, protected species management could change by location and time; new sites (bars, islands) could require additional management, or management actions may become inapplicable for certain sites (e.g., habitat changes with vegetation growth, new overwash areas). The following would also occur:
  - Areas with symbolic fencing (string between posts) would be closed to recreational access.
  - Data collection would continue to document breeding and nest locations.
  - Essential vehicles could enter restricted areas subject to the guidelines in the Essential Vehicles section of the *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Piping Plover (Charadrius melodus), Atlantic Coast Population, Revised Recovery Plan* (USFWS 1996a). Due to the soft sand conditions of the Seashore, essential vehicles would be allowed to travel up to 10 miles per hour (mph).
- Accessibility for the Disabled. The Seashore would provide access to disabled visitors as follows:
  - Beach access points and boardwalks compliant with the *Americans with Disabilities Act* requirements would be provided at Coquina Beach, the Frisco Boathouse, the Ocracoke Pony Pen, and the Ocracoke day use area.
  - Beach access would be provided through the issuance of special use permits for areas in front of the villages to allow ORVs to transport disabled visitors to the beach and then return the vehicle back to the street.
  - Beach wheelchairs could be checked out at each District on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Campgrounds. The Seashore has four campgrounds at Oregon Inlet, Frisco, Cape Point, and Ocracoke. The campgrounds would be open seasonally. Dates the campgrounds open or close would be subject to change.
- Fishing Facilities. Fishing piers are located in Frisco, Avon and Rodanthe on Hatteras Island, and a marina is located at Oregon Inlet on Bodie Island. These would continue to be available to the public.

- Education and Outreach. The Seashore would continue to conduct education and outreach related to ORV management such as posting signage, putting out resource updates, and notifying the public of what areas of the beach are accessible.

## **NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVES**

The no-action alternative is developed for two reasons. First, a no-action alternative may represent the agency's past and current actions or inaction on an issue continued into the future, which may represent a viable alternative for meeting the agency's purpose and need. Second, a no-action alternative may serve to set a baseline of existing impacts continued into the future against which to compare the impacts of action alternatives. For most agency decisions, one no-action alternative can serve both of these purposes. Here, however, the situation is more complex.

As stated in chapter 1, "in order to provide continued visitor access through the use of ORVs, NPS must promulgate a special regulation authorizing ORV use at the Seashore," and the purpose of this plan, in part, is to develop such a regulation. Without a special regulation, continued ORV use would conflict with NPS regulations (36 CFR 4.10). The consent decree recognizes this and sets a deadline of April 1, 2011, for the promulgation of a final special regulation. As the district court has recognized in another case, absent an ORV plan and regulation, as a legal matter ORV use is prohibited. If NPS does not promulgate a regulation, continuing its past inaction, this legal prohibition would remain, and the result could be that the district court would expressly ban ORV driving on the Seashore.

"No ORV use" thus could represent a result of NPS's past inaction continued into the future, and thus might satisfy the first purpose of a no-action alternative. It is not, however, a viable alternative for meeting the purpose and need for this action. It was considered but dismissed in the broader range of alternatives that were identified. Included in chapter 1 is a discussion of the reasons that, for this plan/EIS, "Prohibit the Use of Off-Road Vehicles" is not considered a reasonable alternative.

NPS also does not believe that a "no ORV use" alternative would fully serve the function of a no-action alternative, because it would not satisfy the second purpose. It would not serve as an environmental baseline of existing impacts continued into the future against which to compare the impacts of action alternatives. ORV use has occurred continuously before and since the Seashore was authorized and established. Given this history, a complete ORV prohibition cannot be considered as the "current management direction or level of management intensity" or as "continuing with the present course of action," which is how the Council on Environmental Quality describes this role of the "no-action" alternative under NEPA.

Because there is no history of prohibition at the Seashore, there are also no Seashore monitoring data for an analysis of its effects. Extrapolation from other sites that prohibit ORV use, and from experience with resource closures in limited locations and limited times at the Seashore, indicates that prohibition would likely benefit the Seashore's wildlife more than the other alternatives, though benefits could be similar to those from alternative D. Prohibition would be easier for the Seashore to administer than the other alternatives, though it might increase the need for additional parking areas, with their attendant costs and effects. It would detract from the experience of those visitors who prefer ORVs for access, while enhancing the experience of other visitors who prefer beaches without the presence of vehicles. Prohibition would adversely affect the economies of the villages in the Seashore more than the other alternatives because ORV users would not have the opportunity to shift their visits to different areas of the Seashore or to different dates or times of day when driving would be allowed. These conclusions, however, are largely speculative and cannot substitute for a baseline of existing impacts.

For this plan/EIS the range of alternatives includes two no-action alternatives. Alternative A represents continuing management as described in the Interim Strategy. This management strategy was challenged in court and subsequently modified by the consent decree that was signed on April 30, 2008. Alternative B represents continuing management as described in the consent decree. These two no-action alternatives are analyzed to capture the full range of management actions that occurred and are currently occurring during the planning process for this plan/EIS. Tables ES-2 and ES-3 compare the actions that would be taken under each alternative, and figure 2 in chapter 2 includes the maps of all alternatives.

## **NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVES**

**Alternative A – No Action: Continuation of Management under the Interim Protected Species Management Strategy.** Under this no-action alternative, management of ORV use and access at the Seashore would be a continuation of management based on the 2007 FONSI for the Interim Strategy and the Superintendent’s Compendium 2007, as well as elements from the 1978 draft interim ORV management plan that were incorporated in Superintendent’s Order 7. The Interim Strategy provides direction on the how, when, and where closures and buffers for federally listed species are established, and the size of buffers/closures. Buffer sizes for non-listed species allow some degree of flexibility and management discretion. There would be no restriction on night driving or carrying capacity established under alternative A and an ORV permit would not be required. Seasonal ORV closures would be limited to the “village beaches” and the entire Seashore would be a potential ORV route.

**Alternative B – No Action: Continuation of Terms of the Consent Decree Signed April 30, 2008, and amended June 4, 2009.** Under alternative B, management of ORV use would follow the terms described under alternative A, except as modified by the provisions of the consent decree, as amended. Modifications in the consent decree include earlier and more frequent monitoring at key nesting areas and larger, non-discretionary resource protection buffers when breeding activity is observed. These modifications would result in earlier, larger, and longer-lasting ORV and pedestrian closures than alternative A. Alternative B would also prohibit night driving from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. May 1 to September 15 and would allow night driving with a permit from September 16 to November 15. No carrying capacity would be established or ORV use permit required under alternative B, except for the night-driving permit from September 16 to November 15.

## **ACTION ALTERNATIVES**

Elements that are common to all action alternatives include the following:

- ORV routes and areas would be officially designated in accordance with the executive orders.
- Year-round ORV routes and areas would be designated only in locations without sensitive resources or high pedestrian use.
- Year-round non-ORV areas would be designated.
- A new standard set of species management and monitoring measures would include “species management areas” (SMAs) and two levels of species management effort. SMAs include areas at the spits and points in addition to other sensitive resource areas.
- “Desired Future Conditions” would be established, as well as a system for periodic review and adaptive management initiatives.
- Night-driving restrictions would be in effect from May 1 through November 15, which corresponds with turtle nesting season.

- ORV permits would be required and would involve a fee and education requirement.
- Overcrowding would be addressed using various methods for establishing carrying capacity.
- New vehicular access points and/or new or expanded parking areas would be identified.
- Commercial fishing vehicles would be exempted from some ORV restrictions, when not in conflict with resource protection.

**Alternative C – Seasonal Management.** Alternative C would provide visitors to the Seashore with a degree of predictability regarding areas available for ORV use, as well as vehicle-free areas, based largely on the seasonal resource and visitor use characteristics of various areas in the Seashore. Both seasonal and year-round ORV routes would be established, although most areas would have a seasonal focus. SMAs and village beaches would be closed to ORV use from March 14 through October 14. Pedestrians would be able to access some SMAs depending upon specific shorebird breeding activity. Most of the seasonal ORV areas would be open to ORVs from October 15 through March 14. Seasonal night-driving restrictions would be established between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. from May 1 to November 15. An ORV carrying capacity would be established using a maximum number of vehicles per mile of beach area.

**Alternative D – Increased Predictability and Simplified Management. Alternative D is the Environmentally Preferable Alternative.** Under alternative D, visitors to the Seashore would have the maximum amount of predictability regarding areas available for ORV use and vehicle-free areas for pedestrian use. Restrictions would be applied to larger areas over longer periods of time to minimize changes in designated ORV and non-ORV areas over the course of the year. To provide predictability under this alternative, only year-round ORV routes would be designated. Year-round non-ORV areas would include all of the SMAs and village beaches. SMAs would be closed to pedestrian use under Management Level 1 (ML1) measures during the breeding season. Seasonal night-driving restrictions would be established between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. from May 1 to November 15. An ORV carrying capacity would be addressed solely by the use of vehicle stacking limits (one vehicle deep).

**Alternative E – Variable Access and Maximum Management.** Alternative E would provide use areas for all types of visitors to the Seashore with a wide variety of access for both ORV and pedestrian users, but often with controls or restrictions in place to limit impacts on sensitive resources. Interdunal road and ramp access would be improved, and more pedestrian access would be provided through substantial additions to parking capacity at various key locations that lend themselves to walking on the beach. This alternative would close the SMAs to ORV use from March 15 through August 31, except that two spits and Cape Point would have initial ORV access corridors during the breeding season, with increased species monitoring in those areas. These ORV access corridors would close when breeding activity is observed. North Ocracoke Spit would be designated as a non-ORV area year-round under alternative E, and village beaches would be closed to ORV use between April 1 and October 31. A seasonal night-driving restriction would be established from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. during turtle nesting season although areas with low densities of turtle nests could open to night driving from September 16 through November 15. This alternative would offer a park-and-stay overnight option for ORVs at some spits and Cape Point during the turtle nesting season. Self-contained vehicle (SCV) camping would be allowed during the off-season at designated Seashore campgrounds under the terms of a permit. Alternative E would provide enhanced options for pedestrian access to Bodie Island Spit and South Point Ocracoke by promoting water taxi service when those areas are closed to ORVs.

**Alternative F – Management Based on Advisory Committee Input. Alternative F is the National Park Service Preferred Alternative.** The NPS used the Negotiated Rulemaking Advisory Committee's

input to create this action alternative, which is designed to provide visitors to the Seashore with a wide variety of access opportunities for both ORV and pedestrian users. After shorebird breeding activity is concluded, alternative F would re-open some SMAs to ORV use earlier and for a longer time than the other action alternatives. This alternative would involve the construction of two pedestrian access trails and improvements and additions to the interdunal road system. Under alternative F, Hatteras Inlet Spit and North Ocracoke Spit would be non-ORV areas year-round, with interdunal roads that allow access to the general area, but not the shoreline. SMAs would be closed to ORV use from March 15 through July 31, except South Point and Cape Point would have initial ORV access corridors and Bodie Island Spit would have an initial pedestrian access corridor at the start of the breeding season, with increased species monitoring in these areas. These access corridor(s) would close when breeding activity is observed. Village beach closures would vary under alternative F with the northern beaches closed to ORV use from May 15 through September 15 and southern beaches closed from March 1 through November 30. Seasonal night-driving restrictions would be established from one hour after sunset until after turtle patrol has checked the beaches in the morning, which is usually approximately one-half hour after sunrise.

Table ES-2 indicates the designated routes and areas under all alternatives.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

Impacts of the alternatives were assessed in accordance with Director's Order 12 and Handbook: Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis and Decision-Making. This handbook requires that impacts on park resources be analyzed in terms of their context, duration, and intensity. The analysis provides the public and decision-makers with an understanding of the implications of ORV management actions in the short and long term, cumulatively, and within context, based on an understanding and interpretation by resource professionals and specialists.

For each impact topic, methods were identified to measure the change in the Seashore's resources that would occur with the implementation of each management alternative. Thresholds were established for each impact topic to help understand the severity and magnitude of changes in resource conditions, both adverse and beneficial.

Each management alternative was compared to baselines to determine the context, duration, and intensity of resource impacts. The baselines are the conditions that resulted from management of ORVs under the management frameworks in place during the planning process for this plan/EIS. The baselines are represented by alternatives A and B.

Table ES-5 summarizes the results of the impact analysis for the impact topics that were assessed.

TABLE ES-2. OFF-ROAD VEHICLE ROUTES AND AREAS

Oceanside Location	Mileage <sup>a</sup>	Alternatives A and B: No Action	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
<b>Bodie Island (north to south)</b> Ramp 1 to north end of Coquina Beach	0.9	OPEN <sup>b</sup> Seasonally closed May 15 to Sep 15 (longstanding safety closure).	ORV route—Mar 15 to Oct 14 Non-ORV area—Oct 15 to Mar 14	X	X Parking at ramp 1 expanded.	X
North end of Coquina Beach to 0.5 mile south of Coquina	0.8	OPEN <sup>b</sup> Seasonally closed May 15 to Sep 15 (longstanding safety closure). South of ramp 2 at Coquina Beach open seasonally.	X Ramp 2 relocated approx. 0.5 mile south of Coquina Beach.	X Ramp 2 relocated approx. 0.5 mile south of Coquina Beach.	X Ramp 2 relocated approx. 0.5 mile south of Coquina Beach. Parking at Coquina Beach expanded.	X Ramp 2 relocated approx. 0.5 mile south of Coquina Beach.
0.5 mile south of Coquina to 0.2 mile south of ramp 4 (Includes beach in front of Oregon Inlet Campground. If Bonner Bridge construction closes ramp 4, new ramp 3 will be constructed north of campground and day-use parking and trailhead near campground will be provided.)	2.1	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR ORV pass-through zone established on upper beach in front of campground when campground is open.	ORV route YR
0.2 mile south of ramp 4 to inlet to southwest edge of Bait Pond (Species Management Area)	1.9	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 Area closed to ORVs from March 15 to October 14. When pre-nesting area is established, a pedestrian access corridor would be allowed along ocean shoreline to the inlet. When shorebird breeding activity is observed, standard buffers would apply, which depending upon the circumstances could close the access corridor. (ML2)	X (ML1)	ORV route YR With expected limited access Mar 15 to Aug 31 When pre-nesting area is established, ORV corridor with pass-through zone would be allowed along ocean shoreline to the inlet. When shorebird breeding activity is observed, standard buffers would apply, which depending upon the circumstances could close the access corridor. Pedestrian trail to inlet from new parking near campground established. Trail subject to resource closures. NPS would allow water taxi service to spit from Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, subject to designated landing zone and to resource closures. (ML2)	ORV route—Aug 1 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Jul 31 <sup>a</sup> <sup>a</sup> Area closed to ORVs from March 15 to July 31, or until 2 weeks after shorebird breeding ceases or all chicks have fledged, whichever is later. When pre-nesting area is established, a pedestrian access corridor would be allowed along ocean shoreline to the inlet. When shorebird breeding activity is observed, standard buffers would apply, which depending upon the circumstances could close the access corridor. Pedestrian trail to inlet from new parking near campground established. Trail subject to resource closures. (ML2)
<b>Hatteras Island (north to south)</b> Rodanthe—Waves—Salvo to ramp 23 (includes Tri-Village beaches)	5.3	OPEN <sup>b</sup> Seasonally closed May 15 to Sep 15.	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 Parking at ramp 23 expanded.	X	ORV route—Nov 1 to Mar 31 Non-ORV area—Apr 1 to Oct 31 Parking at ramp 23 expanded.	ORV route—Sep 16 to May 14 Non-ORV area—May 15 to Sep 15 Parking at ramp 23 expanded.
Ramp 23 to ramp 27	4.3	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR One new ramp with parking established at 24 or 26.	ORV route YR. New ramps with parking established at 24 and 26. <sup>†</sup> There would be 1.5 miles of “floating” non-ORV area for nonbreeding shorebirds, either here or in one of the segments below.

