

Currituck County Board of Commissioners

Dear Commissioners:

Over the past two years we have learned a lot about the air down ordinance and its enforceability, the traffic pattern shift, and the impact of the significant increase in day travel on the beach and behind the dunes in our neighborhoods.

We would like to propose a work session with the BOC in the fall to discuss these issues and proposed solutions with you in detail.

Our three main observations are as follows:

1. **People do not know the rules in the 4x4 area; and if they do, they are not following the rules.** This results in
  - a) Threats to the well-being and sustainability of the wild horses where keeping a distance of 50 feet is crucial to their well-being.
  - b) Strain and damage to vehicles from having to drive in soft sand that is torn up by inexperienced drivers or drivers not following the air down ordinances.
  - c) Non-compliance of fore shore clearance for emergency vehicles and other after hours drivers across the entire off road. This is a particularly difficult issue in the MP 14-17 area, where after 5 pm, visitors block the foreshore. At 5:00pm, visitors become belligerent with after-hours drivers and no enforcement presence is available on the beach to counteract or discourage such behavior. There are also examples of excessive speeding after 5pm.
  - d) Damage to roads behind the dunes where people (a) try to avoid the MP14-17 restrictions by going through Seagull and Swan Beach on Sandpiper; (b) must divert through the neighborhood due to high tides and/or the protruding Laughing Gull house; and (c) follow GPS directions that navigate visitors to the neighborhood roads and not the beach, at times sending them over private property. In the aftermath of significant rainfall events, traffic routing through the neighborhoods significantly damages the roads behind the dunes and sometimes personal property.
2. **Law enforcement officers are unable to patrol the entire beach due to the need to be both at the ramp, at MP 14 and MP 17.**

**3. The amount of traffic has increased dramatically over the past two years.** This is from several sources including (a) day trippers (coming from Virginia Beach, Kill Devil Hills, Nags Head, Duck, etc.), (b) an increase in the number of renters in Corolla and Carova, and (c) an increase in Currituck residents enjoying the off road. This will only get worse over time and next year's projections for vacation renters has increased for 2022 compared to 2021.

We would like to propose a work session with the Board in November, 2021. At this meeting we would like to propose the following topics for consideration:

- Establishment of an education and enforcement system with a dedicated facility on the land owned by Currituck County near the paved road behind the dunes.
- Discuss implementation of a document for rental companies to have renters sign having them attest that they know the rules of the 4x4 area and will assume responsibility for their group.
- Expansion of the current driving rules between MP 14-17 to include bicycles (motorized and non-motorized).
- Consideration of a capacity cap on day tripper traffic.
- A plan to limit traffic in all neighborhoods to help with the deterioration of the roads.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to our discussion with you.

John Howland, president

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Eva Cumming Casola, president

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