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## **Conservationists, Park Service, local and recreational interests reach agreement in principle to preserve wildlife and recreation opportunities on Hatteras**

*Parties expect to file consent decree next week*

*The three parties involved in the lawsuit to regulate beach driving along Cape Hatteras National Seashore have agreed in principle to a settlement of the case. Terms of the proposed consent decree can not be discussed. The parties are filing a joint motion in US District Court to continue the case until Wednesday, April 16 to allow members of the Defendant-Intervenors (Dare County Commissioners, Hyde County Commissioners, and the board of the Cape Hatteras Access Preservation Alliance) to vote on the proposed settlement.*

*The following are statements from attorneys representing the environmental interests in the case as well as those representing Dare County and recreational users of Cape Hatteras National Seashore.*

**Derb Carter, Southern Environmental Law Center:** “We are pleased to have all parties to the case at the negotiating table and in agreement in principle. We will continue to work to ensure that the natural resources and public enjoyment of Cape Hatteras National Seashore move forward hand in hand and look forward to filing a proposed consent decree next week.”

**Jason Rylander, Defenders of Wildlife:** “We’re pleased to have come to an agreement in principle with all three parties to this important issue. While we can not discuss the terms of the proposed settlement, we remain committed to preserving the wildlife along the Seashore while allowing for continued recreational access to this unique natural area.”

**Statement from Bobby Outten and Larry Libesman, attorneys for Defendant-Intervenors:** “Bobby Outten, Dare County Attorney and Larry Liebesman, Holland and Knight LLP, outside counsel for Defendant-Intervenors, are very pleased that the parties have reached agreement in principle and will recommend to intervenors that the settlement be approved as soon as possible next week. John Couch, President of the Outer Banks Preservation Association has indicated that he will recommend approval of the settlement to his Board as soon as possible.”

**Mike Murray, Superintendent, Cape Hatteras National Seashore:** “This is the best of all possible outcomes. I am very pleased all parties have reached an agreement in principle.”