Oceanside Location	Mileage <sup>a</sup>	Alternatives A and B: No Action	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
Ramp 27 to ramp 30 (Species Management Area)	2.2	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 (ML1)	X (ML1)	X (ML1)	X (ML1)
Ramp 30 to (new) ramp 32.5	2.5	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR New ramp with parking established at 32.5.	ORV route YR New ramp established at 32.5.	ORV route YR New ramp with parking established at 32.5.	ORV route YR <sup>+</sup> New ramp with parking established at 32.5. <sup>+</sup> There would be 1.5 miles of “floating” non-ORV area for nonbreeding shorebirds, either here, in the above segment, or in the next segment.
(New) ramp 32.5 to ramp 34 (Species Management Area)	1.8	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 (ML1)	X (ML1)	ORV route—Sep 1 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Aug 31 (ML1)	ORV route <sup>+</sup> —Aug 1 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Jul 31 <sup>a</sup> <sup>a</sup> Area closed from Mar 15 to Jul 31, or until 2 weeks after shorebird breeding ceases or all chicks have fledged, whichever is later. <sup>+</sup> There would be 1.5 miles of “floating” non-ORV area for nonbreeding shorebirds, either here or in one of the two previous segments. (ML1)
Ramp 34 to ramp 38 (includes Avon Village Beach)	3.9	OPEN <sup>b</sup> Seasonally closed May 15 to Sep 15.	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14	X	ORV route—Nov 1 to Mar 31 Non-ORV area—Apr 1 to Oct 31 Parking at ramp 34 expanded.	ORV route—Sep 16 to May 14 Non-ORV area—May 15 to Sep 15
Ramp 38 to approx. 1.7 miles south	1.7	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR Parking at ramp 38 expanded.	ORV route YR Parking at ramp 38 expanded.
Approximately 1.7 miles south of ramp 38 (i.e., Haulover) to Buxton line (Species Management Area)	2.0	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup> (Current 3.8-mile safety closure from 1.8 miles south of ramp 38 to 0.4 mile north of ramp 43.)	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 (ML1)	X (ML1)	ORV route—Sep 1 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Aug 31 (ML1)	X New ramp 39 across from Haulover and new soundside parking at Kite Point established. (ML1)
Buxton Village Beach to 0.4 mile north of ramp 43	1.9	OPEN <sup>b</sup> Seasonally closed May 15 to Sep 15 (longstanding safety closure).	X NPS or Dare County to establish new parking at old Coast Guard Station site.	X	ORV route—Nov 1 to Mar 31 Non-ORV area—Apr 1 to Oct 31 NPS or Dare County to establish new parking at old Coast Guard Station site.	X NPS or Dare County to establish new parking at old Coast Guard Station site.
0.4 mile north of ramp 43 to ramp 43	0.4	OPEN <sup>b</sup> Subject to seasonal closure May 15 to Sep 15.	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14	X	ORV route—Mar 15 to Aug 31 Non-ORV area—Sep 1 to Mar 14 Open to ORVs only when east side of Cape Point is closed.	ORV route YR
Ramp 43 to 0.2 mile south of ramp 44	0.6	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR

Oceanside Location	Mileage <sup>a</sup>	Alternatives A and B: No Action	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
0.2 mile south of ramp 44 to Cape Point to approx. 0.2 mile west of the hook (Species Management Area)	1.0	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 When pre-nesting area is established, a pedestrian access corridor would be allowed along ocean shoreline to the point. When shorebird breeding activity is observed, standard buffers would apply, which depending upon the circumstances could close the access corridor. (ML2)	X (ML1)	ORV route YR With expected limited access Mar 15 to Aug 31 When pre-nesting area is established, ORV access corridor with pass-through zone would be allowed along ocean shoreline to the point. When shorebird breeding activity is observed, standard buffers would apply, which depending upon the circumstances could close the access corridor. (ML2)	ORV route YR With expected limited access Mar 15 to Jul 31 When pre-nesting area is established, ORV access corridor would be allowed along ocean shoreline to the point. When shorebird breeding activity is observed, standard buffers would apply, which depending upon the circumstances could close the access corridor. (ML2)
Cape Point 0.2 mile west of the hook to ramp 45 (Species Management Area)	1.2	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 (ML1)	X (ML1)	ORV route—Sep 1 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Aug 31 (ML1)	ORV route—Aug 1 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Jul 31 (ML1)
Ramp 45 to (new) ramp 47 (Species Management Area)	1.7	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 Interdunal road extended and new ramp 47 established. (ML1)	X (ML1)	ORV route—Sep 1 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Aug 31 Interdunal road extended and new ramp 47 established. (ML1)	ORV route <sup>+</sup> —Aug 1 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Jul 31 Interdunal road extended and new ramp 47 established. <sup>+</sup> There would be 1.5 miles of “floating” nonbreeding shorebird area, either here or in the segment below. (ML1)
(New) ramp 47 to ramp 49 (includes beach in front of Frisco Campground)	1.7	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR Interdunal road extended to ramp 49 and new ramp 48 established.	ORV route YR	ORV route YR ORV pass-through zone established on upper beach in front of campground (or bypass beach in front of campground via new interdunal road) when campground is open. Interdunal road extended west of new ramp 47 to ramp 49 and new ramp 48 established.	ORV route YR <sup>+</sup> Interdunal road extended west of new ramp 47 to ramp 49 and new ramp 48 established. <sup>+</sup> There would be 1.5 miles of “floating” nonbreeding shorebird area, either here or in the segment above.
Ramp 49 to East Frisco boundary	1.2	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR
Frisco Village Beach (east village boundary to west boundary)	1.1	OPEN <sup>b</sup> Seasonally closed May 15 to Sep 15 (longstanding safety closure).	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14	X	X Parking at day use area expanded.	ORV route—Dec 1 to Feb 28 Non-ORV area—Mar 1 to Nov 30
Sandy Bay / Frisco day use area (west Frisco boundary to east Hatteras Village boundary)	1.4	OPEN <sup>b</sup> Seasonally closed May 15 to Sep 15 (longstanding safety closure).	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14	X	X	X
Hatteras Village Beach (east boundary to ramp 55)	2.2	OPEN <sup>b</sup> Seasonally closed May 15 to Sep 15 (longstanding safety closure).	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14	X	X	ORV route—Dec 1 to Feb 28 Non-ORV area—Mar 1 to Nov 30
Ramp 55 along ocean beach to 0.2 mile southwest of Bone Road	1.8	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR Parking expanded at ramp 55.	ORV route YR	ORV route YR Parking expanded at ramp 55.	ORV route YR

Oceanside Location	Mileage <sup>a</sup>	Alternatives A and B: No Action	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
Pole Road from NC-12 past Cable Crossing access to Spur Road	2.3	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR West of the overwash fan, Pole Road re-routed toward the sound to provide natural barrier to bird nesting area south of road.
Cable Crossing along sound shoreline to Spur Road	0.8	Varies	X	X	X	ORV route YR When width allows, subject to resource closure(s) to protect vegetation.
Spur Road along sound shoreline to Hatteras Inlet	0.2	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR Pedestrian access to the "rip" permitted from soundside during breeding season, subject to resource closures.	X	ORV route YR Pedestrian access to the "rip" permitted from soundside during breeding season, subject to resource closures.	ORV route YR Pedestrian access to the "rip" permitted from soundside during breeding season, subject to resource closures.
Ocean shoreline from 0.2 mile southwest of Bone Road (a.k.a. Fort Clark Spur) to inlet (Species Management Area)	1.0	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 (ML1)	X (ML1)	ORV route—Sep 1 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Aug 31 (ML1)	X New interdunal road extending southwest and northeast of the south end of Pole Road established to provide access to False Point and inlet. (ML1)
<b>Ocracoke Island (north to south)</b> Inlet to 0.25 mile northeast of ramp 59 (Species Management Area)	1.1	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 Parking area at ramp 59 expanded. (ML1)	X (ML1)	X Parking area at ramp 59 expanded. Pedestrian access corridor(s) provided, subject to resource closures during breeding season. Pedestrian boardwalk access from ferry terminal parking developed. (ML1)	X New interdunal road established parallel to the beach extending from ramp 59 for 0.3 mile northeast toward the inlet, with parking at the terminus. (ML1)
0.25 mile northeast of ramp 59 to 0.25 mile southwest of ramp 59	0.5	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR
0.25 mile southwest of ramp 59 to new ramp 62 at 3.0 miles northeast of Pony Pen area	2.4	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup> (Longstanding safety closure.)	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	X
New ramp 62 to new ramp 64 at 1.0 mile northeast of Pony Pen	2.0	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup> (Longstanding safety closure.)	ORV route YR New ramps 62 and 64 established. Parking established at ramp 64.	ORV route YR New ramps 62 and 64 established.	ORV route YR New ramps 62 and 64 established. Parking established at ramp 64.	ORV route YR New ramps 62 and 64 established. Parking established at ramp 64.
New ramp 64 at 1.0 mile northeast of Pony Pen to 0.75 mile northeast of ramp 67	2.3	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup> (Longstanding safety closure.)	X Parking at Pony Pen expanded.	X	X Parking at Pony Pen expanded.	X Parking at Pony Pen expanded.
0.75 mile northeast of ramp 67 to 0.5 mile northeast of ramp 68	1.4	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR
0.5 mile northeast of ramp 68 to 0.5 mile southwest of ramp 68 (Ocracoke Campground area)	1.0	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup> Seasonally closed when campground open.	Seasonal ORV route Open when campground closed.	X	ORV route—Nov 1 to Mar 31 Non-ORV area—Apr 1 to Oct 31	ORV route—Nov 1 to Mar 31 Non-ORV area—Apr 1 to Oct 31
0.5 mile southwest of ramp 68 to 1.2 miles northeast of ramp 70 (Species Management Area)	0.9	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup> Seasonally closed when campground open.	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 (ML1)	X (ML1)	X (ML1)	ORV route—Nov 1 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 31 (ML1)

Oceanside Location	Mileage <sup>a</sup>	Alternatives A and B: No Action	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
1.2 miles northeast of ramp 70 to 0.5 mile northeast of ramp 70 (includes Ocracoke day use area)	0.8	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup> Seasonally closed when campground open.	X	X	X	ORV route—Nov 1 to Mar 31 Non-ORV area—Apr 1 to Oct 31
0.5 mile northeast of ramp 70 to 0.5 mile southwest of ramp 72	2.7	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR	ORV route YR
0.5 mile southwest of ramp 72 to inlet (Species Management Area)	3.0	OPEN YR <sup>b</sup>	ORV route—Oct 15 to Mar 14 Non-ORV area—Mar 15 to Oct 14 When pre-nesting area is established, a pedestrian access corridor would be allowed along ocean shoreline to the inlet. When shorebird breeding activity is observed, standard buffers would apply, which depending upon the circumstances could close the access corridor. (ML2)	X (ML1)	ORV route YR With expected limited access Mar 15 to Aug 31 When pre-nesting area is established, ORV access corridor with pass-through zone would be allowed along ocean shoreline to the inlet. When shorebird breeding activity is observed, standard buffers would apply, which depending upon the circumstances could close the access corridor. NPS would also allow water taxi service to spit from Silver Lake, subject to designated landing zone and resource closures. (ML2)	ORV route YR <sup>+</sup> With expected limited access Mar 15 to Jul 31 When pre-nesting area is established, ORV access corridor would be allowed along ocean shoreline to the inlet. When shorebird breeding activity is observed, standard buffers would apply, which depending upon the circumstances could close the access corridor. <sup>+</sup> There would be 1.0 mile of “floating” ocean shoreline area for nonbreeding shorebirds. Area would be bypassed via the ORV corridor on the upper beach during nonbreeding season. (ML2)

NOTES: Details on soundside access provided in table ES-3.

<sup>a</sup> All mileages are approximate.

<sup>b</sup> Area(s) open to ORV use, except when resource, seasonal, or safety closures are in effect.

Designated ORV routes and areas (X = No ORV use permitted; YR = ORV use permitted year-round).

All ORV routes and areas subject to temporary resource closures.

**Species Management Areas (SMAs):** ML1 and ML2 are the two proposed strategies for species management. See table 10 in chapter 2 for a detailed description of these strategies. All areas outside of designated SMAs would be managed under ML1 protocols.

(ML1) Once pre-nesting closures are established, ORV and pedestrian access would be prohibited until breeding activity is completed.

(ML2) Once pre-nesting closures are established, ORV or pedestrian access corridor(s) and/or boat landing areas (as indicated in the respective alternatives) would be permitted. Upon the first observation of breeding activity, standard ML2 buffers would apply, which depending upon the circumstances may close the access corridor.

Designated ORV Route Mileage (Approximate)	Alternatives A and B <sup>c</sup>	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F
Designated as closed to ORVs (X)	0 <sup>d</sup>	11.9	40.8	14.5	16.0
Designated for seasonal ORV use	17.9	28.7	0	20.2	23.0
Designated as ORV route YR	50.1	27.4	27.2	33.3	29.0
Total	68.0	68.0	68.0	68.0	68.0

<sup>c</sup> Routes under alternatives A and B have not been officially designated for ORV use. The mileages shown in this table are based on areas open to ORV use under the Interim Protected Species Management Strategy and the consent decree.

<sup>d</sup> Does not include mileage closed for safety reasons.

TABLE ES-3. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE ELEMENTS

Alternative A: No Action—Continuation of Management under the Interim Strategy	Alternative B: No Action—Continuation of Management under Consent Decree	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
<b>ORV Routes, Use Areas, and Corridors</b>					
<p><b>ORV use areas:</b> All areas of the Seashore are potentially open to ORV access, except when closed as described in Superintendent's Order 7. Visitors accessing the Seashore by ORV must drive only on marked ORV routes and must comply with posted restrictions. Refer to table ES-2.</p> <p><b>ORV corridors:</b> The ORV corridor on the ocean beach is marked by posts placed approx. 150 feet landward from the average, normal high tide line, or if less than 150 feet of space is available, at the vegetation or the toe of the remnant dune line, except as noted in the Interim Strategy. The corridor width will fluctuate over time due to the dynamic nature of beach and surf.</p>	<p><b>ORV use areas:</b> Same as alternative A.</p> <p><b>ORV corridors:</b> Same as alternative A, except: Mar 15 to Nov 30: In all locations not in front of the villages that are open to ORV use, NPS shall provide an ORV-free zone in the ocean backshore at least 10 meters wide, wherever there is sufficient beach width to allow an ORV corridor of at least 20 meters above the mean high tide line.</p>	<p><b>ORV routes:</b> ORV access would be prohibited in all areas of the Seashore except where an ORV route is specifically designated. An <i>ORV route</i> is a designated location, typically linear in nature (e.g., from point A to point B), where ORV travel may be authorized by the Superintendent, but which may be temporarily closed to ORV use to protect Seashore resources, provide for visitor safety, or prevent user conflicts. Refer to table ES-2.</p> <p><b>ORV corridors:</b> An <i>ORV corridor</i> is the actual physical demarcation of the ORV route in the field. The ORV corridor on the ocean beach would be marked by posts seaward of the toe of dune or vegetation line to the high tide line (the seaward side of the corridor would not be posted). ORV routes through vegetated areas, such as interdunal roads and ramps, would be posted on both sides of the corridor.</p> <p><b>Seasonally designated ORV routes:</b> These would occur as indicated in table ES-2.</p>	<p><b>ORV routes:</b> ORV access would be prohibited in all areas of the Seashore except where an ORV route is specifically designated. The definition of ORV route is same as for alternative C.</p> <p><b>ORV corridors:</b> Same as alternative C.</p> <p><b>Seasonally designated ORV routes:</b> No seasonal designations under this alternative.</p>	<p><b>ORV routes:</b> ORV access would be prohibited in all areas of the Seashore except where an ORV route is specifically designated. The definition of ORV route is same as for alternative C.</p> <p><b>ORV corridors:</b> Same as alternative C, except: Mar 15 to Aug 31: Where the ocean beach is at least 30 meters wide above the high tide line, the corridor would be posted 10 meters seaward of the toe of the dune to provide an ocean backshore closure.</p> <p><b>Seasonally designated ORV routes:</b> These would occur as indicated in table ES-2.</p>	<p><b>ORV routes:</b> ORV access would be prohibited in all areas of the Seashore except where an ORV route is specifically designated. The definition of ORV route is same as for alternative C.</p> <p><b>ORV corridors:</b> Same as alternative C, except: Year-round: Where the ocean beach is at least 30 meters wide above the high tide line, the corridor would be posted 10 meters seaward of the toe of the dune to provide an ocean backshore closure.</p> <p><b>Seasonally designated ORV routes:</b> These would occur as indicated in table ES-2.</p>

Alternative A: No Action—Continuation of Management under the Interim Strategy	Alternative B: No Action—Continuation of Management under Consent Decree	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
<b>Village, Campground, and Day Use Area Beaches</b>					
<p><b>Village beaches</b>, as identified below, are seasonally closed to ORV use from May 15 through Sep 15:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bodie Island from ramp 1 to 0.5 mile south of Coquina Beach.</li> <li>Beaches fronting the villages of Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo, and Avon.</li> <li>The beach fronting Buxton south to ramp 43.</li> <li>Beaches fronting the villages of Frisco and Hatteras.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ocracoke day use area and campground beaches:</b> Ocracoke Island from 0.5 mile south of ramp 67 to 0.25 mile north of ramp 70 closed to ORVs when campground is open (approx. Apr 1 to Oct 31).</p>	<p>Same as alternative A, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The beach from ramp 43 to 0.4 mile north is open to ORVs year-round.</li> </ul>	<p>Village, campground, and day-use beaches would be managed as follows (also described in table ES-2):</p> <p><b>Seasonally restricted ORV routes:</b> (closed to ORVs Mar 15 to Oct 14, unless otherwise indicated)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo, Avon, Frisco, and Hatteras Village beaches.</li> <li>Ocracoke campground beach, from 0.5 mile northeast to 0.5 mile southwest of ramp 68 (closed to ORVs when campground is open, which is approx. Apr 1 to Oct 31).</li> </ul> <p><b>Non-ORV areas year-round:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buxton beach S to 0.4 mile north of ramp 43.</li> </ul> <p>Ocracoke day use area beach, from 1.2 miles northeast to 0.5 mile northeast of ramp 70.</p>	<p>Village beaches would be managed as follows (also described in table ES-2):</p> <p><b>Non-ORV areas year-round:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All village beaches would be non-ORV year-round.</li> </ul>	<p>Village beaches would be managed as follows (also described in table ES-2):</p> <p><b>Seasonally restricted ORV routes:</b> (closed to ORVs Apr 1 to Oct 31)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo, and Avon beaches, and Buxton Beach south to 0.4 mile north of ramp 43.</li> <li>Ocracoke Campground Beach, from 0.5 mile northeast to 0.5 mile southwest of ramp 68.</li> </ul> <p><b>Non-ORV areas year-round:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bodie Island from ramp 1 to approx. 0.5 mile south of Coquina Beach.</li> <li>Frisco and Hatteras Village beaches.</li> </ul> <p>Ocracoke day use area beach, from 1.2 miles northeast (of ramp 70) to 0.5 mile northeast of ramp 70.</p>	<p>Village beaches would be managed as follows (also described in table ES-2):</p> <p><b>Seasonally restricted ORV routes:</b> (closed to ORVs as indicated below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo, and Avon beaches (closed to ORVs May 15 to Sep 15).</li> <li>Frisco and Hatteras Village beaches would be closed to ORVs Mar 1 to Nov 30.</li> <li>Ocracoke Campground Beach, from 0.5 mile northeast to 0.5 mile southwest of ramp 68 (closed to ORVs Apr 1 to Oct 31).</li> <li>Ocracoke day use area beach, from 1.2 miles northeast to 0.5 mile northeast of ramp 70 (closed to ORVs Apr 1 to Oct 31).</li> </ul> <p><b>Non-ORV areas year-round:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bodie Island from ramp 1 to approx. 0.5 mile south of Coquina Beach.</li> </ul> <p>Buxton Beach south to 0.4 mile north of ramp 43.</p>
<b>ORV Access</b>					
<p><b>Oceanside access:</b> ORV access is provided via 17 oceanside ramps and access points located off NC-12. Ramps are numbered and identified on the Seashore's ORV route map as official vehicle access routes. Seashore staff maintains ramps and signage.</p>	<p><b>Oceanside access:</b> Same as alternative A.</p>	<p><b>Oceanside access:</b> To provide access to the designated ORV routes and non-ORV areas in addition to the existing ramps, which would be maintained, new or improved ramps would be developed as identified in table ES-2. Toilet facilities and trash receptacles would be provided at high use locations.</p>	<p><b>Oceanside access:</b> Same as alternative C.</p>	<p><b>Oceanside access:</b> Same as alternative C.</p>	<p><b>Oceanside access:</b> Same as alternative C.</p>
<p><b>Soundside access:</b> ORV access is provided via 18 soundside access points located off NC-12. Seashore staff maintains ramps and signage.</p>	<p><b>Soundside access:</b> Same as alternative A.</p>	<p><b>Soundside access:</b> Existing soundside ramps would be designated as ORV routes and would remain open with sufficient maintenance to provide clear passage. Signage/posts would be installed at the primitive parking areas and boat launch areas to prevent damage to vegetation and other soundside resources.</p>	<p><b>Soundside access:</b> Same as alternative A.</p>	<p><b>Soundside access:</b> Soundside ramps to designated boat launch areas and Pole Road access to the sound via Cable Crossing and Spur Road would remain open. The remaining soundside ramps would be closed to ORV use and small parking areas would be constructed to provide pedestrian access to the water, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing Ocracoke Island access points north of village would remain open to commercial fishermen.</li> </ul> <p>Signage/posts would be installed at the parking areas and boat launch areas to prevent damage to vegetation and other soundside resources.</p>	<p><b>Soundside access:</b> Same as alternative C, plus: Ocracoke Island: Develop a new soundside access point approx. 0.65 mile south of ramp 72 by establishing short, seasonally open ORV route perpendicular from ocean beach toward sound, ending in a small unpaved parking area with a pedestrian trail leading to the sound. Both the trail and ORV route would be subject to resource closures.</p>

