



Since 1712

HYDE COUNTY

NORTH CAROLINA

RESOLUTION

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 4094, "PRESERVING ACCESS OF CAPE HATTERAS NATIONAL SEASHORE RECREATIONAL AREA" ACT

WHEREAS, The Cape Hatteras National Seashore was established as America's first National Seashore in 1937 to create recreation for everyone, promote jobs after the Great Depression and preserve the pristine beaches of the barrier islands of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the National Park Service did not publish a beach management plan, as required in 1972 and thus operated on an "Interim Management Plan," (formerly adopted in 2007), which was carefully developed by NPS and contained public input and an Environmental Assessment; and

WHEREAS, federal lawsuits by special interest environmental groups led to the Interim Management Plan being replaced by the restrictive Consent Decree in 2008. Intended to protect species of shorebirds, the Consent Decree resulted in closure of the most popular spots, in the busiest times of the season; and

WHEREAS, the Consent Decree has now been replaced with a much more strict ORV Final Rule, which will cost the public an unreasonable amount of money to drive on the beach while still closing access to popular areas; and

WHEREAS, local businesses operating in the Seashore have reported declines in excess of 40 percent in revenue since the Consent Decree was enacted in 2008. In one of the poorest counties in the state, Hyde County relies heavily on tourism dollars generated by visitors to the Seashore. If access is further restricted, it will create a serious economic setback for residents and businesses owners of Hyde County; and

WHEREAS, costs to implement the management strategies have created a burden on taxpayers that has exceeded one million dollars since the Consent Decree was implemented in 2008. With new measures in place, enforcement costs are expected to rise; and

WHEREAS, rules were put in place to protect species of shorebirds that are not listed as endangered and principal threats to these species, including predation and weather, were not factored in to the new rules; and

WHEREAS, evidence has shown access restrictions under the Consent Decree did little or nothing to help the said species; and

WHEREAS, only 749 parking spaces, including 25 handicapped, exist on Cape Hatteras National Seashore to serve more than two million visitors. This was not a planning oversight on behalf of NPS, rather part of the unique design of a network of ten access ramps to provide safe and direct path to the beach without disturbing the dune system. Lack of free and open access to the beach creates hardships for the majority of visitors to the Seashore, namely the elderly and disabled; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 4094 will restore access to Cape Hatteras National Seashore as it was during the Interim Management Plan, thus providing access for citizens, reasonable protection for wildlife on the Seashore and fulfilling the mission of America's first National Seashore: to create jobs, provide recreation and protect the pristine beaches of Ocracoke and Hatteras Island.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Hyde County Board of Commissioners support H.R. 4094, "The Preserving Access to Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area Act" to provide fair access to beaches of Hyde and Dare counties, thus providing citizen recreation, promoting local jobs and protecting the natural balance of our beach ecosystem.

Adopted this the 16th day of April, 2012 in Hyde County, North Carolina by the Hyde County Board of Commissioners.



Sharon P. Spencer, Chair
Hyde County Board of Commissioners

Attested by:



Mazie S. Smith, Clerk to the Board
Hyde County Board of Commissioners

