

18. **RESOURCE PRESERVATION**--To protect fragile natural resources, the following limits have been placed on the number of vehicles allowed in the off-road zones at any one time: (1) For MARYLAND--145 vehicles and (2) in VIRGINIA--42 vehicles. When use reaches this limit in either State, access is restricted until the beach becomes less crowded. (Past experience has shown that overuse occurs mainly on summer weekends and holidays).

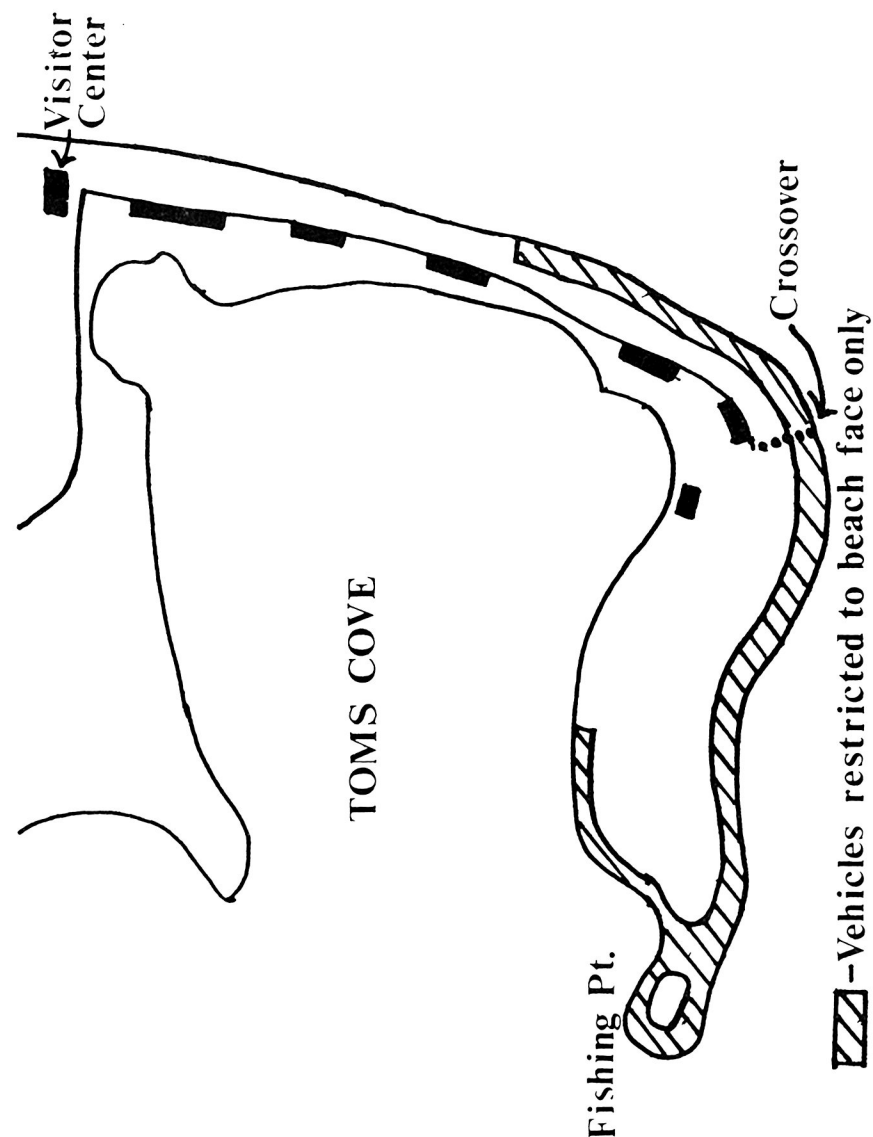
OFF-ROAD ZONE EMERGENCIES

Telephones (for use with credit cards or collect calls) are located in the MARYLAND off-road zone at the south end of the Big Fox Levels, at a point near the house at the north end of the Big Fox Levels, and at the self-contained area at the fifth dune crossing. Public pay phones in MARYLAND are located in the North Beach developed area. VIRGINIA pay phones are located in the Toms Cove developed area and refuge visitor contact station. Many members of the Assateague Mobile Sportfishermen's Association (AMSA) monitor channel 13 of their CB radios. National Park Service Rangers and Fish & Wildlife Service patrolmen do not monitor CB channels. Channel nine is the official channel for citizen band emergency broadcast.