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<p><b>Interdunal roads:</b> One-lane, interdunal routes have been designated as follows:</p> <p><b>Bodie Island District:</b> None.</p> <p><b>Hatteras Island District:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cape Point between ramp 44 and ramp 45.</li> <li>- Hatteras Inlet from ramp 55 to the inlet (includes Pole Road, Cable Crossing, and Spur Road).</li> </ul> <p><b>Ocracoke Island District:</b> None.</p>	<p><b>Interdunal roads:</b> Same as alternative A.</p> <p><b>Bodie Island District:</b> Same as alternative A.</p> <p><b>Hatteras Island District:</b> Same as alternative A.</p> <p><b>Ocracoke Island District:</b> Same as alternative A.</p>	<p><b>Interdunal roads:</b> Same as alternative A, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existing interdunal roads would be better maintained as needed to provide access to ORV areas. Pullouts or road widening would be provided where appropriate to provide safe passage.</li> </ul> <p><b>Bodie Island District:</b> Same as alternative A.</p> <p><b>Hatteras Island District:</b> Same as alternative A, plus: South Beach: Extend interdunal road W of ramp 45 to ramp 49. Establish new ramps 47 and 48 off of interdunal road.</p> <p><b>Ocracoke Island District:</b> Same as alternative A.</p>	<p><b>Interdunal roads:</b> Same as alternative A.</p> <p><b>Bodie Island District:</b> Same as alternative A.</p> <p><b>Hatteras Island District:</b> From ramp 55 to Bone Road (a.k.a. Fort Clark Spur); includes Pole Road, Cable Crossing, and Spur Road.</p> <p><b>Ocracoke Island District:</b> Same as alternative A.</p>	<p><b>Interdunal roads:</b> Same as alternative C.</p> <p><b>Bodie Island District:</b> Same as alternative A.</p> <p><b>Hatteras Island District:</b> Same as alternative C.</p> <p><b>Ocracoke Island District:</b> Same as alternative A.</p>	<p><b>Interdunal roads:</b> Same as alternative C.</p> <p><b>Bodie Island District:</b> Same as alternative A.</p> <p><b>Hatteras Island District:</b> Same as alternative E, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hatteras Inlet Spit: Re-route Pole Road toward the sound west of the Overwash Fan to provide natural barrier to bird nesting area south of road; and establish new interdunal road, with southwest and northeast extensions parallel to the beach, from the southern terminus of Pole Road to provide access to False Point and inlet.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ocracoke Island District:</b> North Ocracoke Spit: Establish new interdunal road parallel to the beach from ramp 59 for 0.3 mile northeast toward the inlet, with parking area at the terminus.</p>
<b>Hours of Allowable ORV Operation on Beach (when area open to ORV use<sup>b</sup>)</b>					
<p>All areas of the Seashore open 24 hours a day year-round.</p>	<p>Nov 16 to Apr 30: All beaches open to ORV use 24 hours a day. May 1 to Nov 15: All potential sea turtle nesting habitat (ocean intertidal zone, ocean backshore, and dunes) closed to non-essential ORV use from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., except that from Sep 16 to Nov 15 ORV use is allowed from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. subject to terms and conditions of a permit.</p>	<p>Nov 16 to Apr 30: Designated ORV routes would be open to ORV use 24 hours a day. May 1 to Nov 15: Designated ORV routes in potential sea turtle nesting habitat (ocean intertidal zone, ocean backshore, and dunes) would be closed to non-essential ORV use from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Hours of night-driving prohibition would be established in the Superintendent's Compendium and subject to periodic review.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No periodic review.</li> </ul>	<p>Nov 16 to Apr 30: Designated ORV routes would be open to ORV use 24 hours a day. May 1 to Nov 15: Designated ORV routes in potential sea turtle nesting habitat (ocean intertidal zone, ocean backshore, and dunes) would be closed to non-essential ORV use from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Sep 16 to Nov 15: ORV routes with no or low density of turtle nests would reopen to ORV use between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., subject to terms and conditions of permit. Hours of night-driving prohibition would be established in the Superintendent's Compendium and subject to periodic review.</p>	<p>Nov 16 to Apr 30: Designated ORV routes would be open to ORV use 24 hours a day. May 1 to Nov 15: Designated ORV routes in potential sea turtle nesting habitat (ocean intertidal zone, ocean backshore, and dunes) would be closed to non-essential ORV use from 1 hour after sunset until turtle patrol has checked the beach in the morning (by approx. one-half hour after sunrise). Sep 16 to Nov 15: ORV routes with no or low density of turtle nests remaining would reopen for night driving, subject to terms and conditions of an ORV permit. Hours of night-driving prohibition would be established in the Superintendent's Compendium and subject to periodic review.</p>

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<b>ORV Safety Closures</b>					
<p>ORV safety closures are established as needed to address safety conditions such as debris on the beach or narrow beaches. Narrow beaches are reopened as the beach widens. Safety closures are applicable only to ORV access; pedestrian access is maintained.</p> <p>Existing ORV safety closures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ramp 1 to ramp 2</li> <li>- 1.8 mile south of ramp 38 to 0.4 mile north of ramp 43.</li> <li>- Buxton to Lighthouse Beach.</li> <li>- Northern boundary of Frisco to Hatteras Village.</li> <li>- Hatteras Village Beach.</li> </ul> <p>1.5 mile north of ramp 67 to 1 mile south of ramp 59.</p>	<p>Same as alternative A.</p>	<p>ORV safety closures would be established on designated ORV routes as needed to address ORV and pedestrian safety considerations, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Debris on the beach.</li> <li>- Narrow beaches.</li> <li>- Congested areas.</li> </ul> <p>Safety closures would preclude ORV access, while pedestrian and commercial fishing access would generally be maintained through safety closures.</p> <p>NPS law enforcement staff would monitor ORV safety closures on a weekly basis. Sufficient reduction or elimination of the conditions prompting the closure, so there is no longer an imminent hazard, would constitute the trigger for reopening an ORV safety closure.</p>	<p>ORV safety closures would not be established. ORV drivers would be responsible for recognizing and avoiding ORV safety hazards and would drive at own risk.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C, plus:</p> <p>An ORV safety closure would be implemented in the event of a clear and imminent threat of significant bodily injury or death, and/or damage to personal property, including vehicles and their contents.</p> <p>Triggers that could justify a safety closure include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deep beach cuts that block the beach from dune to surf with no obvious way around.</li> <li>- Obstacles, such as exposed stumps, shipwrecks, or debris, that cannot be safely bypassed or that block the entire width of the beach and cannot be easily removed.</li> <li>- Severe beach slope that puts vehicles in an unsafe gradient position and increases the chances of the loss of vehicular control.</li> <li>- A high concentration of pedestrian users coupled with a narrow beach.</li> </ul> <p>Triggers do not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A narrow beach by itself.</li> <li>- High tides that block access through portions of beaches occur periodically and predictably, and are an obvious, easily avoidable hazard.</li> <li>- Hazards blocking only a portion of the beach, where safe passage is available around the hazard.</li> </ul> <p>ORV safety closures would preclude ORV access, while pedestrian and commercial fishing access would be maintained through most safety closures.</p> <p>NPS law enforcement staff will monitor ORV safety closures on a weekly basis. Sufficient reduction or elimination of the conditions prompting the closure, so there is no longer an imminent hazard, would constitute the trigger for reopening a closure.</p>

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<b>Pedestrian Safety</b>					
<p>36 CFR 4.20, Right-of-Way: An operator of a motor vehicle shall yield the right of way to pedestrians (as well as saddle and pack animals, and vehicles drawn by animals). Failure to yield the right of way is prohibited.</p> <p>36 CFR 4.22, Unsafe Operation: (b) The following are prohibited:</p> <p>(3) Failing to maintain that degree of control of a motor vehicle necessary to avoid danger to persons, property, or wildlife.</p> <p>No additional measures apply.</p>	Same as alternative A.	Same as alternative A.	Same as alternative A.	<p>Same as alternative A, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For village beaches that are open to ORV use during the winter season, the village beaches must be at least 20 meters (66 feet) wide from the toe of the dune seaward to mean high tide line in order to be open to ORV use.</li> </ul>	<p>Same as alternative A, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicles must yield to pedestrians on all ORV routes.</li> <li>When approaching or passing a pedestrian on the beach, ORVs shall move to the landward side of the available ORV corridor in order to yield the wider portion of the beach corridor to the pedestrian.</li> <li>ORVs shall slow to 5 mph (or the slowest possible speed to maintain traction without exceeding the overall speed limit) when traveling within 30 meters (100 feet) or less of pedestrians at any location on the beach at any time of year.</li> </ul> <p>Pedestrians should not block access ramps and should use pedestrian ramps/boardwalks where available. If a pedestrian walkover is not available, pedestrians should walk to the side of ORV ramps, not in the tire tracks.</p>
<b>Administrative ORV Closures</b>					
<p>The beach in front of the former site of Cape Hatteras Lighthouse is closed to ORV access.</p> <p>Buxton Woods Road is closed to ORV access.</p>	Same as alternative A.	No administrative closures would be established. ORV routes and non-ORV areas would be designated as described in table ES-2.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.
<b>Temporary Emergency ORV Closures</b>					
<p>Temporary emergency ORV closures established per Superintendent's Compendium and NPS policy.</p>	<p>Same as alternative A, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NPS retains the authority to implement a temporary emergency ORV closure if any of the following conditions are observed:</li> <li>ORV traffic is backing up on the beach access ramps, either on- or off-beach bound, which threatens to impede traffic flow.</li> <li>ORV traffic on the beach is parked in such a way that two-way traffic is impeded.</li> </ul> <p>Multiple incidents of disorderly behavior are observed or reported.</p>	<p>Same as alternative B, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beaches would be temporarily closed to additional ORV use if/when carrying capacity is reached or exceeded.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative B.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.

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<b>Ramp Characteristics</b>					
Ramp width and construction details vary. Current practice is to use shell/clay base material to provide firm driving surface where ramps cross dune line.	Same as alternative A.	Ramps would be two lanes wide with shell/clay base and have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standard regulatory signs and information boards at all ramps.</li> <li>- Gates at all ramps and access points.</li> <li>- Designated “air down” area with hardened surface (e.g., shell/clay base).</li> </ul>	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preferably, each ORV route would have an access ramp at either end of the route.</li> </ul>
<b>Permit Requirements</b>					
No permit required.	Night-driving permit required for ORV use from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Sep 16 to Nov 15.	ORV permit required.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.
<b>Permit Distribution</b>					
N/A	Available in person at various locations and online.	Available in person at designated permit issuing stations and online.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.
<b>Permit Issuance Requirements</b>					
N/A	ORV owner must sign permit to acknowledge understanding of the rules and must carry permit when beach driving during the restricted period.	ORV owners must complete a short education program in person or online and pass a basic knowledge test. Owners would sign for their permits to acknowledge understanding of the rules and regulations governing ORV use at the Seashore.	ORV owners must read an information brochure and sign the permit to acknowledge understanding of the rules and regulations governing ORV use at the Seashore.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.
<b>Permit Types</b>					
N/A	Night-driving permit for Sep 16 to Nov 15.	Annual ORV permits would be valid for 12 months from date of purchase.	Annual ORV permits would be valid for the calendar year.	Weekly (7-day) and annual (12-month) ORV permits would be valid from date of purchase. Permits would include night-driving component for September 16 to November 15.  In addition, a separate permit would be required for the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Park-and-stay overnight.</li> <li>- Self-contained vehicle (SCV) camping.</li> </ul>	Weekly (7-day) and annual (12-month) ORV permits would be valid from date of purchase. Permits would include night-driving component for September 16 to November 15.
<b>Permit Number Limits</b>					
N/A	No limit on night-driving permits.	No limit on ORV permits.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C, except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use limits would be established for park-and-stay and SCV camping.</li> <li>- Use limits would be subject to periodic review.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative C.
<b>Permit Fees</b>					
N/A	None	ORV permit fee would be based on cost recovery as described in NPS Director's Order and Reference Manual 53.	Same as alternative C, except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amount of fee would be lower than alternative C due to decreased management costs under this alternative.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative C, except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fee for weekly ORV permit would be less than fee for annual permit.</li> <li>- Fees for park-and-stay and SCV permits would be determined separately.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative C, except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fee for weekly ORV permit would be less than fee for annual permit.</li> </ul>

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<b>Permit Form</b>					
N/A	Night-driving permit is an informational brochure that the user signs and places on dash of vehicle.	ORV permit would be affixed to vehicle in a manner approved by the NPS.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.
<b>Permit Revocation</b>					
N/A	Night-driving permit may be revoked for violation of applicable park regulations or terms and conditions of the permit.	ORV permit may be revoked for violation of applicable park regulations or terms and conditions of the permit.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.
<b>Beach Parking</b>					
Parking within routes is allowed in any configuration, as long as parked vehicles do not obstruct traffic.	Same as alternative A.	Same as alternative A.	Parking within ORV routes is allowed, but only one vehicle deep. Stacking of vehicles in more than one row would be prohibited.	Same as alternative A.	Same as alternative A.
<b>Vehicle Carrying Capacity Determination</b>					
Vehicle carrying capacity would not be determined.	Same as alternative A.	<p>Carrying capacity would be a “peak use limit” determined for all areas based on the linear feet of beachfront and the following physical space requirements (“mile” refers to miles of beach open to ORV use):</p> <p>Bodie Island District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 260 vehicles/mile (20 feet/vehicle).</li> </ul> <p>Hatteras Island District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 260 vehicles/mile (20 feet/vehicle).</li> </ul> <p>Ocracoke Island District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 175 vehicles/mile (30 feet/vehicle).</li> </ul> <p>Temporary exceptions to carrying-capacity limits may be approved for short-term events operating under a special use permit.</p> <p>Carrying-capacity criteria would be subject to periodic review.</p>	Carrying capacity would be addressed solely by the beach parking restriction described in the row above.	<p>Same as alternative C, except:</p> <p>Hatteras Island District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cape Point: 400 vehicles allowed within a 1 mile area centered on Cape Point.</li> </ul>	<p>Same as alternative E, except:</p> <p>Ocracoke Island District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 260 vehicles/mile (20 feet/vehicle).</li> </ul>

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<b>ORV Characteristic Requirements</b>					
All vehicles operating in all areas of the Seashore must have valid vehicle registration, insurance, and license plate. Vehicles must be street legal. All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are prohibited from beach driving.	Same as alternative A.	Vehicle characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All vehicles must be registered, licensed, and insured for highway use and must comply with state inspection regulations within the state, country, or province where the vehicle is registered</li> <li>- Four-wheel-drive vehicles are recommended.</li> <li>- Two-wheel-drive vehicles are allowed.</li> <li>- Motorcycles and ATVs are prohibited.</li> <li>- There is a three-axle maximum for vehicles (this is the axle maximum for the powered vehicle only and does not include the additional number of axles on towed trailers).</li> <li>- Any trailers are limited to no more than two axles.</li> <li>- The maximum vehicle length is 30 feet (this is the maximum length for the powered vehicle and does not include the additional length of a towed trailer).</li> <li>- Tires must be U.S. Dept. of Transportation-listed or approved.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C, except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Motorcycles would be prohibited on ocean beaches, but allowed on soundside access areas where ORVs are allowed.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative C.
<b>Equipment Requirements</b>					
None	Same as alternative A.	Equipment requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All vehicles shall contain a low-pressure tire gauge, shovel, jack, and jack stand.</li> <li>- A full-sized spare tire, first-aid kit, fire extinguisher, trash bag or container, flashlight (if night driving), and tow strap are <i>recommended</i>.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.
<b>Tire Pressure</b>					
Recommend air down of tires before driving on the beach.	Same as alternative A.	When driving on designated routes, tire pressure must be lowered sufficiently to maintain adequate traction within the posted speed limit. Tire pressure of 20 psi is <i>recommended</i> for most vehicles. The softer the sand, the lower the pressure needed. Re-inflate tires to normal pressure as soon as possible after vehicle returns to paved roads.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.

