



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Outer Banks Group:

· Cape Hatteras National
Seashore
· Fort Raleigh National
Historic Site
· Wright Brothers National
Memorial

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Two Vandalism Incidents at Ramp 23 Result in Expansion of Shorebird Protection Area

Two new vandalism incidents have resulted in expanded buffers at the Ramp 23 shorebird protection area in Cape Hatteras National Seashore. The first incident, which occurred between the evening hours of Sunday, August 16 and dawn on Monday, August 17, 2009, was investigated by NPS law enforcement personnel and evaluated by park management. The second incident occurred during the early morning hours of Tuesday, August 18, 2009.

The recent vandalism represents the third time the Ramp 23 protection area has been vandalized. Accordingly, and by the terms of the court ordered consent decree, the buffers will be expanded by 600 meters. The bird protection area now extends north to the Salvo annual village closure and to the south for an additional 600 meters for these consecutive deliberate violations.

Investigation revealed that the barricades closing the ramp to ORV use were removed and one set of vehicle tracks entered the beach via Ramp 23. Once on the beach, the vehicle turned north and continued until coming to the first turtle closure where the vehicle turned around and exited the beach on Ramp 23. A second incident occurred in the same location during the early morning hours of Tuesday, August 18, 2009.

The court ordered consent decree mandates that if a confirmed deliberate act that disturbs or harasses wildlife or vandalizes fencing, nests, or plants occurs, NPS shall automatically expand the buffer by 50 meters on the first offense, 100 meters on the second, and 500 meters on the third. As a result of the violations, the buffers are being expanded at Ramp 23. The expansion will remain in effect until shorebirds have finished using the respective areas for breeding activities. The nearest available ORV and pedestrian access point is currently located at Ramp 27.

NPS law enforcement personnel continue to investigate these two incidents. If anyone has information about any of these violations, please call Dare Community Crime Line at 252-473-3111. Destruction of government property and entering a resource closure are federal criminal violations, each subject up to a \$5,000.00 fine and up to six months imprisonment.

For up-to-date information on currently open or closed areas, check the Cape Hatteras National Seashore's Google Earth maps at: <http://www.nps.gov/caha/planyourvisit/googleearthmap.htm>

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