

## Beach Access

The 2008 court ordered settlement of a request to enjoin ORV use at Cape Hatteras (Consent Decree) has resulted in significant reductions in the amount beach available to visitors--ORV and pedestrian alike. If you are planning on visiting Cape Hatteras during the period of March 15 through the end of October, be prepared for beach closures that change from day to day. We have tracked the closed areas during 2008 and 2009. This data "may" help you get a feel for which beaches are likely to be closed during the upcoming bird and turtle nesting season. Simply click on your area of interest--Hatteras Island, Oregon Inlet, or Ocracoke Island. Note, you will need to use the zoom control on your browser to increase the size of the image. Detailed descriptions of current closures can be found by viewing NPS Access Information. Keep in mind that all bird closures extend to the water--that is, you may not walk on the sand in front of bird closures without risking a fine. Read on for more information on beach access. The Cape Hatteras Anglers Club is dedicated to maintaining open beaches, as well as a clean beach, good sportsmanship and consideration for others. As demonstrated by the above attempt to enjoin ORV use, beach access is not a given and can be negatively impacted by a variety of factors, including the following: Beach users who fail to act responsibly provide individuals and agencies who would like to close or limit access to our beaches the ammunition needed to achieve their goal. Click here for links to current beach use rules & regulations and for suggestions as to how you can help minimize beach user conflicts. Please do your part to help keep our beaches open. The failure of the National Park Service to reopen or adjust resource/safety closures in a timely fashion. In this regard, the National Park Service is responsible for maintaining beach ramps, opening temporary/seasonally closed beaches, and moving the markers for the 150 foot ORV corridor as beach conditions change. The National Park Service has over 70 miles of seashore to monitor with a limited number of local personnel. In fact, the personnel with the final say on scheduling maintenance and opening temporary/seasonal closures are located in Manteo, NC. The personnel located in Manteo are not always aware of maintenance or beach access issues. The best approach to addressing maintenance and beach access issues is to work with the National Park Service. The Cape Hatteras Anglers Club has developed a standing committee designed to serve as a conduit for advising the appropriate National Park Service personnel of maintenance and beach access issues. Click here for information on how to report ramp maintenance and beach access problems. The actions taken by a variety of individuals and agencies who have advocated everything from limiting access to closing our beaches entirely. Adhering to the beach use rules & regulations and treating other beach users with respect is our first line of defense against individuals and agencies who advocate closing or limiting access to our beaches. Some attempts to limit beach access, however, require a more direct approach. The request for injunction that resulted in the Consent Decree is one example of an unwarranted attempt to severely limit beach access. The current proposals for the required ORV rule is another example of a threat to beach access that must be met head on. The Outer Banks Preservation Association was formed for the express purpose of responding to attempts to limit access to our beaches. If it were not for the efforts of the volunteers who serve as officers and directors of the OBPA, our beaches would likely have been closed to all ORV traffic back in 2008. Furthermore, pedestrian use would be much more limited than it is at present. Please, click here for more information on responses to attempts to limit beach access and the status of beach access issues. Once you have reviewed the information, please do what you can to support the efforts of OBPA.