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<b>Speed Limit</b>					
<p>Speed limit is 25 mph (unless otherwise posted) on park beaches for public and private vehicles.</p> <p>Speed limit is 10 mph when ORV corridor is less than 100 feet wide.</p> <p>Speed limit in front of villages during off season (Sep 16 to May 14) on park beaches posted at 10 mph.</p> <p>Emergency vehicles exempt when responding to a call.</p>	<p>May 15 to Sep 15: Speed limit is 15 mph (unless otherwise posted).</p> <p>Sep 16 to May 14: Speed limit is 25 mph (unless otherwise posted).</p>	<p>Speed limit is 15 mph (unless otherwise posted).</p> <p>Emergency vehicles exempt when responding to a call.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C.</p>
<b>Essential Vehicles</b>					
<p>Essential vehicles are allowed in non-ORV areas and within resource closures subject to guidelines in the “Essential Vehicles” section of appendix G of the USFWS <i>Piping Plover, Atlantic Coast Population, Revised Recovery Plan</i>. To the extent practicable, emergency response vehicle operators will consult with trained resource management staff regarding protected species before driving into or through resource closures; however, prior consultation may not always be practical.</p>	<p>Same as alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as alternative A.</p>
<b>Non-ORV Areas</b>					
<p>None designated. ORVs are temporarily prohibited in seasonal (village) closures, safety closures, administrative closures, and resource closures, including some areas that have been closed to ORV use for many years.</p>	<p>Same as alternative A.</p>	<p>Non-ORV areas would be designated as indicated in table ES-2.</p>	<p>Non-ORV areas would be designated as indicated in table ES-2.</p>	<p>Non-ORV areas would be designated as indicated in table ES-2.</p>	<p>Non-ORV areas would be designated as indicated in table ES-2.</p>
<b>Resource Education</b>					
<p>Information is available to the general public through the park website, newspaper, information brochures, and interpretive programs. However, there is no targeted education program for beach users.</p>	<p>Same as alternative A, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Night-driving permit has basic education component.</li> <li>- Protected species information is available at ORV access points.</li> <li>- There is a 24-hour citizen phone line.</li> <li>- The beach access brochure is to be redesigned.</li> </ul>	<p>General information would remain available as described in alternative A. There would be a new required education program for ORV users, as described under ORV Permit Issuance Requirements.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There would be a new voluntary resource education program targeted toward non-ORV beach users.</li> </ul>

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<b>Temporary ORV Use of Non-ORV Areas</b>					
N/A	N/A	<p>Under the terms and conditions of a special use permit, the Superintendent could authorize the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Temporary emergency ORV use of non-ORV areas if needed to bypass sections of NC-12 that are closed for repairs. This could apply to all vehicles, including private vehicles, and would require a special use permit during the temporary emergency situation.</li> <li>- Temporary non-emergency ORV use of non-ORV areas traditionally used for fishing tournaments that were established prior to Jan 1, 2009.</li> <li>- Temporary non-emergency ORV use of non-ORV areas to transport mobility-impaired individuals to join their family or friends on an open beach that is otherwise closed to ORVs. ORV use would be limited to the shortest, most direct distance between the nearest designated ORV route and the location of the gathering.</li> </ul> <p>Temporary non-emergency use by <i>nonessential</i> vehicles would not be permitted within resource closures.</p>	Same as alternative A.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.
<b>Parking Areas for Non-ORV Access</b>					
Parking is currently provided in 32 park-maintained parking lots throughout the Seashore, totaling approx. 1,000 spaces.	Same as alternative A.	<p>New or expanded parking would be established to support pedestrian access to non-ORV areas as identified in table ES-2.</p> <p>NPS would use environmentally appropriate design standards to minimize stormwater runoff and other resource impacts. Toilet facilities and trash receptacles would be provided at high-use locations.</p>	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.
<b>Alternative Transportation</b>					
None	Same as alternative A.	NPS would consider applications for commercial use authorization to offer beach shuttle services.	Same as alternative A.	<p>Same as alternative C, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NPS would designate and post boat landing zones (drop-off) near the inlet at Bodie Island Spit and South Point Ocracoke that could be used to drop off pedestrians if/when the inlet shoreline is not otherwise closed to protect Seashore resources. NPS would encourage a commercial water shuttle service for this purpose; however, the drop-off points would be subject to closure on short notice if needed to protect Seashore resources.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative C.

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<b>Camping and Nighttime Beach Use</b>					
<p>Per 36 CFR 2.10: Camping<sup>a</sup> is prohibited except in designated areas. In the Superintendent's Compendium, camping is prohibited on Seashore beaches. In areas open to ORV use, ORVs are allowed on the beach overnight if someone associated with the vehicle is actively fishing.</p> <p><sup>a</sup>Camping is defined in 36 CFR 1.4 as the erecting of a tent or shelter of natural or synthetic material, preparing a sleeping bag or other bedding material for use, parking of a motor vehicle, motor home, or trailer, or mooring of a vessel for the apparent purpose of overnight occupancy.</p>	<p>Same as alternative A, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nighttime use of ORVs is seasonally restricted as described under the Hours of Allowable ORV Operation section.</li> </ul>	<p>Same as alternative B, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unattended beach equipment (e.g., chairs, canopies, volleyball nets, watersports gear) is prohibited on the Seashore at night. Turtle patrol and law enforcement will tag equipment found at night. Owners have 24 hours to remove equipment before it is removed by NPS staff.</li> </ul>	<p>Same as alternative C.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C, plus: SCV camping would be authorized as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The following campgrounds and use limits would be designated for SCV camping from Nov 1 to Mar 31: Oregon Inlet—100 spaces; Cape Point—100 spaces; and Ocracoke—50 spaces. Use limits would be established in the Superintendent's Compendium and subject to periodic review.</li> <li>SCV permits would be required, in addition to an ORV permit for beach driving, and would be available in weekly or seasonal increments.</li> <li>There would be a 7-consecutive-day- / 6-night-stay limit during any one visit and a limit of one visit per month.</li> <li>SCVs would be required to have a self-contained toilet and a separate, permanently installed holding tank for both black and grey water, each with a min. capacity of 3 days' waste.</li> <li>Holding tanks must be dumped at an appropriate facility every 72 hours during a visit.</li> </ul> <p>Between May 1 and September 16, ORV park-and-stay overnight would be allowed with a permit at selected spits and points, if not otherwise closed to protect resources. The following park-and-stay use limits would be established: Inlet spits—15 vehicles each; Cape Point and South Point Ocracoke—25 vehicles each.</p> <p>Park-and-stay use limits and hours of night-driving prohibition would be established in the Superintendent's Compendium and subject to periodic review.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C.</p>
<b>Beach Fires</b>					
<p>Per 36 CFR 2.13: Fires are prohibited except in designated areas. In the Superintendent's Compendium, beach fires are authorized year-round, with the following restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires are prohibited from midnight to 6:00 a.m. year-round.</li> <li>Fires are prohibited within resource closures.</li> </ul>	<p>Same as alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as alternative B, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A non-fee educational fire permit is required for any beach fire year-round.</li> <li>The hours that beach fires are permitted are subject to periodic review.</li> </ul>	<p>Same as alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C.</p>	<p>Same as alternative C, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May 1 to Nov 15: Beach fires would be permitted only in front of Coquina Beach, Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo, Avon, Buxton, Frisco, Hatteras Village, and Ocracoke day use area during the sea turtle nesting season.</li> </ul>

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<b>Pets</b>					
<p>Per 36 CFR 2.15: The following are prohibited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possessing a pet in an area closed to the possession of pets by the Superintendent.</li> <li>- Failing to crate, cage, restrain on a leash which shall not exceed 6 feet in length, or otherwise physically confine a pet at all times.</li> </ul> <p>In the Superintendent's Compendium, pets are prohibited in all resource closures. Pets are prohibited, even if on a leash, from the landward side of the posts delineating the ORV corridor at the spits (Bodie, Hatteras, Ocracoke) and Cape Point.</p>	Same as alternative A.	<p>Same as alternative A, except :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pets would be prohibited within all designated Breeding Shorebird Species Management Areas (SMAs) from Mar 15 to Oct 15.</li> <li>- Pets would be prohibited within all Nonbreeding Shorebird SMAs that are otherwise open to recreational use.</li> </ul>	<p>Same as alternative C, except :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pets would be prohibited in all designated SMAs year-round.</li> <li>- This policy would not be subject to periodic review.</li> </ul>	<p>Same as alternative C, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pets would be prohibited within all designated Breeding Shorebird SMAs, including pass-through zones, from Mar 15 to Aug 31.</li> </ul>	<p>Same as alternative C, except :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pets would be prohibited in all designated Breeding Shorebird SMAs from Mar 15 to Jul 31, or 2 weeks after all shorebird breeding activities have ceased or all chicks in the area have fledged, whichever comes later.</li> </ul>
<b>Horses</b>					
<p>Per 36 CFR 2.16: The use of horses or pack animals is prohibited outside of trails, routes, or areas designated for their use.</p> <p>In the Superintendent's Compendium, horse use is prohibited in resource closures and on lifeguarded beaches, and is allowed only in the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On the beach seaward of the existing dunes and only on beaches open to ORV use.</li> <li>- Along road shoulders or across paved roads where travel is necessary to cross to and from beach access routes.</li> <li>- On trails or in areas as authorized by commercial-use authorization or special use permit.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative A.	<p>Same as alternative A, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Horse use would be allowed in some non-ORV areas, except for SMAs, and on a limited number of trails to be designated in the Superintendent's Compendium after ORV routes are determined.</li> <li>- Horse use would be allowed on village beaches from Sep 16 to May 14.</li> <li>- The designated horse use trails and areas would be subject to periodic review.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative A.	Same as alternative C.	<p>Same as alternative C, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Horse use would be authorized in any upper beach ORV corridor(s), if such is provided at "floating" Nonbreeding Shorebird SMAs as described in the final section of this table.</li> </ul>

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<b>Commercial Fishing Vehicles</b>					
Commercial fishing at the Seashore is authorized and managed under a special use permit in accordance with 36 CFR 7.58(b). Commercial fishing vehicles are considered <i>non-essential vehicles</i> and are not authorized to enter resource closures. Permitted commercial fishermen are authorized to enter other areas that are closed to recreational ORV use, including seasonal closures and safety closures, but are not authorized to enter lifeguarded beaches.	Same as alternative A, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial fishing vehicles are subject to the night-driving restriction in the consent decree.</li> <li>Under the modified consent decree, commercial fishermen would be granted access to beaches at 5:00 a.m. instead of 6:00 a.m.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative A, except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial fishermen would not be required to obtain an ORV permit that would be required for recreational ORVs.</li> <li>Commercial fishing vehicles would be authorized to enter non-ORV areas, except for full resource closures and lifeguarded beaches.</li> <li>In areas outside of existing resource closures, the Superintendent would be able to modify the hours of night-driving restrictions by +/- two hours, subject to terms and conditions of the fishing permit, for commercial fishermen who are actively engaged in authorized commercial fishing activity and can produce fish house receipts from the past 30 days. Such modifications would be subject to periodic review.</li> </ul>	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.
<b>Periodic Review</b>					
None	Same as alternative A.	Every 5 years NPS would conduct a systematic review of the ORV management measures that are identified in this plan as being subject to Periodic Review. This could result in changes to those management actions in order to improve effectiveness.	Same as alternative A.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.
<b>Staffing and Material Costs (annual costs based on 2009 dollars)</b>					
Protection: \$1,147,500 Management/Administration: \$428,750 Resource Mgmt: \$508,500 Facilities: \$55,600 Interpretation: \$68,500 Total: \$2,208,850	Protection: \$1,481,500 Management/Administration: \$483,950 Resource Mgmt: \$813,000 Facilities: \$178,600 Interpretation: \$193,500 Total: \$3,150,550	Protection: \$1,706,900 Management/Administration: \$380,100 Resource Mgmt: \$704,000 Facilities: \$198,800 Interpretation: \$193,500 Total: \$3,183,300	Protection: \$1,768,500 Management/Administration: \$360,850 Resource Mgmt: \$649,500 Facilities: \$178,600 Interpretation: \$193,500 Total: \$3,150,950	Protection: \$2,204,300 Management/Administration: \$383,100 Resource Mgmt: \$924,200 Facilities: \$211,400 Interpretation: \$193,500 Total: \$3,916,500	Protection: \$2,078,300 Management/Administration: \$383,100 Resource Mgmt: \$850,700 Facilities: \$211,400 Interpretation: \$193,500 Total: \$3,717,000

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<b>Resource Protection Measures</b>					
<b>Breeding Season Measures</b>					
Shorebird pre-nesting areas and ORV/pedestrian buffers for observed shorebird breeding behavior, sea turtle nests, and seabeach amaranth are established as described in the Interim Strategy FONSI (table 9).	Shorebird pre-nesting areas and ORV/pedestrian buffers for observed shorebird breeding behavior, sea turtle nests, and seabeach amaranth are established as described in the Interim Strategy FONSI (table 9), as modified by the consent decree.	Breeding Shorebird SMAs would be designated. Shorebird pre-nesting areas and ORV/pedestrian buffers for observed shorebird breeding behavior, sea turtle nests, and seabeach amaranth would be established as described in table 10 in chapter 2.  ML1 measures would be implemented at all locations (including those outside of SMAs), except at Bodie Island Spit, Cape Point, and South Point Ocracoke, where ML2 measures would be implemented.  Designated SMAs would be subject to periodic review.	Same as alternative C, except: – ML1 would be implemented at all locations.	Same as alternative C, except: – ML2 areas at Bodie Island Spit, Cape Point, and South Point Ocracoke would include an ORV pass-through zone, using standard buffer distances as described in table 10 in chapter 2.	Same as alternative C, except: – ML2 area at Bodie Island Spit would include a pedestrian access corridor, and ML2 areas at Cape Point and South Point Ocracoke would include an ORV access corridor, using standard buffer distances as described in table 10 in chapter 2.
<b>Nonbreeding Season Measures</b>					
As described in the Interim Strategy FONSI: Suitable interior habitats at spits and at Cape Point are closed year-round to all recreational users to provide for resting and foraging for shorebirds. Suitable habitats include ephemeral ponds and moist flats at Cape Point, Hatteras Spit, Ocracoke, and Bodie Island Spit. Actual locations of suitable foraging and resting habitat may change periodically due to natural processes and are determined based on annual habitat assessment and monitoring.	Same as alternative A.	Nonbreeding Shorebird SMAs would be established at the points and spits based on an annual habitat assessment. In addition, year-round non-ORV areas along the ocean shoreline outside of the villages, as identified in table ES-2, would be managed as Nonbreeding Shorebird SMAs with recreational activity restrictions as described in table 10 in chapter 2.  Designated SMAs would be subject to periodic review.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C, plus the following areas would be managed as “floating” non-ORV areas during the nonbreeding season (i.e., as soon as breeding season closures are reduced or removed): – “Floating” 1.5 miles of ocean shoreline habitat between ramp 23 (Salvo) and ramp 34 (Avon) would be non-ORV (in addition to ramps 27–30), based on habitat assessment and nonbreeding surveys. – “Floating” 1.5 miles of ocean shoreline on South Beach between ramp 45 and ramp 49, based on habitat assessment and nonbreeding surveys. ORV access to be provided via interdunal road or upper beach route (where 50-meter buffer can be maintained). – “Floating” 1.0 mile of ocean shoreline between ramp 72 and inlet, based on annual habitat assessment and nonbreeding surveys. Upper-beach ORV corridor will be used to bypass the 1.0 mile shoreline area.  The “floating” Nonbreeding Shorebird SMAs would be monitored as described in table 10 in chapter 2 and would be subject to periodic review.
<b>Vegetation</b>					
ORV use is generally restricted to minimize impacts.	Same as alternative A.	ORV use would be restricted or prohibited in locations where ORV use is causing unacceptable impacts to vegetation.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.	Same as alternative C.

<sup>a</sup> This matrix is designed to display differences among alternatives; therefore, actions common to all alternatives are not included in it. Refer to the “Elements Common to All Alternatives” section, which begins on page 56 of chapter 2.

<sup>b</sup> Please refer to table ES-2 to determine when routes and areas are open to ORV use.

**TABLE ES-4. ANALYSIS OF HOW ALTERNATIVES MEET OBJECTIVES**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Alternative A: No Action—Continuation of Management under the Interim Strategy</b>	<b>Alternative B: No Action—Continuation of Management under Consent Decree</b>	<b>Alternative C: Seasonal Management</b>	<b>Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management</b>	<b>Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management</b>	<b>Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input</b>
<b>Management Methodology</b>						
Identify criteria to designate ORV routes and areas.	Meets objective to some degree. No criteria would be developed to designate routes and areas. Entire Seashore would be route or area.	Meets objective to some degree. No criteria would be developed to designate routes and areas. Entire Seashore would be route or area.	Meets objective to a large degree. Routes and areas designated based on seasonal resource and visitor use characteristics of various areas in the Seashore.	Meets objective to a large degree. Routes and areas designated based on providing predictability for visitors and simplified management strategies.	Meets objective to a large degree. Routes and areas designated based on providing a wide variety of access opportunities for all users, while still protecting sensitive resources.	Meets objective to a large degree. Routes and areas designated based on providing a variety of access opportunities for all users, while still protecting sensitive resources. This alternative also provides more predictability than alternative E.
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.	Meets objective to a moderate degree. ORV use areas are determined by where resource management closures exist. Flexibility to adapt to changes, but lack of a framework to make these changes efficiently.	Meets objective to some degree. ORV use areas are set through resource management measures under the Consent Decree. Areas are set, but are rigid, and do not have flexibility to adapt as needed to respond to changing environment.	Meets objective to a large degree. Route, areas, and ORV management measures are established that are subject to Periodic Review of both ORV management and species management measures.	Meets objective to some degree. Route, areas, and ORV management measures are established that are subject to Periodic Review and species management measures, but not ORV management measures. The ability to implement safety closures would not be available.	Meets objective to a large degree. Route, areas, and ORV management measures are established that are subject to Periodic Review of both ORV management and species management measures.	Meets objective to a large degree. Route, areas, and ORV management measures are established that are subject to Periodic Review of both ORV management and species management measures.
Establish a civic engagement component for ORV management.	Meets objective to a moderate degree. The Seashore would conduct educational programs during bird and turtle hatching season, which would involve students from public schools, as well as other public involvement activities that engage the public.	Meets objective to a moderate degree. The Seashore would conduct educational programs during bird and turtle hatching season, which would involve students from public schools, as well as other public involvement activities that engage the public.	Meets objective to a large degree as the Seashore would implement more educational programs in local schools, expand the Junior Ranger program, and enlist volunteers for a Sea Turtle Nest Watch Program.	Meets objective to a large degree as the Seashore would implement more educational programs in local schools, expand the Junior Ranger program, and enlist volunteers for a Sea Turtle Nest Watch Program.	Meets objective to a large degree as the Seashore would implement more educational programs in local schools, expand the Junior Ranger program, and enlist volunteers for a Sea Turtle Nest Watch Program.	Meets objective to a large degree as the Seashore would implement more educational programs in local schools, expand the Junior Ranger program, and enlist volunteers for a Sea Turtle Nest Watch Program.
Establish procedures for prompt and efficient public notification of beach access status, including any temporary ORV use restrictions for such things as ramp maintenance, resource and public safety closures, storm events, etc.	Meets objective to some degree. Weekly beach access reports and online news releases provide prompt public notification.	Meets objective to a moderate degree. Weekly beach access reports, online news feeds, and Google Earth maps provide efficient beach access status updates.	Fully meets objective. Weekly beach access reports, online news feeds, and Google Earth maps provide efficient beach access status updates. Implementation of a permit system would provide ORV users with information regarding closed areas.	Fully meets objective. Weekly beach access reports, online news feeds, and Google Earth maps provide efficient beach access status updates. Implementation of a permit system would provide ORV users with information regarding closed areas.	Fully meets objective. Weekly beach access reports, online news feeds, and Google Earth maps provide efficient beach access status updates. Implementation of a permit system would provide ORV users with information regarding closed areas.	Fully meets objective. Weekly beach access reports, online news feeds, and Google Earth maps provide efficient beach access status updates. Implementation of a permit system would provide ORV users with information regarding closed areas.
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.	Meets objective to some degree. Seashore programs would continue to provide information regarding resource management and aim to build stewardship through public awareness.	Meets objective to some degree. Seashore programs would continue to provide information regarding resource management and aim to build stewardship through public awareness. Public opinion regarding the Consent Decree would detract from these efforts.	Meets objective to a large degree. Seashore programs would continue to provide information regarding resource management and aim to build stewardship through public awareness. Additional programs would be implemented and information provided through the permit system would increase awareness of Seashore resources.	Meets objective to a large degree. Seashore programs would continue to provide information regarding resource management and aim to build stewardship through public awareness. Additional programs would be implemented and information provided through the permit system would increase awareness of Seashore resources.	Meets objective to a large degree. Seashore programs would continue to provide information regarding resource management and aim to build stewardship through public awareness. Additional programs would be implemented and information provided through the permit system would increase awareness of Seashore resources.	Meets objective to a large degree. Seashore programs would continue to provide information regarding resource management and aim to build stewardship through public awareness. Additional programs would be implemented and information provided through the permit system would increase awareness of Seashore resources.

