

An Invitation to join ...

Fight for Cape Lookout

You are invited to join a growing group of citizens, businesses, non-profit organizations, institutions and local, regional and state government entities who are united in their opposition to an off-road vehicle (ORV) plan proposed by the National Park Service (NPS) that is not in the best interests of Cape Lookout National Seashore (Seashore) and the economic future of Carteret County, the State and its citizens.

Fight for Cape Lookout is dedicated to fighting an ill-conceived plan that would not only significantly limit public access to and use of the Seashore, but will also result in significant economic impacts to the local and state economy with little to no corresponding benefits to the natural resources or values of the Seashore.

In addition to providing outstanding natural resources, the Seashore provides a wide variety of recreational activities, including, among others, beach recreation, fishing, boating, camping, shell collecting, hunting, hiking, and photography. For many visitors, ORV use and beach driving, which date back to the 1930s and predates authorization of the Seashore, provide access to these activities.

ORV use is currently regulated by NPS pursuant to an interim management plan, which includes, among things, designated ORV routes and pedestrian-only areas, closure of the Seashore to ORVs from January 1 to March 15, miscellaneous vehicle and operator requirements, and special management measures to protect the Seashore's natural resources (*i.e.*, recreational and ORV buffers and closures).

NPS has recognized that the interim management plan is working: it protects the Seashore's natural resources for the enjoyment of present and future generations and provides access to visitors to experience these outstanding natural resources and recreational opportunities of the Seashore.

Despite this recognition, NPS has proposed a preferred alternative that would include a number of additional unnecessary and burdensome restrictions on ORV use at the Seashore, which would result in significant adverse impacts to the local and state economy and would significantly limit public access to and use of the Seashore.

It is a bad plan that needs to be changed. All citizens are urged to voice their opposition by commenting on the ORV Plan by **September 19, 2014** and contacting their state and federal representatives after the comment period closes.

To learn more, go to

or email *Fight for Cape Lookout* at

Why the Coalition opposes the ORV Plan that will hurt the Seashore and Carteret County:

In 1966, the Seashore was authorized "to preserve for public use and enjoyment an area in the State of North Carolina possessing outstanding natural and recreational values." Thus, in managing the Seashore, NPS has a dual mandate: (i) protect the natural resources and values of the Seashore; and (ii) provide access to the public to use and enjoy the Seashore. As recognized by NPS, the existing interim management plan meets these objectives.

Despite this recognition, NPS has proposed a number of unnecessary and burdensome restrictions on ORV use at the Seashore that will significantly limit access to and use of the Seashore. These proposed restrictions include, among others: ORV permit limits and fees; the potential to prohibit transporting ATVs/UTVs to the Seashore by private vessel; prohibiting ORV use at nighttime; new and expanded pedestrian-only areas; extending the closure of the Seashore to ORVs in the winter; prohibiting ATVs/UTVs in the summer and prohibiting certain types of ATVs/UTVs year-round; and restricting vehicle and trailer length.

These proposed restrictions are not consistent with NPS's mandate and will cause significant economic impacts to Carteret County and the State. As recognized by NPS, these restrictions have the potential to shut down one or more of the ferry operators serving the Seashore limiting access to and use of the Seashore. NPS determined that a 30% reduction in visitation (the mid-value assumed by NPS) would result in economic losses ranging from \$1,464,000 to nearly \$3,000,000. Much of these losses would be concentrated in the local communities serving the Seashore.

Notwithstanding the potential economic impacts that could result from NPS's proposed ORV restrictions, visitation to the Seashore continues to decline and economic losses continue to increase. In 2010, 534,981 people visited the Seashore, and the Seashore had an economic impact of \$37.3 million and supported 598 jobs; in 2013, visitation was down to 416,596 visitors with an economic impact of \$17.6 million and 204 jobs. Looking back to 2007, the numbers are worse. Comparing the data for 2007 and 2013 and depending on the formula used, the economic loss to Carteret County is between \$72.1 million (286 jobs) and \$135.7 million (694 jobs). This trend continues (July 2014 visitation is down 25% compared to 2013) and will only be made worse if the additional ORV restrictions are adopted.

Fight for Cape Lookout opposes approval of the ORV Plan as written:

- Because the current plan and regulations in place protect the natural resources and values of the Seashore and provide access to the public to use and enjoy the Seashore.
- Because the proposed ORV Plan will significantly limit access and use of the Seashore with little to no benefits to the natural resources and values of the Seashore.
- Because the ORV Plan will adversely affect the economy and well-being of Carteret County by reducing visitation to the Seashore and impacting the communities serving the Seashore.

What you can do to oppose the ORV Plan?

- Join *Fight for Cape Lookout*.

There is no cost to join. You are only asked to voice your concerns with and opposition to limiting access to the Seashore and hurting Carteret County's economy. The Coalition is accepting donations to fund its opposition of this ill-conceived plan. Visit [www.fightforcape.com](#) to join and donate!

- Submit written comments on the ORV Plan by September 19, 2014. Comments may be submitted electronically at: [www.fightforcape.com](#)
- Contact your state and federal representatives to voice your concerns.

Senator Richard Burr
217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202)224-3154

Representative Walter Jones
2333 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515
(202)225-3415

Senator Kay R. Hagan
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202)224-6342

Governor Pat McCrory
Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301
(919)814-2000

North Carolina General Assembly

- Encourage friends, co-workers, neighbors and family to oppose the ORV Plan joining the Coalition's efforts, submitting written comments to the National Park Service, and contacting your state and federal representatives.

To learn more, go to [www.fightforcape.com](#)

or email *Fight for Cape Lookout* at fightforcape@fightforcape.com

1. **Number of people in your party?** _____. **Miles from home.** _____.

2. **How many times** per year do use an off-road vehicle on Cape Lookout?
___ First time ___ 0 ___ 1 to 3 ___ 4 or more

3. What is your **primary purpose** of your visit to Cape Lookout?
___ Bird Watching ___ Fishing ___ Relaxing on the beach
___ Camping ___ Off-road driving

4. How much do you and your **family usually spend** as part of your trip to Cape Lookout? Include lodging, dining, ferry, fuel, bait, tackle and other expenses.
___ \$100 or less ___ \$100 to \$500 ___ \$500 to \$1000 ___ More than \$1000

5. As you may know, the National Park Service has proposed new restrictions for off road vehicles on Cape Lookout National Seashore. Below is a summary of these restrictions. Please identify any affect these restrictions would have on your **likelihood of future visits** to Cape Lookout.

A. Charge a **permit fee** of \$150 annually or \$80 for 10 days
___ No visits ___ Fewer visits ___ No affect ___ More visits

B. **Limit number of permits** to 5,500 per year for both islands
___ No visits ___ Fewer visits ___ No affect ___ More visits

C. **Limit use of ATVs and UTVs** to a few months (eventually prohibit their use)
___ No visits ___ Fewer visits ___ No affect ___ More visits

D. **Prohibit nighttime driving** from May 1st thru September 14th
___ No visits ___ Fewer visits ___ No affect ___ More visits

E. **Prohibit vehicles that exceed 180-inch wheelbase**
___ No visits ___ Fewer visits ___ No affect ___ More visits

F. **Close sections of the beach** to vehicles for pedestrians only
___ No visits ___ Fewer visits ___ No affect ___ More visits

6. Which of the above-proposed changes will have a **negative impact** on you visiting Cape Lookout? (Check as many as needed)

___ A. ___ B. ___ C. ___ D. ___ E. ___ F. ___ None of the above

Thank you for your interest and participation in this survey. Please add any additional comments below or on the reverse side.