



# Foundation Document Overview

## Canaveral National Seashore

### Florida



#### Contact Information

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## Purpose



*CANAVERAL NATIONAL SEASHORE preserves natural, ecological, cultural, and scientific resources; provides rare uncrowded visitor experiences; and protects exceptional habitats along 24 miles of undeveloped barrier island, mainland, and Mosquito Lagoon, on Florida's Atlantic coastline.*



## Significance

Significance statements express why Canaveral National Seashore resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

- The 24 miles of beach within Canaveral National Seashore preserve the longest extent of undeveloped, pristine beach along the Florida Atlantic Coast and provide rare opportunities for uncrowded seashore recreation.
- Mosquito Lagoon is part of the larger Indian River Lagoon system, which is the most biologically diverse estuary in North America. This important water body is designated an estuary of national significance and an Outstanding Florida Water, and the portion of Mosquito Lagoon within the seashore has been nominated to be a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance.
- Canaveral National Seashore contains prime habitat that provides sanctuary for the largest number of sea turtle nests of any national park, numbering up to 8,000 nests, as well as more than a dozen federally listed threatened and endangered species.
- Canaveral National Seashore encompasses a transition zone between a variety of temperate and subtropical plant and animal species, found together only in east central Florida, and classic elements of subtropical dune and hammock plant communities.
- Canaveral National Seashore's archeological and cultural resources and cultural landscapes reflect the span of human history in the Florida peninsula from 2000 BC to the early 20th century. These resources include more than 180 identified American Indian middens and burial mounds, and historic buildings, structures, and ruins associated with five centuries of Florida exploration and settlement.

## Fundamental Resources and Values



Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **Undeveloped Character.**
- **Uncrowded Setting that Provides Opportunities for Public Enjoyment.**
- **Exemplary American Indian Archeological Sites.**
- **Representative Early Florida Settlement Sites and Structures.**
- **Barrier Island Ecosystem.**
- **Threatened and Endangered Species.**
- **Mosquito Lagoon Estuary and Ocean Waters.**



## Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- From ancient times to the present, this barrier island ecosystem has provided sanctuary and sustenance to humans of many cultures; traces of their existence, along with the water, wildlife, and plant life, provide visitors with a timeless view of old Florida. The seashore meets the need of visitors from all walks of life to enjoy an uncrowded coastal experience.