Objectives	Alternative A: No Action—Continuation of Management under the Interim Strategy	Alternative B: No Action—Continuation of Management under Consent Decree	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
<b>Natural Physical Resources</b>						
Minimize impacts from ORV use to soils and topographic features, for example, dunes, ocean beach, wetlands, tidal flats, and other features.	Meets objective to some degree. ORV use not permitted on dunes, but permitted in all areas of Seashore 24 hours a day. Lack of defined areas likely to lead to increased non-compliance and potential for these resources to be impacted.	Meets objective to a moderate degree. ORV use not permitted on dunes, but permitted in all areas of Seashore. Night-driving restrictions reduce amount of disturbance from beach driving. Implementation of larger buffers and backshore closures would offer protection to resources.	Meets objective to a large degree, as ORV use not permitted on dunes, night-driving restrictions, and carrying capacity limits. However, a large amount of beach open to ORV use could result in impacts to physical resources.	Fully meets objective, as ORV use not permitted on dunes, night-driving restrictions, and beach parking limitations. Least amount of mileage open to ORV use year-round would minimize resource impacts.	Fully meets objectives, as ORV use not permitted on dunes, night-driving restrictions, carrying capacity limits, and soundside driving restrictions.	Meets objective to a large degree, as ORV use not permitted on dunes, night-driving restrictions, and carrying capacity. However, a large amount of beach open to ORV use would result in impacts to physical resources.
<b>Threatened, Endangered, and Other Protected Species</b>						
Provide protection for threatened, endangered, and other protected species (e.g., state-listed species) and their habitats, and minimize impacts related to ORVs and other uses as required by laws and policies such as the <i>Endangered Species Act</i> , the <i>Migratory Bird Treaty Act</i> , and NPS laws and management policies.	Meets objective to some degree, as temporary resource closures provide protection for sensitive species but buffers would require frequent adjustments to provide adequate protection.	Meets objective to a moderate degree, as increased buffer distances and night-driving restrictions provide increased levels of species protection.	Meets objective to a large degree with increased buffer distances, night-driving restrictions, pet regulations, and SMAs closed to ORV use 7 months per year provide proactive (prior to breeding season) protection.	Fully meets objective with increased buffer distances, night-driving restrictions, pet regulations, and SMAs closed to ORV use year-round providing large areas of resource protection.	Meets objective to a large degree with increased buffer distances, night-driving restrictions, pet regulations, and SMAs closed to ORV use 5.5 months per year provide proactive (prior to breeding season) protection.	Meets objective to a large degree with increased buffer distances, night-driving restrictions, pet regulations, and SMAs closed to ORV use 4.5 months per year provide proactive (prior to breeding season) protection.
<b>Vegetation</b>						
Minimize impacts to native plant species related to ORV use.	Meets objective to some degree as driving on dune vegetation is prohibited, but lack of defined ORV areas or backshore closures could result in increased non-compliance and impacts to the resource.	Meets objective to a moderate degree as driving on dune vegetation is prohibited and ocean backshore closures are provided. Sensitive areas with marginal width may be open in the winter that would result in non-compliance problems.	Meets objective to a large degree by adding protective signage at soundside parking areas. Location of ORV corridor at the toe of the dune, with no buffer, may impact vegetation.	Fully meets objective as driving on dune vegetation is prohibited. Year-round SMAs protect large areas, reducing potential impacts to vegetation. ORV corridor would provide a 10 meter buffer from the toe of the dune, further protecting vegetation.	Fully meets objective by closing some soundside access areas and adding protective signage at remaining soundside parking areas. ORV corridor would provide a 10 meter buffer from the toe of the dune, further protecting vegetation.	Meets objective to a large degree by adding protective signage at soundside parking areas. However, there is the potential for damage to vegetation from new soundside access points. Location of ORV corridor at the toe of the dune, with no buffer, may impact vegetation.
<b>Other Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat</b>						
Minimize impacts to wildlife species and their habitats related to ORV use.	Meets objective to some degree, as temporary resource closures provide protection for other wildlife species but buffers are not as large as other alternatives and would not offer large levels of protection.	Meets objective to a moderate degree, as increased buffer distances and night-driving restrictions provide increased levels of species protection, which would include to other bird and invertebrate species.	Meets objective to a large degree with increased buffer distances, night-driving restrictions, pet regulations, and SMAs closed to ORV use 7 months per year.	Fully meets objective with increased buffer distances, night-driving restrictions, pet regulations, and SMAs closed to ORV use year-round, which would also offer protection to other bird species and invertebrates.	Meets objective to a large degree with increased buffer distances, night-driving restrictions, pet regulations, and SMAs closed to ORV use 5.5 months per year.	Meets objective to a large degree with increased buffer distances, night-driving restrictions, pet regulations, and SMAs closed to ORV use 4.5 months per year.

Objectives	Alternative A: No Action—Continuation of Management under the Interim Strategy	Alternative B: No Action—Continuation of Management under Consent Decree	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
<b>Cultural Resources</b>						
Protect cultural resources, such as shipwrecks, archeological sites, and cultural landscapes, from impacts related to ORV use.	Meets objective to some degree as Seashore protections would be put in place for cultural resources, such as shipwrecks, but allowing driving at night and allowing access to large areas of the Seashore would provide for more access to these resources and more possibility for these resources to be disturbed.	Meets objective to a moderate degree as Seashore protection would be in place for cultural resources, such as shipwrecks, and seasonal restrictions on night driving would further limit access to these resources. Large areas of the Seashore would still be accessible by ORV and would provide some level of access to these resources.	Meets objective to a large degree as Seashore protection would be in place for cultural resources, such as shipwrecks, and seasonal restrictions on night driving would further limit access to these resources. Further protection would be provided by the establishment of SMAs that limit access to certain areas of the Seashore during certain times of year and the addition of a permit system that could be revoked for non-compliance, decreasing the probability of drivers taking non-compliant actions.	Meets objective to a large degree as Seashore protection would be in place for cultural resources, such as shipwrecks, and seasonal restrictions on night driving would further limit access to these resources. Further protection would be provided by the establishment of SMAs that limit access to certain areas of the Seashore during certain times of year and the addition of a permit system that could be revoked for non-compliance, decreasing the probability of drivers taking non-compliant actions.	Meets objective to a large degree as Seashore protection would be in place for cultural resources, such as shipwrecks, and seasonal restrictions on night driving would further limit access to these resources. Further protection would be provided by the establishment of SMAs that limit access to certain areas of the Seashore during certain times of year and the addition of a permit system that could be revoked for non-compliance, decreasing the probability of drivers taking non-compliant actions.	Meets objective to a large degree as Seashore protection would be in place for cultural resources, such as shipwrecks, and seasonal restrictions on night driving would further limit access to these resources. Further protection would be provided by the establishment of SMAs that limit access to certain areas of the Seashore during certain times of year and the addition of a permit system that could be revoked for non-compliance, decreasing the probability of drivers taking non-compliant actions.
<b>Visitor Use and Experience</b>						
Ensure that ORV operators are informed about the rules and regulations regarding ORV use at the Seashore.	Meets objective to some degree as ORV rules are posted at visitor centers, on ORV ramp bulletin boards, in the park newspaper, and on the website. No permit system would be in place to convey information or provide a mechanism for ensuring regulations are followed.	Meets objective to a moderate degree as ORV rules are posted at visitor centers, on ORV ramp bulletin boards, in the park newspaper, on the website, and within the required night-driving permit.	Fully meets objective as ORV rules are posted at visitor centers, on ORV ramp bulletin boards, in the park newspaper, and on the website. This alternative includes a required education component as part of the ORV permit.	Fully meets objective as ORV rules are posted at visitor centers, on ORV ramp bulletin boards, in the park newspaper, and on the website. This alternative includes a required education component as part of the ORV permit.	Fully meets objective as ORV rules are posted at visitor centers, on ORV ramp bulletin boards, in the park newspaper, and on the website. This alternative includes a required education component as part of the ORV permit.	Fully meets objective as ORV rules are posted at visitor centers, on ORV ramp bulletin boards, in the park newspaper, and on the website. This alternative includes a required education component as part of the ORV permit.
Manage ORV use to allow for a variety of visitor use experiences.	Meets objective to some degree as ORV and non-ORV areas are not officially designated. Non-ORV areas occur through seasonal and safety closures throughout the Seashore, but no defined use areas exist to provide for a variety of visitor use experiences.	Meets objective to some degree as ORV and non-ORV areas are not officially designated. Non-ORV areas occur through seasonal and safety closures throughout the Seashore, but no defined use areas exist to provide for a variety of visitor use experiences.	Meets objective to a moderate degree as more defined areas for ORV and non-ORV recreational opportunities are provided. New interdunal road access would be provided, offering additional options to ORV users. Some separation of uses and unique opportunities are provided for various user groups.	Meets objective to a moderate degree as more defined areas for ORV and non-ORV recreational opportunities are provided. New interdunal road access would be provided, offering additional options to ORV users. Some separation of uses and unique opportunities are provided for various user groups, but large areas would be closed to all visitors for most of the year, and would not be available to provide for the visitor experience.	Meets objective to a large degree as more defined areas for ORV and non-ORV recreational opportunities are provided. New interdunal road access would be provided, offering additional options to ORV users. Additional user opportunities would be provided including the addition of a park-and-stay options, as well as self-contained vehicle camping. The addition of pedestrian routes, additional parking on the soundside, as well as the potential for water taxi access would all contribute to offering a variety of visitor experiences.	Meets objective to a large degree as more defined areas for ORV and non-ORV recreational opportunities are provided. New interdunal road access would be provided, offering additional options to ORV users. Additional visitor experiences would be provided through pedestrian routes, extra trails, and new parking. SMAs would offer additional flexibility that would provide for a greater variety of visitor experiences.

Objectives	Alternative A: No Action—Continuation of Management under the Interim Strategy	Alternative B: No Action—Continuation of Management under Consent Decree	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
Minimize conflicts between ORV use and other visitor uses.	Meets objective to some degree as no designated areas for uses are established, which could result in real or perceived conflicts between ORV uses and other visitor uses.	Meets objective to some degree as no designated areas for uses are established, which could result in real or perceived conflicts between ORV uses and other visitor uses.	Meets objective to a large degree as designation of ORV and non-ORV areas would help minimize conflicts. Implementation of a permit system would provide additional education and the ability to revoke permits would likely increase compliance with ORV use regulations and further reduce conflicts. Seasonal night-driving restrictions would also reduce potential visitor use conflicts.	Meets objective to a large degree as designation of ORV and non-ORV areas would help minimize conflicts. Implementation of a permit system would provide additional education and the ability to revoke permits would likely increase compliance with ORV use regulations and further reduce conflicts. Seasonal night-driving restrictions would also reduce potential visitor use conflicts.	Meets objective to a large degree as designation of ORV and non-ORV areas would help minimize conflicts. Implementation of a permit system would provide additional education and the ability to revoke permits would likely increase compliance with ORV use regulations and further reduce conflicts. Seasonal night-driving restrictions would also reduce potential visitor use conflicts.	Meets objective to a large degree as designation of ORV and non-ORV areas would help minimize conflicts. Implementation of a permit system would provide additional education and the ability to revoke permits would likely increase compliance with ORV use regulations and further reduce conflicts. Seasonal night-driving restrictions would also reduce potential visitor use conflicts.
<b>Visitor Safety</b>						
Ensure that ORV management promotes the safety of all visitors.	Meets objective to a moderate degree as ORV safety closures would be provided, as well as right-of-way and unsafe operation regulations contained in the CFR.	Meets objective to a large degree as ORV safety closures would be provided, as well as right-of-way and unsafe operation regulations contained in the CFR. Increased signage, lower speed limits, and increased public awareness would contribute to visitor safety.	Fully meets objective as ORV safety closures would be provided. Reduced speed limits would also apply in all areas. Village beaches would be closed to ORV use during the summer. Permit requirement would provide further information for increasing visitor safety.	Fully meets objective. Although ORV safety closures would not be provided, areas where these occur would be closed year-round as SMAs. Village beaches would be closed to ORVs year-round. Reduced speed limits would also apply in all areas.	Fully meets objective as ORV safety closures would be provided. Reduced speed limits would also apply in all areas. Beach width requirements would limit some ORV use in narrow beach areas and village beaches would be closed to ORV use during the summer.	Fully meets objective. Speed limits, village beach closures, and safety closures would be provided. Also, additional pedestrian safety and right-of-way requirements would provide increased protection.
<b>Seashore Operations</b>						
Identify operational needs and costs to fully implement an ORV management plan.	Meets objective to a large degree as implementation costs have been identified, but carries a degree of uncertainty.	Meets objective to a large degree as implementation costs have been identified, but carries a degree of uncertainty.	Meets objective to a large degree as implementation costs have been identified, but carries a degree of uncertainty.	Meets objective to a large degree as implementation costs have been identified, but carries a degree of uncertainty.	Meets objective to a large degree as implementation costs have been identified, but carries a degree of uncertainty.	Meets objective to a large degree as implementation costs have been identified, but carries a degree of uncertainty.
Identify potential sources of funding necessary to implement an ORV management plan.	Meets objective to a moderate degree. Funding expected under annual budget, but no additional funding source provided.	Meets objective to a moderate degree. Funding expected under annual budget, but no additional funding source provided.	Meets objective to a large degree. Funding expected under annual budget, additional funding would occur by from permit fees utilizing cost recovery.	Meets objective to a large degree. Funding expected under annual budget, additional funding would occur by from permit fees utilizing cost recovery.	Meets objective to a large degree. Funding expected under annual budget, additional funding would occur by from permit fees utilizing cost recovery.	Meets objective to a large degree. Funding expected under annual budget, additional funding would occur by from permit fees utilizing cost recovery.
Provide consistent guidelines, according to site conditions, for ORV routes, ramps, and signage.	Meets objective to some degree. Guidelines are not set and conditions would not be predictable.	Meets objective to a moderate degree. Increased signage would be consistent, but no consistent guidelines for routes and ramps would exist.	Meets objective to a large degree. Guidelines for ramp establishment and maintenance, signage, and routes would be established.	Meets objective to a large degree. Guidelines for ramp establishment and maintenance, signage, and routes would be established.	Meets objective to a large degree. Guidelines for ramp establishment and maintenance, signage, and routes would be established.	Meets objective to a large degree. Guidelines for ramp establishment and maintenance, signage, and routes would be established.

Note: Objectives are measured as fully meets objective, largely meets objective, moderately meets objective, or meets objective to some degree.