AMSA is a local sportsmen's association which was formed to promote the camaraderie of surf-fishing via oversand vehicles. The license plates which you see are issued by the association to members; these plates are not part of the seashore oversand vehicle permit system and members of AMSA receive no special privileges.

SHOREBIRD NESTING STUDY

The Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge is conducting a study on the habitat destruction and predation on the beach nesting species of shorebirds. The study will be conducted throughout the shorebird nesting season, March - July, and will require that certain portions of the public recreation area in VIRGINIA be closed. These closed areas are bird nesting sites. They are closed to prevent human activity from stressing the nesting birds; a stressed bird may leave its eggs and young which could then die of exposure to heat. We need your cooperation. Please do not enter the closed nesting areas. For further information contact the Refuge Biologist, Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. (804) 336-6122.



OPERATION OF OVERSAND VEHICLES ON ASSATEAGUE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
ASSATEAGUE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE
ROUTE 2, BOX 294
BERLIN, MD. 21811

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
CHINCOTEAGUE NATIONAL WILDLIFE
REFUGE, P.O. BOX 62
CHINCOTEAGUE, VA. 23336



RULES OF THE ROAD FOR OVERSAND VEHICLES

Area regulations prohibit the operation of motor vehicles outside of established roads, parking areas, or designated routes of travel. Access to portions of the seashore beyond the surfaced roadway is limited to vehicles which are capable of traveling over sand.

Motorcycles are not permitted in the roadless sections of the seashore or on any portion of a beach oceanward of the primary dunes. For the purposes of this section, a motorcycle is defined as every motor vehicle having a seat for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground.

Former property owners with retained rights in Maryland will be given reasonable access to their holdings but must travel only over designated roads or marked sand routes.

The following rules of the road apply to oversand vehicles. Conviction may result in a fine and loss of the permit to use the seashore.

1. LICENSE AND PERMITS REQUIRED,--Oversand vehicles must bear a valid State license plate and be properly registered to operate over public highways before entering the off-road zones of the seashore.

Operators of oversand vehicles must possess a valid State driver's license. It is illegal to allow an unlicensed operator to drive your vehicle on the seashore. Both driver's license and evidence of registry must be displayed upon request.

A seashore oversand permit must also be purchased before entering the off-road zones. Permits are available on an annual basis only and are valid from April 15 of each year. The current cost is \$15 and the permit is valid in both Maryland and Virginia. A 7 day permit is available for \$10. An oversand permit is not transferable and shall be carried by the operator of the vehicle for which it has been issued. Operators without a permit will be subject to prosecution.

2. EQUIPMENT REQUIRED,--Before issuing an oversand permit, a vehicle will be checked for proper equipment. Oversand vehicles must carry a jack, shovel, tow rope or chain (minimum pulling strength recommended-6,000 lbs.), board or similar support for the jack, and low-pressure tire gauge at all times when traveling in the off-road zones. Minimum shovel accepted is the military trenching type. A long rope, strap, or chain and a standard size shovel are recommended.

3. LIMITATIONS ON VEHICLES IN THE OFF-ROAD ZONES--

	Per unit
Maximum vehicle length-----	26 ft.
Maximum vehicle width-----	8 ft.
Minimum vehicle ground clearance-----	7 in.
Gross vehicle weight rating may not exceed-----	10,000 lb.
Maximum number of axles-----	2
Maximum number of wheels (per axle)-----	2

4. TIRES,--On two-wheel-drive vehicles, in addition to the six items listed immediately above: Minimum width of tire tread contact on sand is 8 in. each wheel. Tires with regular mud-snow grip tread are not acceptable.

