



**Masonboro Island Reserve
Local Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, 16 March, 2011, 6-8 pm**

Attendance

<u>LAC Members</u>	<u>Affiliation/Interest</u>	<u>Present</u>
Ms. Jessica Blake	N.C. Coastal Land Trust	No
Mr. Richard Cecelski	Commercial User	Yes
Lieutenant Matt Payne	New Hanover County Sheriff's Department	Yes
Mr. Ted Wilgis	Non-profit/Education/NC Coastal Federation	No
Ms. Amanda Southwood-Williard	UNCW Biology Department	No
Mr. Rich Carpenter	Division of Marine Fisheries	Yes
Dr. Steve Everhart	Division of Coastal Management	Yes
Mr. William Raney	Community Member	Yes
Mr. Walker Golder	Non-profit/Audubon	No
Dr. Anthony Snider	UNCW EVS	No
<u>Others Present</u>		
Jason Dail	DCM, Southern Sites Stewardship and Education Specialist	
Hope Sutton	DCM, Stewardship Coordinator and Southern Sites Manager	
Sean Ahlum	Surfrider National, Recreational User	
Neal Andrew	Community Member, Recreational User	

Reserve Program Update – Hope Sutton

Rules review process

The objective of the Rules Review Process is to produce recommendations for updating the current rule language for the ten Reserve sites to make rules that are: clear and consistent for the public, effective for management of the sites, and enforceable by the appropriate agencies. The Reserve held two rules review workshops in January and one in February 2011. A third will

occur in March. The next steps are to draft rule language and submit to the Department for approval. Additional opportunities for LAC input, as well as general public input, will occur later in the process.

A document summarizing management topics under discussion as part of the rules review process was distributed. LAC members were invited to provide additional feedback after reading the document in further detail.

LAC procedures document

The document detailing operational procedures for the LACs has been completed based on input received from the LAC members following the fall meetings. The document will now go to the Department for final approval. After the document goes into effect, open positions will be announced so that interested parties can submit applications to be considered for appointment.

Site Update – Hope Sutton

Visitor count project

An effort to estimate the total annual visitation to the Reserve is underway. The Masonboro will serve as the pilot for this project. UNCW researchers are working with Reserve staff to develop a data collection and statistical analysis methodology appropriate to the Reserve sites.

Signage project

The Reserve's signage update project continues. A request for bids for "welcome" signs is going out very soon, with another request for informational signs to follow closely. Although these signs will contain only basic information regarding the sites and the program, they are a good first step in communicating with visitors regarding the purpose of the sites and appropriate use of the site.

ACE jetty repair

The Army Corps recently completed a repair to the shoreward end of the jetty at Masonboro Inlet. The wall was reinforced with rock on its south side. A creative solution to provide for revegetation of the area impacted by the heavy equipment was arranged involving a partnership between the Reserve and the NC Botanical Garden. The contractor made a donation to the Garden to provide for them to grow and plant several species of plants in the area using seeds banked from the island last season.

Pre-season preparations

Preparations are underway for the spring/summer season. A temporary staff person has been hired to assist with species of concern monitoring programs. Three seasonal staff will also be coming on starting June 1. Planning for the holiday weekends and the July Fourth holiday is underway but will be very similar to last year.

Member Roundtable and other comments

- Lt. Payne addressed the NHCS D marine patrol efforts underway. There will be a full time boat patrol this summer, meaning regular patrols through and around the Reserve. Further collaboration with other area agencies in a “task force” approach should increase effectiveness overall. New boats and new staff are part of this effort.
- Mr. Cecelski reminded all that his company has a standing invitation to support trash pickup efforts. Volunteers should be connected with him.
- Mr. Raney requested an update regarding red fox activity. Signs have been posted on the Reserve to notify the public regarding the presence and boldness of the foxes and to encourage visitors not to feed or approach the foxes. Funding constraints did not allow any removal efforts to be undertaken this season, so the focus for the nesting season will be on protection of sea turtle nests. Bird nesting will be monitored, but it is assumed that success will be low, as it was during the last two seasons.
- Mr. Ahlum suggested that more effort needs to be put into utilizing the community support demonstrated last season during the Masonboro.org July Fourth trash removal/education effort and at the fundraiser in September. The focus of the fundraiser this season will be raising the seed funds to begin a stewardship endowment for the Reserve.

Meeting Follow Up

- Other 2011 meetings scheduled for May 18th, August 17th and November 7th.