TABLE ES-5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SUMMARY BY ALTERNATIVE

Impact Topic	Alternative A: No Action—Continuation of Management under the Interim Strategy	Alternative B: No Action—Continuation of Management under Consent Decree	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
<b>Wetlands and Floodplains</b>						
<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Impacts of the Alternative on Marine Intertidal Wetlands:</b> Under all alternatives, there would be short term, negligible adverse impacts to marine intertidal wetlands due to continued ORV use in these areas					
	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Under alternative A, there would be long-term minor adverse impacts to wetlands due to direct damage from ORV use in and around vegetated wetlands on the sound side and along interior ORV routes.</p> <p>There would be no construction (or related impacts) under the no-action alternatives.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wetlands would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Under alternative B, there would be long-term minor adverse impacts to wetlands due to direct damage from ORV use in and around vegetated wetlands on the sound side and along interior ORV routes.</p> <p>There would be no construction (or related impacts) under the no-action alternatives.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wetlands would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Under alternative C, there would be long-term negligible adverse impacts to wetlands due to direct damage from ORV use in and around vegetated wetlands on the sound side and along interior ORV routes. Impacts to soundside wetlands would remain at a negligible level due to the protection provided by the installation of signage.</p> <p>Construction activities would avoid wetland areas, resulting in indirect, long-term negligible adverse impacts to wetlands.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wetlands would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Under alternative D, there would be long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts to wetlands due to direct damage from ORV use in and around vegetated wetlands on the sound side, which would not be protected with signage. Impacts to vegetated wetlands along interior ORV routes would continue.</p> <p>Construction activities would avoid wetland areas, resulting in indirect long-term negligible adverse impacts to wetlands.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wetlands would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Under alternative E, there would be long-term negligible adverse impacts to wetlands due to direct damage from ORV use in and around vegetated wetlands on the sound side and along interior ORV routes. Impacts to soundside wetlands would remain at a negligible level due to the protection provided by signage and closures of soundside access points.</p> <p>Construction activities would avoid wetland areas, resulting in indirect long-term negligible adverse impacts to wetlands.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wetlands would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Under alternative F, there would be long-term negligible adverse impacts to wetlands due to direct damage from ORV use in and around vegetated wetlands on the sound side and along interior ORV routes. Impacts to soundside wetlands would remain at a negligible level due to the protection provided by the installation of signage.</p> <p>Construction activities would avoid wetland areas, resulting in indirect long-term negligible adverse impacts to wetlands.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wetlands would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>
<b>Floodplains</b>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> There would be no construction under alternative A. As a result, there would be no impacts to the functions or values of floodplains.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> No cumulative impacts would occur.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> There would be no construction under alternative B. As a result, there would be no impacts to the functions or values of floodplains.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> No cumulative impacts would occur.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Under alternative C, there would be long-term minor adverse impacts to floodplains due to the construction or expansion of seven parking areas in the floodplain.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to floodplains would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Under alternative D there would be long-term negligible adverse impacts to floodplains due to the location of four ORV access ramps in the 100-year floodplain.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to floodplains would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Under alternative E, there would be long-term minor adverse impacts to floodplains due to the construction or expansion of 14 parking areas in the floodplain.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to floodplains would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Under alternative F, there would be long-term minor adverse impacts to floodplains due to the construction or expansion of 10 surfaced and 2 un-surfaced parking areas in the floodplain.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to floodplains would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>

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<b>Federally Listed Threatened or Endangered Species</b>						
<b>Piping Plover</b>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, impacts to piping plover from resource management activities (primarily as a result of surveys and field activities) would be long-term minor to moderate adverse. Although the management of the species would provide a certain level of benefit, the manner in which buffers would be established, along with the need to adjust buffers frequently would have an adverse impact on the species.</p> <p>Overall, impacts to piping plover from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term moderate to major adverse as much of the Seashore would be open to recreational use, with an increased potential that piping plover could be impacted due to disturbance from ORV use and other recreational activities. Lack of a permit system for education and law enforcement, no night-driving restrictions, and lack of compliance with pet leash requirements would contribute substantially to these adverse impacts.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to piping plover would be long-term moderate to major adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, impacts under alternative B from resource management activities (primarily resulting from the effects of surveying and field activities) would be long-term minor to moderate beneficial. Buffers for piping plover would be larger and provide more protection compared to buffers under alternative A. Minor adverse impacts would occur from human presence during monitoring activities, but on the whole the establishment of prenesting closures early in the breeding season, monitoring activities, education and outreach efforts, and establishment of prescribed buffers would provide long-term minor to moderate beneficial impacts to the species.</p> <p>Overall, impacts to piping plover from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term moderate adverse. While some buffers would be increased in an attempt to separate recreational uses from piping plover, access to these buffers would be provided at all Seashore beaches and could result in intentional or un-intentional non-compliance (i.e., when signs are washed out), which would impact the species. Adverse impacts would also occur due to limited pre-nesting protection outside of the points and spits, and the potential for protective buffers to be reduced during critical life stages of plover chicks.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to piping plover would be long-term moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall impacts under alternative C from resources management activities (primarily resulting from the effects of surveying and field activities) would be long-term moderate beneficial. As with alternative B, minor adverse impacts would occur from human presence during monitoring activities, but on the whole the establishment of SMAs early in the breeding season, monitoring activities, and establishment of prescribed buffers would provide long-term moderate beneficial impacts to the species.</p> <p>Overall, impacts to piping plover from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse. The establishment of the SMAs which proactively reduce or preclude recreational use early in the breeding season, ORV permit requirements, seasonal night-driving restrictions, and pet and other recreational activity restrictions would all provide benefits in terms of species protection. As there would still be some opportunity for recreational use to come in contact with and impact piping plovers, and the fact that alternative C would still include some level of pedestrian access to three SMAs during a portion of the breeding season, impacts to piping plover would be long-term minor adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to piping plover would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall impacts to piping plover from resources management activities (primarily resulting from the effects of surveying and field activities) under alternative D would be long-term moderate to major beneficial. As with all species management activities, minor adverse impacts would occur from human presence during monitoring, but on the whole the implementation of SMAs that prohibit ORV use year-round and only allow pedestrian access outside of the breeding season, establishment of prenesting closures early in the breeding season, monitoring activities, and establishment of prescribed buffers would provide long-term moderate to major beneficial impacts to the species.</p> <p>Overall impacts from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse. The establishment of SMAs that are closed to ORVs year-round and managed under ML1 procedures during the breeding season would proactively preclude recreational use early in the breeding season from large areas of the Seashore, which would reduce the potential for disturbance to plovers during critical life stages. This protection, combined with ORV permit requirements, seasonal night-driving restriction, and pet and other recreational activities restrictions would all provide benefits in terms of species protection. As there would still be some opportunity for recreational use to come in contact with and impact the species, impacts would be long-term minor adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to piping plover would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall impacts under alternative E from resources management activities (primarily resulting from the effects of surveying and field activities) would be long-term moderate beneficial. As with all species management activities, minor adverse impacts would occur from human presence during monitoring activities, but on the whole the establishment of SMAs early in the breeding season, monitoring activities, and establishment of prescribed buffers would provide long-term moderate beneficial impacts to the species.</p> <p>Overall impacts from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor to moderate adverse. The establishment of the SMAs which proactively reduce or preclude recreational use early in the breeding season, ORV permit requirements, and pet and other recreational activity restrictions would all provide benefits in terms of species protection. Although there would be benefits from seasonal night-driving restrictions, they would not be as great as other action alternatives because driving after dark (until 10:00 p.m.) would still be occurring, even during seasonal restrictions. The potential for adverse impacts would exist from the park-and-stay option under this alternative. As there would still be some opportunity for recreational use to come in contact with and impact the species, impacts would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to piping plover would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall impacts under alternative F from resources management activities (primarily resulting from the effects of surveying and field activities) would be long-term moderate beneficial for piping plovers. As with all species management activities, minor adverse impacts would occur from human presence during monitoring activities, but on the whole the establishment of SMAs early in the breeding season, monitoring activities, and establishment of prescribed buffers would provide long-term moderate beneficial impacts to the species. Long-term moderate benefits to nonbreeding populations would be greater under alternative F than under alternatives C or E because of the addition of four miles of nonbreeding areas closed to ORV use.</p> <p>Overall impacts under alternative F from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor to moderate adverse. The establishment of the SMAs which proactively reduce or preclude recreational use early in the breeding season, ORV permit requirements, and pet and other recreational activity restrictions would all provide benefits in terms of species protection. As alternative F would provide for more flexible access to various areas of the Seashore, the potential for disturbance to piping plover is increased over alternatives C and D, resulting in long-term minor to moderate adverse impacts.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to piping plover would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>

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<b>Sea Turtles</b>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, resource management activities under alternative A would have long-term moderate benefits due to the protection provided to sea turtles.</p> <p>Overall, ORV and other recreational use under alternative A would result in long-term major adverse impacts to sea turtles due to the amount of Seashore available for ORV use and the lack of night-driving restrictions.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to sea turtles would be long-term moderate to major adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, resource management activities under alternative B would have long-term moderate benefits due to the protection provided to sea turtles.</p> <p>Although additional restrictions and regulations would help lessen some of the impacts from ORV use and other recreational activities, overall, the impacts would be long-term moderate adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to sea turtles would be long-term moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, resource management activities under alternative C would have long-term moderate to major beneficial impacts due to the added protection provided to sea turtles.</p> <p>Restrictions placed on nonessential, recreational ORV use under alternative C would provide substantial long-term benefits to sea turtles, including seasonal night-driving restrictions that close the beach before dark (7:00 p.m.), some adverse impacts would still occur in areas where their use is allowed. Therefore, overall, ORV and other recreational use would have long-term minor adverse impacts.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to sea turtles would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, similar to alternative C, management activities under alternative D would result in long-term moderate to major beneficial impacts.</p> <p>While restrictions placed on ORV use under alternative D would provide long-term moderate to major beneficial impacts, similar to alternative C, there would still be some level of adverse impact to sea turtles in areas where ORV use and beach fires are allowed; therefore, overall impacts from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to sea turtles would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Management activities would provide long-term moderate to major beneficial impacts to sea turtles.</p> <p>While additional restrictions and regulations would help lessen some of the impacts from ORVs and other recreational activities, overall, the impacts would be long-term moderate adverse from allowing night driving until 10:00 p.m., and due to increased recreational access throughout the Seashore during the turtle nesting season, including a park-and-stay option for ORVs at selected points and spits.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to sea turtles would be long-term moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, resource management activities would provide long-term moderate to major beneficial impacts to sea turtles.</p> <p>While additional restrictions and regulations would help lessen some of the impacts from ORV and other recreational use, overall, the impacts would be long-term minor to moderate adverse, due to the earlier re-opening of SMAs (after shorebird breeding activity has concluded), resulting in increased recreational access throughout the Seashore during the sea turtle nesting season.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to sea turtles would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>
<b>Seabeach Amaranth</b>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, because of the protection of seabeach amaranth habitat and plants under alternative A, resources management actions would have long-term minor to moderate beneficial impacts, if plants are detected.</p> <p>Overall, ORV and other recreational use under alternative A would have long-term moderate adverse impacts as plants may go undetected and therefore unprotected from this use.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to seabeach amaranth would be long-term moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, because of the protection of seabeach amaranth habitat and plants under alternative B, resources management actions would have long-term minor to moderate beneficial impacts, if plants are detected.</p> <p>Overall, ORV and other recreational use would result in long-term moderate adverse impacts. Slightly more protection would be provided for the species when compared to alternative A, due to shorebird breeding closures being larger and lasting longer.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative to seabeach amaranth would be long-term moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, because of the protection of seabeach amaranth habitat and plants under alternative C, resources management actions would have long-term moderate beneficial impacts to seabeach amaranth as the establishment of SMAs and increased protection for the species would occur compared to alternatives A and B.</p> <p>Overall, ORV and other recreational use would result in long-term minor to moderate adverse impacts. Because of the establishment of SMAs and protection of approximately 41 miles of beach, the adverse impacts under alternative C would likely be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to seabeach amaranth would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, because of the increased level of protection of seabeach amaranth habitat and plants under alternative D, when compared to other alternatives, resources management actions would have long-term moderate to major beneficial impacts.</p> <p>Overall ORV and other recreational use would result in long-term minor adverse impacts. Because the establishment of SMAs closed to ORVs year-round would protect approximately 41 miles of beach, the adverse impacts under alternative D would be greatly reduced compared to the other alternatives and result in long-term minor adverse impacts.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to seabeach amaranth would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, because of the protection of seabeach amaranth habitat and plants under alternative E, resources management actions would have long-term minor to moderate beneficial impacts as ORV access to more areas would be allowed during the germination period, than under action alternatives C and D.</p> <p>Overall, ORV and other recreational use would have long-term minor to moderate adverse impacts to seabeach amaranth due to the increased level of recreational access allowed when compared to the other action alternatives.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to seabeach amaranth would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, because of the protection of seabeach amaranth habitat and plants under alternative F, resources management actions would have long-term minor to moderate beneficial impacts as ORV access to more areas would be allowed during the germination period, than under action alternatives C and D.</p> <p>Overall, ORV and other recreational use would be similar to those under alternative E and result in long-term minor to moderate adverse impacts to seabeach amaranth.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to seabeach amaranth would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>

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<b>State-Listed and Special Status Species</b>						
<b>American Oystercatcher</b>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts would be long-term minor to moderate adverse as surveying and lack of specific pre-nesting closures for this species may miss early nesters. Piping plover pre-nesting closures, which could be utilized by this species as well, would not protect a number of American oystercatcher nest sites used in recent years. Also, buffer distances based on bird behavior may not provide adequate protection for the species.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Establishment of piping plover pre-nesting closures earlier in the season that could be used by oystercatchers and establishment of larger, pre-set buffers would result in long-term beneficial impacts to American oystercatchers. While there would still be minor adverse impacts related to human disturbance during field activities, resources management activities on the whole would provide information and result in actions that would be beneficial to the species.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Implementation of 10 SMAs that are closed to ORVs during the breeding season would provide a proactive resource closure early in the breeding season. Establishment of pre-nesting closures earlier in the season and establishment of larger, pre-set buffers would result in long-term beneficial impacts to American oystercatchers. While there would still be minor adverse impacts related to human disturbance during field activities, on the whole, resources management activities would provide information that would enable the implementation of adaptive management initiatives and contribute to better management. These activities would result in long-term beneficial impacts to the American oystercatcher, greater than those provided under alternative B.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Establishment of 10 SMAs that are closed to ORVs year-round and all managed under ML1 procedures during the breeding season would provide long-term benefits to breeding and wintering American oystercatchers, greater than those under alternative C. Additional benefits would be provided from surveying and closures outside of these established SMAs, as well as from the education and outreach provided. These surveying and field activities would provide information that would enable the implementation of adaptive management initiatives and contribute to better management. These activities would result in long-term beneficial impacts to this species, greater than those provided under alternative B.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Implementation of 10 SMAs, 7 of which are closed to ORVs during the breeding season, would provide a proactive resource closure early in the breeding season. Establishment of pre-nesting closures earlier in the season and establishment of larger, pre-set buffers would result in long-term beneficial impacts to American oystercatchers. While there would still be minor adverse impacts from human disturbance during field activities, resources management activities on the whole would provide information that would enable the implementation of adaptive management initiatives and contribute to better management. These activities would result in long-term beneficial impacts to this species, greater than those provided under alternative B.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Implementation of 10 SMAs, 8 of which are closed to ORVs (with 1 open to pedestrians only) during the breeding season, would provide a proactive resource closure early in the breeding season. Establishment of pre-nesting closures through SMAs earlier in the season and establishment of larger, pre-set buffers would result in long-term beneficial impacts to American oystercatchers. While there would still be minor adverse impacts related to human disturbance during field activities, resources management activities on the whole would provide information that would enable the implementation of adaptive management initiatives and contribute to better management. These activities would result in long-term beneficial impacts to the species, greater than those provided under alternative B.</p>

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<p><b>American Oystercatcher (continued)</b></p>	<p>Impacts would be long-term moderate to major adverse as buffers that adjust frequently based on bird behavior are more subject to non-compliance. The lack of designated non-ORV areas, a permitting system, carrying capacity, or seasonal night-driving restrictions, and allowing pets at the Seashore during breeding season would contribute to these adverse impacts.</p>	<p>Establishment of pre-nesting closures for piping plover earlier in the season, implementation of larger, more immediate buffers, longer lasting closures for American oystercatchers once breeding behavior occurs, and night-driving restrictions would benefit the American oystercatcher. However, recreational use, with no carrying capacity, would still occur in the vicinity of this species and the established buffers may not be large enough to afford adequate protection. Because the birds would not be under constant observation, disturbance may go undetected and implementation of adequate buffers may be delayed in some nesting locations. Compliance with closures may not be absolute, resulting in minor to moderate adverse impacts if non-compliance occurs. Further adverse impacts would result from allowing pets in the Seashore during breeding season, resulting in the possibility of non-compliance with these regulations. Because of these factors, impacts to American oystercatchers from ORV use and other recreational activities would be long term moderate adverse.</p>	<p>Implementation of a permit system with an educational component, larger buffer sizes, seasonal night-driving restrictions, establishment of breeding and nonbreeding SMAs, and not allowing pets in SMAs would benefit the American oystercatcher. SMAs would provide a proactive method of limiting recreational uses early in the breeding season, and limit the potential for impacts to state-listed/special status species. However, alternative C does manage three SMAs under ML2 procedures, which provide for some level of pedestrian access into these areas, and introduces the potential for impacts to the species. Although there would be some protection measures in place, ORV and other recreational use could still have impacts to the species, resulting in long-term minor to moderate adverse impacts to American oystercatchers.</p>	<p>Providing large SMAs that are closed year-round to ORVs and closed to pedestrians during the breeding season would provide large undisturbed areas for both breeding and nonbreeding oystercatchers. Further benefits would be provided by seasonal night-driving restrictions, the establishment of a permit system with an educational component, and prohibition of pets in SMAs year-round. With these measures in place, impacts to American oystercatchers from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse, as the chance of disturbance still exists, but would be lower than that under the other alternatives evaluated.</p>	<p>Implementation of a permit system with an educational component, larger buffer sizes, seasonal night-driving restrictions, restrictions on pets in SMAs, and establishment of breeding and nonbreeding SMAs would benefit the American oystercatcher. SMAs would provide a proactive method of limiting recreational uses early in the breeding season, and limit the potential for impacts to state-listed/special status species. However, alternative E does allow an ORV access corridor at three SMAs managed under ML2 procedures during the breeding season (more than the other action alternatives), which provide for some level of pedestrian or ORV access into these areas, which introduces the potential for impacts to the species. Although there would be some protection measures in place, recreational use could still result in long-term minor to moderate adverse impacts to American oystercatchers.</p>	<p>Implementation of a permit system with an educational component, larger buffer sizes, seasonal night-driving restrictions, prohibition of pets in the Seashore during breeding season including in front of the villages, and establishment of breeding and nonbreeding SMAs would benefit the American oystercatcher. SMAs would provide a proactive method of limiting recreational uses early in the breeding season, and limit the potential for impacts to state-listed/special status species. However, alternative F does manage three SMAs under ML2 procedures, which provide for some level of pedestrian or ORV access into these areas, which introduces the potential for impacts to the species. As there would be some protection measures in place, but recreational use could still have impacts to the species, impacts to American oystercatchers would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>

