



Summer 2006

Fire Island Soundings

Mid-Summer Sunrise over Barrett Beach



Our Mission

The National Park Service is committed to preserving Fire Island National Seashore's cultural and natural resources, its values of maritime and American history, barrier island dynamics and ecology, biodiversity, museum collection objects, and wilderness.

The National Park Service is committed to providing access, a positive visitor experience, and recreational and educational opportunities to Fire Island National Seashore visitors in this natural and cultural setting close to densely populated urban and suburban areas.

While maintaining and exemplifying the policies of the National Park Service, Fire Island will work collaboratively with local partners and constituents to achieve excellence in all we do and create a shared stewardship philosophy for one of the nation's national treasures.

A Message from the Superintendent:

Shared Stewardship for the Future of a National Treasure: A New Plan for Fire Island National Seashore

Thank you for taking time to visit and explore Fire Island National Seashore, one of the 390 national treasures within the U.S. National Park System. Whether this is your first or one of many trips to Fire Island, I hope you will find your visit enjoyable, stimulating, relaxing and safe.

Fire Island National Seashore has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. With 26 miles of Atlantic Beach, you may find opportunities for both solitude and camaraderie. You may discover such gems as the Sunken Forest, a 250-year-old maritime forest tucked behind the dunes. Or you may explore the productive Watch Hill salt marsh. If you're a boater, you may enjoy one of our developed marinas at either Watch Hill or Sailors Haven, or you may simply moor and wade onto a secluded beach site on the bay. If you don't boat, you can still enjoy a relaxing ferry ride from Patchogue or Sayville to the National Park Service facilities, or from Bay Shore to some of the Fire Island communities.

Seventeen preexisting communities are retained within the boundary of Fire Island National Seashore. Each has its own distinct heritage and offers its own unique community spirit and appeal for those visiting or living on Fire Island.

If history is your interest, then plan to visit the two superb historical sites administered by Fire Island National Seashore. You may learn about Fire Island's maritime history and climb to the top of the Fire Island Lighthouse tower. You may tour the family home of William Floyd, a signer of the *Declaration of Independence*, and discover how this preserved plantation landscape has evolved over more than 250 years of single-family ownership.

You may want to participate in one of our guided interpretive programs. Sunken Forest tours at Sailors Haven and guided canoe trips at Watch Hill are among the park's standards. Several special activities and Junior Ranger workshops are offered at the park again this summer.

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Entrusted to protect its resources for future generations while making them available for all people today is a delicate balancing act. To address this issue, Fire Island National Seashore is developing a new General Management Plan, or GMP, to carry the park forward to meet the challenges of the future.

The GMP provides guidance for the management and development of the park for the next 20-plus years. The concept of partnerships and shared stewardship is a vital part of the GMP vision.

Enjoy your time here at Fire Island National Seashore, and share your thoughts and ideas. With your help we all will be able to preserve and protect this incredible resource for generations to come.



Michael T. Reynolds
Superintendent

Fire Island National Seashore —

42 years later

In 1964, the National Park Service and the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation prepared a report for the Secretary of the Interior to explain how Fire Island National Seashore would serve to meet various outdoor recreation needs locally and for the entire nation, as a unit of the National Park System.

Fire Island first came to the public attention in 1908 when then New York Governor Charles Evans Hughes authorized New York's first state park on this island.

On September 21, 1938, a severe hurricane devastated the shoreline of eastern Long Island and New England. Shortly afterward a task force of New York State and federal officials recommended that portions of Fire Island be protected for public use and enjoyment.

Additional issues facing Fire Island were proposals for development, restoration and protection. Robert Moses, President of the Long Island State Park Commission, had envisioned by 1929 a system of state parks and parkways that included Fire Island. Moses was the driving force behind the construction of Jones Beach State Park, officially opening to the public in 1929, and the Ocean Parkway to Captree State Park, built in the early 1930s.

In October 1938, a consulting engineer hired by Suffolk County, W. Earle Andrews, released a plan, *Restoration and Protection of Fire Island*, to extend the Ocean Parkway with the development of a four lane highway down the length of Fire Island. In the 1940s, the Suffolk County Board of Supervisors voted down this idea, mostly due to the cost factor. In 1962, Robert Moses developed a new amended version.

However, when Robert Moses's proposal was released, a Citizens Committee to save Fire Island was created to preserve the historically road-free Fire Island and its communities. With the support of Congressman Otis G. Pike's legislation, on September 11, 1964 Fire Island National Seashore was established, putting to rest Robert Moses' plans.

Forty-two years later, Fire Island National Seashore is now in a new phase of upgrading its public use facilities. With a new concession operator, *Fire Island Concessions, LLC*, much needed improvements have begun in many of the visitor use sites. Improvements in the marinas, food service, campgrounds and shops are helping the park move forward.

The Resource Management division has seen success in its Threatened and Endangered Species Protection programs. With the assistance of park volunteers and SCA students, the piping plovers are making a comeback. Seabeach amaranth and seabeach knotweed, which are threatened and rare plant species, are also protected on the barrier beach.

Fire Island National Seashore is moving forward and continues to provide a unique experience and fun for all ages. "It brings back the 'kid' in all of us," said one frequent beach-goer recently. We hope that can be said for generations to come!

Fire Island National Seashore



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Fire Island Soundings is a seasonal publication of Fire Island National Seashore.