On four-wheel-drive vehicles, there are no tire size or design restrictions; however, tires with smooth tread design and good sidewall flexibility are recommended. Many operators reduce air pressure to 15 lbs. or less to provide more surface contact with sand. Air pumps are provided at no charge. They are located near the entrance to the oversand zones in Maryland and Virginia.

5. WHERE OVERSAND VEHICLES MAY BE OPERATED,--Use in MARYLAND is restricted to a portion of the beach and designated routes bayward of the primary dune in MARYLAND. These routes are marked by the posting of signs or cable and are shown on a map which is available on request. The oversand zone in MARYLAND extends from the end of the paved road to the MD./VA. State line, a distance of 12 miles. In VIRGINIA, use is restricted to the 3 southern-most miles of beach on Toms Cove Hook.

Keep off of sand dunes except at posted crossings.

Retained property rights in MARYLAND are protected by law and must be respected. Do not enter roadways posted "Authorized Vehicles Only."

6. SPEED,--Speed on any beach or designated oversand route may not exceed 25 miles per hour. When approaching or passing within 100 feet of a pedestrian or person on horseback, reduce speed to 15 miles per hour.

7. RIGHT-OF-WAY,--Pedestrians or horseback riders always have the right-of-way.

8. PASSING RULE,--When two vehicles approach from opposite directions in the same track, both operators must slow down and the operator with the ocean on his right should yield the track to allow the other vehicle to pass.

9. PASSENGER RULE,--Do not ride on the fender, hood, roof, or tailgate or in any other position outside of a moving vehicle. Vehicles may not be used to tow persons or any recreational device over sand or in the air or water.

10. PARKING RULE,--Never park on a beach or oversand route so as to interfere with the flow of traffic.

11. OVERNIGHT PARKING IN MARYLAND,--Oversand rigs may park on a beach overnight provided one member of each party is fishing at all times.

12. OVERNIGHT PARKING IN VIRGINIA,--The Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge is closed to general public access from 10 p.m. until 4 a.m. daily. Fishermen who obtain a special overnight beach fishing permit may park on the beach during this period provided everyone remains actively engaged in fishing. During winter the refuge is subject to increased hours of night closure.

13. CAMPING RULE,--Sleeping on a beach is prohibited at all times. In MARYLAND, camping by use of self-contained vehicle is restricted to designated locations only. Special regulations on the use of self-contained vehicles are posted at each location for the benefit of users, and copies may be obtained from the office of the Superintendent at request. Refer to the section under self-contained vehicles to see if yours qualifies.

14. USE AND QUALIFICATIONS OF TRAILERS AND SELF-CONTAINED VEHICLES,--Towed travel trailers or self-propelled camping vehicles must be equipped with a toilet and permanently installed waste storage tank capable of holding 2 days volume of material for all occupants before they can remain overnight in the off-road zone at designated self-contained camping areas in MARYLAND. Towed travel trailers are not allowed in the VIRGINIA off-road zone nor may they be parked on the beachface in the MARYLAND zone.

15. SANITATION,--Litter of any sort must be disposed of at established litter collection stations or removed from the area. Such materials may not be buried. Self-contained vehicles must use a designated sanitary dump station. Liquid wastes, such as dishwater or sink drainage, must be deposited in a holding tank or a dug seepage hole while using the self-contained area in MARYLAND. Such holes shall be covered on departing from the area. Ground discharge and drainage of such waste is prohibited elsewhere in the seashore.

16. DOGS, CATS, AND OTHER PETS,--Pets are prohibited in MARYLAND unless they are caged, crated, or on a leash at all times. They may not be released to run loose or exercise at any time. All pets are prohibited from entering any portion of the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, therefore they are prohibited from all portions of the island in VIRGINIA.

17. REPORTING ACCIDENTS,--Every accident involving property damage, injury, or death must be reported to the nearest seashore official as quickly as possible. When several vehicles are involved, all operators must stop, render aid, and exchange vital information needed to comply with State laws governing financial responsibility and accident reporting.