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<b>Colonial Waterbirds</b>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts would be long-term minor to moderate adverse as no pre-nesting closures would be established for colonial waterbirds. Some species, such as terns and black skimmers, may be able to utilize the pre-nesting closures established for piping plovers; however, those pre-nesting areas would not protect a number of colonial waterbird nest sites used in recent years. Also, buffer distances based on bird behavior may not provide adequate protection for the species.</p> <p>Impacts would be long-term moderate to major adverse as buffers may not be adequate to protect the species, and disturbance from recreational uses is more likely. The lack of designated non-ORV areas, a permitting system, carrying capacity, or seasonal night-driving restrictions, and allowing pets in the vicinity of breeding birds would also contribute to adverse impacts.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Establishment of piping plover pre-nesting closures earlier in the season that would be used by some colonial waterbird species and establishment of larger, pre-set buffers would result in long-term beneficial impacts to colonial waterbirds. While there would still be minor adverse impacts related to human disturbance during field activities, resources management activities on the whole would provide information and result in actions that would be beneficial to the species.</p> <p>Impacts to colonial waterbirds from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term moderate adverse, for the same reasons as American oystercatchers under this alternative.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts to colonial waterbirds from surveying and field activities would be long-term beneficial, for the same reasons as discussed above for American oystercatchers.</p> <p>Impacts to colonial waterbirds from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor to moderate adverse, for the same reasons as American oystercatchers under this alternative.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts to colonial waterbirds from surveying and field activities would be long-term beneficial, for the same reasons as discussed above for American oystercatchers.</p> <p>Impacts to colonial waterbirds from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse, for the same reasons as American oystercatchers under this alternative.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts to colonial waterbirds from resources management activities would be long-term beneficial, for the same reasons as discussed above for American oystercatchers.</p> <p>Impacts to colonial waterbirds from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor to moderate adverse, for the same reasons as those discussed above for American oystercatchers under this alternative.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts to colonial waterbirds from resources management activities would be long-term beneficial, for the same reasons as discussed above for American oystercatchers.</p> <p>Impacts to colonial waterbirds from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor to moderate adverse, for the same reasons as American oystercatchers under this alternative, in addition to having some SMAs under ML2 procedures that open earlier than under other action alternatives.</p>

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<b>Wilson's Plover</b>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts would be long-term minor adverse as the habitat for this species would be well surveyed during piping plover surveys and this species would be able to take advantage of management measures for piping plover as their breeding seasons and habitat requirements are similar. Also, buffer distances based on bird behavior may not provide adequate protection for the species. Some benefits may occur from incidental management of Wilson's plover during piping plover management activities, both during breeding and nonbreeding seasons.</p> <p>Impacts would be long-term moderate to major adverse as no specific management would be provided for this species, although they could utilize buffers and closures established for piping plover. The lack of designated non-ORV areas, a permitting system, carrying capacity, or seasonal night-driving restrictions, and allowing pets at the Seashore during breeding season would contribute to these adverse impacts.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Establishment of piping plover pre-nesting closures earlier in the season that could be used by other species and establishment of larger, pre-set buffers for piping plover, used by Wilson's plover, would result in long-term beneficial impacts to Wilson's plover. While there would still be minor adverse impacts related to human disturbance during field activities, species surveying and field activities on the whole would provide information and result in actions that would be beneficial to the species.</p> <p>Impacts to Wilson's plover from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor to moderate adverse. Although this species would face the same adverse impacts as American oystercatchers and colonial waterbirds, it also tends to utilize closures for piping plover and would therefore be provided slightly more protection than other state-listed/special status species.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts to Wilson's plover from surveying and field activities would be long-term beneficial, for the same reasons as discussed above for American oystercatchers, with slightly greater benefits as this species would also benefit from the management measures applied to piping plover.</p> <p>Impacts to Wilson's plover from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse, less than those under alternative A and B. Although this species would face the same adverse impacts as American oystercatchers and colonial waterbirds, it also tends to utilize the closures for piping plover, in addition to the specific buffers/closures provided for the species, and would therefore be provided slightly more protection than other state-listed/special status species.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts to Wilson's plover from surveying and field activities would be long-term beneficial, for the same reasons as discussed above for American oystercatchers, with slightly greater benefits as this species would also benefit from the management measures applied to piping plover.</p> <p>Impacts to Wilson's plover from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term negligible to minor adverse. Although this species would face the same adverse impacts as American oystercatchers and colonial waterbirds, it also tends to utilize closures for piping plover, in addition to the buffers/closures provided specifically for this species, and would therefore be provided slightly more protection than other state-listed/special status species.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts to Wilson's plover from resources management activities would be long-term beneficial, for the same reasons as discussed above for American oystercatchers, with slightly greater benefits as this species would also benefit from the management measures applied to piping plover.</p> <p>Impacts to Wilson's plover from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse. Although this species would face the same adverse impacts as American oystercatchers and colonial waterbirds, it also tends to utilize closures for piping plover, in addition to the buffers/closures provided specifically for this species, and would therefore be provided slightly more protection than other state-listed/special status species.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts to Wilson's plover from resources management activities would be long-term beneficial, for the same reasons as discussed above for American oystercatchers, with slightly greater benefits as this species would also benefit from the management measures applied to piping plover.</p> <p>Impacts to Wilson's plover from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse. Although this species would face the same adverse impacts as American oystercatchers and colonial waterbirds, it also tends to utilize closures for piping plover, in addition to the buffers/closures provided specifically for this species, and would therefore be provided slightly more protection than other state-listed/special status species.</p>

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<b>Red Knot</b>	<b>Impacts of the Alternative Common to All:</b> Many of the surveying and field activities for other species would occur outside of the primary time when the red knot is a resident at the Seashore. Therefore, any impacts to this species from surveying and field activities for other species would be long-term negligible adverse.					
	<p>Impacts to nonbreeding red knot would be long-term minor adverse as their prime foraging habitat (ocean shoreline) would not be afforded protection by nonbreeding closures, although the ability of this species to use wintering closures for piping plover at inlets and Cape Point would result in some benefit.</p> <p>Impacts would be long-term moderate adverse as no specific management would be provided for this species especially during a key life stage of wintering. The lack of designated non-ORV areas, a permitting system, or night-driving restrictions when red knots are at the Seashore, and allowing pets at the Seashore during the migrating/nonbreeding season would contribute to these adverse impacts. Impacts to red knots would be lower than other species as they would not be subject to impacts during their breeding cycle and their use of the Seashore corresponds to times of lower visitation.</p>	<p>The red knot would benefit from extended breeding season closures for other species and from wintering closures for piping plover at the inlets and Cape Point. Impacts to nonbreeding red knot would be long-term minor adverse as their prime foraging habitat (ocean shoreline) would not be afforded protection by nonbreeding closures.</p> <p>Impacts to red knots from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term moderate adverse as no specific management would be provided for this species especially during a key life stage of wintering. Although this species may benefit from longer lasting breeding season closures for other species and from winter closures established for piping plovers, the lack of designated non-ORV areas, a year-round permitting system, no night-driving restrictions when red knots are at the Seashore, and allowing pets at the Seashore during the migrating / nonbreeding season would contribute to these adverse impacts.</p>	<p>Nonbreeding Shorebird SMAs and the establishment of non-ORV areas along the ocean shoreline would result in beneficial impacts to nonbreeding red knots. However, the ability of this species to use wintering closures that have been established for piping plover as well as the establishment of SMAs, some of which are closed to ORVs year-round, would be beneficial to those red knot that happen to use those areas, and overall result in long-term beneficial impacts to the species when compared to alternatives A and B.</p> <p>Impacts to red knot from recreation and other activities would be long-term minor adverse due to the additional nonbreeding closures provided under alternative C that offer this wintering species further protection.</p>	<p>Nonbreeding Shorebird SMAs and the establishment of non-ORV areas along the ocean shoreline would result in beneficial impacts to nonbreeding red knots. However, the ability of this species to use wintering closures that have been established for piping plover as well as the establishment of SMAs, all of which are closed to ORVs year-round would result in long-term beneficial impacts to red knot when compared to all other alternatives.</p> <p>Impacts to red knot from recreation and other activities would be long-term negligible to minor adverse due to the additional nonbreeding closures provided under alternative D that offer this wintering species further protection, as well as the large year-round SMAs that would offer further protection during red knot wintering.</p>	<p>The ability of this species to use wintering closures that have been established for piping plover as well as the establishment of SMAs, some of which are closed year-round, would be beneficial, and overall result in long-term beneficial impacts to the species when compared to alternatives A and B.</p> <p>Impacts to red knot from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse due to the additional nonbreeding closures provided under alternative E that offer this wintering species further protection; however, there would be greater adverse impacts than under alternatives D or F due to fewer miles of shoreline being closed to ORVs under alternative E during the nonbreeding season.</p>	<p>The ability of this species to use wintering closures that have been established for piping plover as well as the establishment of SMAs, some of which are closed year-round, would be beneficial, and overall result in long-term beneficial impacts to the species when compared to alternatives A and B. Additional benefits, when compared to the other alternatives, would be realized under alternative F from “floating” nonbreeding closures that would provide four additional miles of protection during this time.</p> <p>Impacts to red knot from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse due to the additional nonbreeding closures provided under alternative F that offer this wintering species further protection, including four miles of “floating” closures.</p>
All State-Listed and Special Status Species	<p><b>Cumulative Impacts (for all State-listed and Special Status Species):</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to state-listed and special status species would be long-term moderate to major adverse.</p>	<p><b>Cumulative Impacts (for all State-listed and Special Status Species):</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to state-listed and special status species would be long-term moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Cumulative Impacts (for all State-listed and Special Status Species):</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to state-listed and special status species would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Cumulative Impacts (for all State-listed and Special Status Species):</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to state-listed and special status species would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Cumulative Impacts (for all State-listed and Special Status Species):</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to state-listed and special status species would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Cumulative Impacts (for all State-listed and Special Status Species):</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to state-listed and special status species would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>

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Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat - Other Bird Species	<b>Impacts of the Alternative Common to All:</b> Many of the surveying and field activities for protected species would occur outside of the primary time when other bird species are residents at the Seashore. Therefore, any impacts to other bird species from surveying and field activities for protected species would be long-term negligible adverse.					
	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts to other bird species from resources management activities would be long-term minor adverse as nonbreeding closures would not be species-specific and therefore would not protect important habitat areas such as the ocean shoreline.</p> <p>Impacts of ORV and other recreational use would be long-term moderate adverse as no specific management would be provided for this species, increasing the possibility of disturbance to the species from recreational use. The lack of designated non-ORV areas, a permitting system, or night-driving restrictions during the time period when these species are present at the Seashore, and allowing ORVs, people and pets at the Seashore during the nonbreeding season in the vicinity of these species would contribute to adverse impacts.</p> <p>There would be no construction and therefore no construction-related to disturbance to other bird species under the no-action alternatives.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (other bird species) would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>Impacts to other bird species would be long-term minor adverse as nonbreeding closures would not be species-specific and therefore would not protect important habitat areas such as the ocean shoreline when many of these species are wintering or migrating.</p> <p>Impacts of ORV and other recreational use would be long-term moderate adverse as no specific management would be provided for this species, increasing the possibility of disturbance to the species from recreational use. The lack of designated non-ORV areas, allowing night driving during the time period when other bird species are present at the Seashore, and allowing ORVs, people and pets at the Seashore during the nonbreeding season in the vicinity of these species would contribute to adverse impacts.</p> <p>There would be no construction and therefore no construction-related to disturbance to other bird species under the no-action alternatives.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (other bird species) would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>The establishment of both breeding and nonbreeding SMAs, some of which are closed to ORVs year-round, would result in long-term beneficial impacts to other bird species when compared to alternatives A and B.</p> <p>Impacts from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse due to the additional nonbreeding closures provided under alternative C that offer wintering species further protection.</p> <p>Impacts to other bird species from construction activities would be short-term negligible to minor and adverse due to temporary displacement during construction activities.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (other bird species) would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>The establishment of SMAs, which would be closed to ORVs year-round, would result in long-term beneficial impacts to other bird species. Beneficial impacts would be greater than those under alternative C due to the amount of mileage closed to ORV use year-round.</p> <p>ORV and other recreational use would result in long term negligible to minor adverse impacts to other bird species due to the amount of beach closed to ORV use and the additional nonbreeding closures that offer wintering species further protection.</p> <p>Impacts to other bird species from construction activities would be short-term negligible to minor and adverse due to temporary displacement during construction activities.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (other bird species) would be long-term negligible to minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>The establishment of both breeding and nonbreeding SMAs, some of which are closed to ORVs year-round, would result in long-term beneficial impacts to other bird species.</p> <p>ORV and other recreational use would result in long term minor adverse impacts to other bird species due to additional nonbreeding closures provided under alternative E that offer species further protection, with greater adverse impacts than under alternatives D or F from fewer miles of shoreline being closed to ORVs under alternative E during the nonbreeding season. Adverse impacts would be greater than those under alternatives C or D due to the increased level of recreational access provided under alternative E.</p> <p>Impacts to other bird species from construction activities would be short-term negligible to minor and adverse due to temporary displacement during construction activities.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (other bird species) would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b></p> <p>The establishment of both breeding and nonbreeding SMAs, some of which are closed to ORVs year-round, would result in long-term beneficial impacts to other bird species. Additional benefits, when compared to the other alternatives, would be realized under alternative F from “floating” nonbreeding closures that would provide four additional miles of protection during this time.</p> <p>Impacts to other bird species from ORV and other recreational use would be long-term minor adverse due to the additional nonbreeding closures provided under alternative F that offer wintering species further protection, including four miles of “floating” closures.</p> <p>Impacts to other bird species from construction activities would be short-term negligible to minor and adverse due to temporary displacement during construction activities.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b></p> <p>Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (other bird species) would be long-term minor adverse.</p>

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Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat - Invertebrates	<b>Impacts of the Alternative Common to All:</b> The use of vehicles to conduct resources management activities would result in long-term negligible adverse impacts to invertebrates due to the potential for mortality of individual invertebrate species.					
	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Recreational ORV use would result in long-term minor to moderate adverse impacts to invertebrate species primarily due to mortality arising from unlimited night driving in the intertidal and wrack areas.</p> <p>There would be no construction and therefore no construction-related to disturbance to invertebrates under the no-action alternatives.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (invertebrates) would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Recreational ORV use would result in long-term minor adverse impacts to invertebrate species resulting from the continued use of ORVs in invertebrate habitat. Impacts would be reduced when compared to alternative A due to limitations on ORV use at night and within the larger resources management closures under alternative B.</p> <p>There would be no construction and therefore no construction-related to disturbance to invertebrates under the no-action alternatives.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (invertebrates) would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Recreational ORV use would result in long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts to invertebrate species resulting from the continued use of ORVs in invertebrate habitat. Impacts would be reduced due to longer seasonal restrictions on vehicle use under alternative C.</p> <p>Short term negligible adverse impacts to invertebrates would occur due to temporary displacement during construction activities.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (invertebrates) would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Recreational ORV use would result in long-term negligible adverse impacts to invertebrate species resulting from the continued use of ORVs in invertebrate habitat. Impacts to invertebrates would be reduced under this alternative due to the amount of beach closed to recreational use.</p> <p>Short term negligible adverse impacts to invertebrates would occur due to temporary displacement during construction activities.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (invertebrates) would be long-term negligible to minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Recreational ORV use would result in long-term minor adverse impacts to invertebrate species resulting from the continued use of ORVs in invertebrate habitat. Adverse impacts would be greater than those under alternatives C or D due to the increased level of recreational access provided under alternative E.</p> <p>Short term negligible adverse impacts to invertebrates would occur due to temporary displacement during construction activities.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (invertebrates) would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Recreational ORV use would result in long-term minor adverse impacts to invertebrate species resulting from the continued use of ORVs in invertebrate habitat.</p> <p>Short term negligible adverse impacts to invertebrates would occur due to temporary displacement during construction activities.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat (invertebrates) would be long-term minor adverse.</p>

