



# COUNTY OF DARE

P.O. Box 1000, Manteo, North Carolina 27954

## *ISSUED IN CONJUNCTION WITH HYDE COUNTY, NC*

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[www.PreserveBeachAccess.org](http://www.PreserveBeachAccess.org)

## **No Consensus Reached Regarding Beach Access at Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area**

The committee tasked with assisting the National Park Service in the development of a long term management plan governing beach access in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area has failed to reach consensus. The committee, which includes 29 members selected by the National Park Service and representing various stakeholder organizations, has been meeting routinely since 2007 to reach unanimous consensus for a preferred alternative to manage the country's first National Seashore, the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area, located on North Carolina's Outer Banks.

"We are disappointed and concerned," said Warren Judge, Chairman of the Dare County Board of Commissioners and a member of the negotiating committee. "People from all over America have a tradition of enjoying these beaches with their friends and family. We will continue to work to preserve access here and at National Parks and Recreational Areas across the country so that future generations will be able to share this heritage with their children and grandchildren."

Larry Hardham, President of the Cape Hatteras Anglers Club, also served as a member of the committee working to reach consensus. Hardham, expressing his frustration with the proceedings said, "It became clear that consensus would be difficult because of a few who were unwilling to compromise in any way. The lawsuit filed by the Audubon Society and Defenders of Wildlife, represented by the Southern Environmental Law Center, started the destruction of good faith negotiations." These sentiments were echoed by Hyde County Commissioner Eugene Ballance, a commercial fisherman and member of the committee.

After the final committee meeting, Warren Judge looked to the future. "Although we are very disappointed with the outcome of the negotiated rulemaking," he said, "We cannot give up. Our residents, visitors and business community all depend on open and accessible beaches." Judge added, "We urge people everywhere to stay involved in the issue through websites such as [PreserveBeachAccess.org](http://PreserveBeachAccess.org)."

Management of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area is currently under a consent decree resulting from a lawsuit filed by the Audubon Society and Defenders of Wildlife, represented by the Southern Environmental Law Center. The consent decree remains in effect until 2011 when the long term management plan becomes effective, unless legislation introduced in Congress returns control of the area to the Interim Management Plan of the National Park Service (House Bill 718).