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<b>Soundscapes</b>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, minor to moderate impacts, depending upon vehicle speed, would occur along the beaches where most routes are established for ORV driving. While impacts over the majority of the Seashore beaches would be long-term adverse due to greater numbers of designated year-round ORV routes, impacts would be short-term adverse in the areas in front of village beaches, which are only opened seasonally to ORV use. Short-term adverse impacts would also result during other closure periods along any ORV route for resource protection, safety or administrative purposes. During closures, the potential for increased vehicle concentrations along remaining open ORV routes would increase the frequency of occurrence of single ORV pass-by events. Impacts would remain minor to moderate adverse, depending on vehicle speed, but vehicle noise may dominate the natural soundscape more frequently. In general, as ORV use would continue intermittently over the life of the management plan, vehicle noise would be a recurring, long-term minor to moderate adverse impact in all areas of the Seashore beaches open to ORV driving. Additionally, as closure periods, which have the potential to provide short-term benefits, would be implemented throughout the life of the management plan, long-term benefits would arise. As noise from ORV use would add at least 3 decibels (A-weighted scale) (dBA) to the natural ambient sound levels within the Seashore, wildlife would also experience adverse impacts.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to soundscapes would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> As described under alternative A, impacts to the natural soundscape within the Seashore would be minor to moderate, depending upon vehicle speed. Due to the slower speed limits proposed during the peak season when more visitors would be using beach areas, the potential for a greater reduction in visitor awareness would occur under this alternative as compared to alternative A. On beaches where ORV routes are open year-round, including the additional year-round route established under alternative B, impacts would be long-term and adverse, but would potentially become short-term adverse during closure periods. In locations where ORV routes are specifically designated as “seasonal,” impacts would be short-term adverse. As with alternative A, closures of any kind present the potential for increased concentrations of vehicles in areas where ORV routes remain open. In such areas, the potential for vehicle noise to more frequently dominate the sound energy would arise. Aside from the short-term benefits that would occur in areas undergoing closure periods of any kind, additional short-term benefits may occur under alternative B as a result of regulations imposed to seasonally eliminate night driving. Impacts to wildlife would be similar to those under alternative A.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to soundscapes would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> As described under alternative B, impacts to the natural soundscape resulting from a 15 mph speed limit would be minor adverse. However, the potential for wildlife and visitor use impacts, as well as the extent of such impacts, may be reduced due to seasonal restrictions and designated non-ORV areas. Like under alternatives A and B, impacts would be long-term adverse for year-round ORV areas, potentially becoming short-term subject to temporary resource closures. As seasonal closures would limit ORV activity to less than a year, short-term adverse impacts would result. Closures of any kind, depending on the closure length, would also provide short-term benefits by providing noise-free periods. Under alternative C there would be areas of negligible impacts due to designated non-ORV areas and greater opportunities for natural sounds to prevail due to longer seasonal closure periods as compared to alternatives A and B. Conversely, fewer open ORV areas and longer seasonal closure periods also present the potential for greater concentrations of ORVs in areas with open ORV routes, thereby increasing the frequency of vehicle noise in such areas. Construction activities would be localized and of short duration and would be minor adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to soundscapes would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> As described under alternative A, impacts to the natural soundscape resulting from a 15 mph speed limit would be minor adverse. However, the potential for impacts to wildlife and visitor use from ORV noise would be the least under this alternative, as compared to the no-action and all action alternatives due to larger areas of designated non-ORV use. During resource closures, short-term benefits would occur due to the lack of ORV noise and would also be long-term benefits since closures would recur throughout the life of the management plan. The key difference between this alternative and all other alternatives is that alternative D has the greatest extent of long-term negligible adverse impacts resulting from the number of year-round non-ORV route designations. Alternative D also has the greatest extent of long-term benefits to the natural soundscape, visitors and wildlife due to these non-ORV areas. However, this alternative would also present the greatest potential for increased ORV pass-by events that dominate the sound energy in designated ORV areas due to the fewer number of open ORV areas in which vehicles may drive. Like under alternative C, construction related noise impacts from ramp improvements and the construction of a new ramp would be minor adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to soundscapes would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> As described under alternative A, impacts to the natural soundscape on the beaches resulting from a 15 mph speed limit would be minor adverse. However, like under alternative C, the potential for wildlife and visitor use impacts, as well as the extent of such impacts, may be reduced due to seasonal restrictions and designated non-ORV areas. On the other hand, pass-through zones and earlier openings along seasonal routes under this alternative would potentially provide fewer “noise-free” periods for visitors and wildlife. Vehicle diversions to other open routes may not be as frequent under this alternative as under alternative C or D given that some seasonal routes are open longer than others, ORV pass-through zones would be established in certain areas, and water taxi service would be available as an alternative option to driving. Although under this alternative, more ramps would be constructed, as compared to alternatives C and D, construction-related impacts would remain minor adverse due to the localized nature and short duration of the activities.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts under alternative E would be long-term minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> As described under alternative A, impacts to the natural soundscape on the beaches resulting from a 15 mph speed limit would be minor adverse. Like under alternatives C and E, the potential for wildlife and visitor use impacts from ORV noise may be reduced due to seasonal closures and designated non-ORV areas. However, seasonal routes would re-open earlier than under alternatives C and E, thereby creating shorter “noise-free” periods. Vehicle diversions to other open routes may not be as frequent under this alternative as under the other action alternatives given that some seasonal routes are open longer than others. Although under this alternative, more ramps would be constructed, as compared to alternatives C and D, construction-related impacts would remain minor adverse due to the localized nature and short duration of the activities.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts under alternative F would be long-term minor adverse.</p>

Impact Topic	Alternative A: No Action—Continuation of Management under the Interim Strategy	Alternative B: No Action—Continuation of Management under Consent Decree	Alternative C: Seasonal Management	Alternative D: Increased Predictability and Simplified Management	Alternative E: Variable Access and Maximum Management	Alternative F: Management Based on Advisory Committee Input
<b>Visitor Use and Experience</b>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Those looking for an experience at the Seashore that includes ORV use would have long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts as some areas would be closed for resource protection, but alternative A would provide the most ORV access of any alternative. Should there be extensive resource closures in a given year, the potential for long-term moderate impacts exists. Those looking for a non-ORV experience at the Seashore would experience long-term moderate adverse impacts as alternative A does not provide for a specific separation of uses or designation of non-ORV areas. Since night driving would be permitted under alternative A, there would be short-term minor adverse impacts to night skies.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts would be long-term negligible to minor adverse for ORV users and long-term, moderate, and adverse for non-ORV users.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Those looking for an experience at the Seashore that includes ORV use would have long-term moderate to major adverse impacts as one or more spit or point would be closed for an extended period of time during the breeding season. During the remainder of the year, there would be negligible to minor adverse impacts to ORV users as limited areas would be closed for resource protection. Those looking for a non-ORV experience at the Seashore would experience long-term moderate adverse impacts as alternative B does not provide for a specific separation of uses outside of seasonal ORV closures of village beaches and no non-ORV areas would be designated. Since night driving would be seasonally restricted under alternative B, there would be long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts to night skies, with long-term beneficial impacts during times of seasonal night-driving restrictions.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts would be long-term moderate to major adverse for ORV users, and long-term moderate adverse for non-ORV users.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Those looking for an experience at the Seashore that includes ORV use would have long-term moderate to major adverse impacts as the designation of non-ORV areas and the establishment of the SMAs would seasonally preclude ORV use from some areas of the Seashore that are popular ORV use areas. While three areas managed under ML2 procedures would have pedestrian access corridors, no ORV corridors would be provided in the SMAs, resulting in greater impacts to ORV users. Those looking for a non-ORV experience at the Seashore would experience long-term benefits as alternative C provides for pedestrian corridors in three SMAs under ML2 procedures, as well as providing additional non-ORV areas. Since night driving would be seasonally restricted under alternative C, there would be long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts to night skies, with long-term beneficial impacts during times of seasonal night-driving restrictions.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts would be long-term moderate to major adverse to ORV users, and long-term beneficial for non-ORV users.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Those looking for an experience at the Seashore that includes ORV use would have long-term major adverse impacts as all SMAs and village beaches would be designated as non-ORV areas year-round, which would prohibit the use of ORV in many popular visitor use areas. Those looking for a non-ORV experience at the Seashore would experience long-term benefits as alternative D provides for many designated non-ORV areas throughout the Seashore, although pedestrian access would be prohibited in the SMAs during the breeding season. Since night driving would be seasonally restricted under alternative D, there would be long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts to night skies, with long-term beneficial impacts during times of seasonal night-driving restrictions.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts would be long-term major and adverse to ORV users, and long-term beneficial for non-ORV users.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Those looking for an experience at the Seashore that includes ORV use would have long-term moderate adverse impacts as the designation of non-ORV areas and the establishment of the SMAs would preclude ORV use, either seasonally or year-round, from some areas of the Seashore that are popular visitor use areas. Three SMAs under ML2 management procedures would provide an ORV pass-through corridor at the start of the breeding season, subject to resource closures, lessening the impacts to this user group. Additional recreational opportunities such as park-and-stay and SCV camping would provide long-term benefits.</p> <p>Those looking for a non-ORV experience at the Seashore would experience long-term benefits as alternative E provides for designated year-round non-ORV use areas, as well as seasonal ORV closures in areas such as village beaches and some of the SMAs. Since night driving would be seasonally restricted, but allowed until 10:00 p.m., under alternative E, there would be long-term moderate adverse impacts to night skies due to the hours of night driving allowed, implementation of park-and-stay opportunities, with long-term beneficial impacts during times of seasonal night-driving restrictions.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts would be long-term moderate to major adverse to ORV users, and long-term beneficial for non-ORV users.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Those looking for an experience at the Seashore that includes ORV use would have long-term moderate adverse impacts as the designation of non-ORV areas and the establishment of SMAs would preclude ORV use, either seasonally or year-round, from some areas of the Seashore that are popular visitor use areas. Three SMAs under ML2 management procedures would provide either an ORV or pedestrian access corridor at the start of the breeding season, subject to resource closures, lessening the impacts to this user group. Additional access would be provided to the soundside under this alternative as well. Those looking for a non-ORV experience at the Seashore would experience long-term benefits as alternative F provides for year-round non-ORV areas, as well as seasonal ORV closures in areas such as village beaches and some SMAs, and a new pedestrian trail. Since night driving would be seasonally restricted under alternative F, there would be long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts to night skies, with long-term beneficial impacts during times of seasonal night-driving restrictions.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts would be long-term moderate to major and adverse to ORV users, and long-term beneficial for other non-ORV users.</p>

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<p><b>Socioeconomic Impacts</b></p>	<p><b>Impact of the Alternative to the Region of Influence:</b> The region of influence (ROI) is expected to experience long-term negligible adverse impacts or long-term beneficial impacts depending on the extent of beach closures. The Seashore villages (the villages bordering the Seashore) would experience the majority of the impacts with the potential for larger short-term impacts to specific businesses that cater most directly to ORV users.</p> <p><b>Impact of the Alternative to Small Business:</b> Small businesses may experience long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts or long-term beneficial impacts depending on the extent of beach closures. Based on visitation statistics in 2007, there is a greater likelihood of negligible impacts.</p> <p><b>Impacts of the Alternative to Preservation Values:</b> As a result of the long-term minor to major impacts to protected species, impacts to preservation values would be long-term moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impact of the Alternative to the Region of Influence:</b> The ROI is expected to experience long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts depending on the extent of beach closures. The Seashore villages would experience the majority of the impacts with the potential for larger short-term impacts to specific businesses that cater most directly to ORV users. Based on the current visitation statistics, the probability of negligible impacts is greater than the probability of minor adverse impacts.</p> <p><b>Impact of the Alternative to Small Business:</b> Small businesses may experience long-term negligible to moderate adverse impacts depending on the extent of beach closures. Based on current visitation statistics there is a greater likelihood of negligible or minor impacts.</p> <p><b>Impacts of the Alternative to Preservation Values:</b> As a result of the long-term minor to moderate impacts to protected species, and addition of protection from seasonal night-driving restrictions, impacts to preservation values would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impact of the Alternative to the Region of Influence:</b> The ROI is expected to experience long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts. The Seashore villages would experience the majority of the impacts with the potential for larger short-term impacts to specific businesses that cater most directly to ORV users. Efforts to improve access through pedestrian corridors, when compared to the no-action alternatives, and changes to access ramps would decrease the impacts on businesses that rely on visitors using the beaches affected by the new corridors and ramps relative to the no-action alternatives. However, the longer ORV closures in the fall months may reduce visitation under alternative C relative to the no-action alternatives and make the mid to high impact scenarios more likely.</p> <p><b>Impact of the Alternative to Small Business:</b> Small businesses may experience long-term negligible to moderate adverse impacts, with a greater likelihood of adverse impacts relative to the no-action alternatives due to increased fall ORV closures.</p> <p><b>Impacts of the Alternative to Preservation Values:</b> Adverse impacts to preservation values would be less under alternative C, relative to alternatives A and B, and overall impacts to preservation values would be long-term minor adverse with long-term beneficial impacts from the measures taken to protect sensitive species at the Seashore.</p>	<p><b>Impact of the Alternative to the Region of Influence:</b> The ROI is expected to experience long-term minor adverse impacts. The Seashore villages would experience the majority of the impacts with the potential for larger short-term impacts to specific businesses that cater most directly to ORV users. Compared to the other alternatives, alternative D provides the least access to the beach by ORV's resulting in larger projected adverse impacts.</p> <p><b>Impact of the Alternative to Small Business:</b> Small businesses may experience long-term moderate to major adverse impacts. The adverse impacts are projected to be larger relative to the other alternatives because of the limits on beach access for ORVs.</p> <p><b>Impacts of the Alternative to Preservation Values:</b> Adverse impacts to preservation values would be less under alternative D, relative to alternatives A and B, and the overall impact to preservation values would be long-term minor adverse, with the closure of sensitive areas to ORVs under alternative D year-round substantially increasing the probability of long-term beneficial impacts relative to all other alternatives.</p>	<p><b>Impact of the Alternative to the Region of Influence:</b> The ROI is expected to experience long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts. Based on the visitation statistics for 2008, the probability of negligible impacts is greater than the probability of minor adverse impacts. The Seashore villages would experience the majority of the impacts. Like alternative B, alternative E provides for more ORV access and the impacts would likely be on the lower end of the range compared to alternatives C and D.</p> <p><b>Impact of the Alternative to Small Business:</b> Small businesses may experience long-term negligible to moderate adverse impacts, with a likelihood of adverse impacts in the lower end of the range relative to alternatives C and D due to increased ORV access. closures.</p> <p><b>Impacts of the Alternative to Preservation Values:</b> Adverse impacts to preservation values would be less under alternative E, relative to alternatives A and B, and overall preservation values would be long-term minor to moderate adverse with long-term beneficial impacts from the measures taken by the Seashore to protect threatened and endangered, as well as special status, species.</p>	<p><b>Impact of the Alternative to the Region of Influence:</b> The ROI is expected to experience long-term negligible to minor adverse impacts. The Seashore villages would experience the majority of the impacts with the potential for larger short-term impacts to specific businesses that cater most directly to ORV users. Alternative F provides less access by ORVs to the beach compared to the no-action alternatives, especially in SMAs, and has more restricted SMAs than alternative E. However, some popular ORV areas open sooner in the late summer than alternative E and allow for an ORV corridor instead of just pass-through access at Cape Point and South Point. There are more vehicle-free areas for pedestrians because of the closures, as well as increased parking. Compared to the no-action alternatives, these measures could increase visitation and increase the probability that revenue impacts would be at the low end of the estimated range rather than the high end.</p> <p><b>Impact of the Alternative to Small Business:</b> Small businesses would experience long-term negligible to moderate adverse impacts. The extra efforts to increase ORV access and pedestrian access should increase the probability that the impacts are on the low rather than high end of the range.</p> <p><b>Impacts of the Alternative to Preservation Values:</b> Adverse impacts to preservation values would be less under alternative F, relative to alternatives A and B, and overall preservation values would be long-term minor to moderate adverse, with long-term beneficial impacts from the measures taken by the Seashore to protect threatened and endangered, as well as special status, species.</p>

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<b>Socioeconomic Impacts (continued)</b>	<b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative Impacts for socioeconomics to the ROI would be long-term negligible to minor adverse or beneficial, depending on national economic conditions.	<b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative Impacts for socioeconomics to the ROI would be long-term negligible to minor adverse or beneficial, depending on national economic conditions.	<b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative Impacts for socioeconomics to the ROI would be long-term negligible to minor adverse or beneficial, depending on national economic conditions.	<b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative Impacts for socioeconomics to the ROI would be long-term negligible to minor adverse or beneficial, depending on national economic conditions.	<b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative Impacts for socioeconomics to the ROI would be long-term negligible to minor adverse or beneficial, depending on national economic conditions.	<b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative Impacts for socioeconomics to the ROI would be long-term negligible to minor adverse or beneficial, depending on national economic conditions.
<b>Seashore Operations and Management</b>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, each division could accomplish within current funding, without shifting priorities or having a noticeable change in operations, resulting in long-term negligible adverse impacts to all areas of Seashore operations.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to Seashore Operations and Management would be long-term negligible adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, there would be an increase in duties related to ORV management for staff in the park management/administration, visitor protection, and resources management divisions. Although these staff could accomplish these duties within existing budgets, it would require them to re-prioritize and re-allocate staff, and would not leave staff with adequate time to address other needs at the park outside of ORV management, resulting in long-term moderate adverse impacts. Staff in facility management and Interpretation would not see a large change in operations and would be able to accomplish ORV related tasks within current funding, without shifting priorities or having a noticeable change in operations, resulting in long-term negligible adverse impacts to these two divisions. Overall, impacts to Seashore operations would be long-term moderate adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to Seashore Operations and Management would be long-term negligible to minor adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, there would be an increase in duties related to ORV management for staff in the park management/administration, resources management, facility management divisions that could result in some re-prioritization of work, but would not be expected to impact overall duties resulting in long-term minor adverse impacts. In the visitor protection division, staff could accomplish their duties with existing budgets, but it would require them to re-prioritize and re-allocate staff, and would not leave staff with adequate time to address other needs at the park outside of ORV management, resulting in long-term moderate adverse impacts. Staff in the interpretation division would not see a large change in operations and would be able to accomplish ORV related tasks within current funding, without shifting priorities or having a noticeable change in operations, resulting in long-term negligible adverse impacts Overall, impacts to Seashore operations would be long-term, minor to moderate (but mostly minor) adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to Seashore Operations and Management would be long-term, minor to moderate, adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, there would long-term negligible adverse impacts to all divisions as each division would be expected to execute their duties from existing, or expected, funding sources, without having to re-prioritize staff. These impacts are due, in part, to the expected cost recovery under the proposed permit program. Overall impacts to Seashore operations would be long-term negligible adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to Seashore Operations and Management would be long-term negligible adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, there would be an increase in duties related to ORV management for staff in the facility management division that could result in some re-prioritization of work, but would not be expected to impact overall duties resulting in long-term minor adverse impacts. In the park management/administration division, the increase in ORV related responsibilities would be similar, but slightly greater with long-term minor to moderate adverse impacts. In the visitor protection and resources management divisions, staff could accomplish their duties with existing budgets, but it would require them to re-prioritize and re-allocate staff, and would not leave staff with adequate time to address other needs at the park outside of ORV management, resulting in long-term moderate adverse impacts. Staff in the Interpretation division would not see a large change in operations and would be able to accomplish ORV related tasks within current funding, without shifting priorities or having a noticeable change in operations, resulting in long-term negligible adverse impacts. Overall impacts to Seashore operations would be long-term moderate adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to Seashore Operations and Management would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>	<p><b>Impacts of the Alternative:</b> Overall, there would be an increase in duties related to ORV management for staff in the facility management and park management/administration divisions that could result in some re-prioritization of work, but would not be expected to impact overall duties resulting in long-term minor adverse impacts. In the visitor protection and resources management divisions, staff could accomplish their duties with existing budgets, but it would require them to re-prioritize and re-allocate staff, and would not leave staff with adequate time to address other needs at the park outside of ORV management, resulting in long-term moderate adverse impacts. Staff in the interpretation division would not see a large change in operations and would be able to accomplish ORV related tasks within current funding, without shifting priorities or having a noticeable change in operations, resulting in long-term negligible adverse impacts. Overall impacts to Seashore operations would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p> <p><b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Cumulative impacts to Seashore Operations and Management would be long-term minor to moderate adverse.</p>