20 Years of Threatened and Endangered Species Protection

Bird Conservation in the 21st Century

Since 1986, Fire Island National Seashore together with other federal, state, and local governments, volunteers, and private organizations has been preserving and monitoring critical habitats and open spaces for the protection of threatened and endangered shorebirds and coastal plants. Using a variety of protective measures and the latest technologies has helped these agencies and organizations realize success in the protection of several threatened and endangered species on the south shore of Long Island. The number of piping plover chicks that have fledged from Fire Island National Seashore has steadily increased over the years. In 2005, 17 nesting pairs of plovers fledged 40 chicks.



Affected Bird Species:

- Piping Plover
- Common tern
- Roseate tern
- Least tern
- Black skimmer
- American Oystercatcher
- Killdeer
- Willet
- Horned Lark

Challenges:

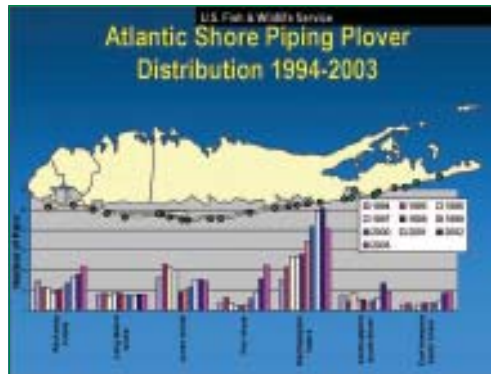
- Housing development
- Vehicle traffic
- Recreational use
- Beach stabilization projects
- Predators
- Pets
- Kite flying

Management:

- Predator trapping
- Vehicle restrictions
- Law enforcement
- Research
- Monitoring
- Pet-free areas
- Kite-free areas
- Education

Affected Plant Species:

- Seabeach amaranth
- Seabeach knotweed



Areas of potential piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) nesting habitat may be created each year as a result of seasonal weather events. In the fall of 2005, Fire Island National Seashore staff witnessed an overwash near Old Inlet, in the Otis Pike Fire Island High Dune Wilderness. After a continuous series of extreme high tides, dunes were leveled resulting in these areas of overwash. The result developed into optimal piping plover nesting habitat. With advancements in technology, Global Positioning Systems (GPS) points of the area can be collected and extracted onto a Geographic Information System (GIS) software template and viewed as an aerial photograph for the better understanding and awareness of recently created nesting habitat.

Where Will Fire Island Go From Here?

Your Opportunities for Civic Involvement

Mark your calendars! Fire Island National Seashore has reserved the Ocean Beach Community Center for July 29, 2006, and the Davis Park Casino for July 30, 2006 from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. to launch a series of roundtable discussions and project scoping meetings. Additional public meetings are scheduled for Watch Hill, Sailors Haven, Fire Island Pines, Cherry Grove, Saltaire, Islip, Patchogue, Mastic Beach, and in Manhattan.

In preparation for the park's upcoming General Management Planning (GMP) process, the park staff is undertaking a public involvement project to begin a community-based dialogue on critical park and community issues. The goals of the project are two-fold.

Our first goal is to hear from you—the public. Tell us what you think are the important park values, issues of concern, and how you feel about the overall management of the seashore.

Secondly, we want to tell you about what to expect when we begin this extensive and rather complicated GMP process. The entire process is expected to take up to four years to complete.

Your participation is vital to ensuring the preservation and proper management of park resources—both for today and for future generations. Help us shape Fire Island National Seashore's future.



For More Information:

www.nps.gov/fiis/parkmgmt/generalmanagementplan.htm

Where Does All the Sand Come From?

Hopefully as you read this, you are enjoying a warm sunny day frolicking in the ocean, walking along the shore, or maybe just lying on the beach. The roar of the ocean seems soothing and constant, but change is the only thing that is constant about the offshore sand bars, beaches, and dunes at Fire Island. Together these three features—the offshore sand bars, beaches, and dunes—represent a system of sand storage.

In the summer, the beaches tend to be wider because the wave and current conditions during the summer move sand from the offshore bars onto the beach. In the winter, the beaches are narrower because more of the sand is stored in the offshore bars.

Dunes are also part of the sand-sharing system. Dunes are an accumulation of sand at the upper edge of the beach.

Dune development occurs when sand is transported inland across the bare sand beach to gather in areas of vegetation. The plants on the dune and beach are uniquely adapted to this harsh environment. These plants can tolerate nutrient poor sand, salt, heat, drought, and the abrasion of wind transported sand.

The foredune, or front of the dune, is a dynamic feature in the sand-sharing system. The foredune is often eroded, or scarped, by waves during storm events. The storm may also move sand to the crest (top) of the dune or to the back of the dune. After the storm, the dunes face recovery processes that allow the foredune to redevelop from storm events. But where does all the sand come from?



Sand grains are held tightly in place by the roots and rootlets of the salt-tolerant beach grass, *Ammophila breviligulata*.

Fire Island's sand comes from two sources. The eroding cliffs and bluffs of Montauk in the east help sustain the sandy barriers and islands to the west. Sand also comes from offshore sources which were deposited by retreating glaciers and remain from earlier inlet deltas.

Sediment is moved in great quantities over short periods of time. When you stand in the surf, you can feel the power of the water that fuels the longshore transport system. Storms can move larger quantities of sand, bringing deeper supplies into the nearshore, building the dune system and also eroding and reconfiguring it.

People have been struggling for generations to adapt to this ever changing process. The Fire Island Inlet to Montauk Point Reformulation Study has been a decades-long process of conducting, collecting, analyzing, and reviewing technical and scientific data to gain an improved understanding of the hydrologic, geomorphologic, and ecological factors of shoreline processes.

As you enjoy that warm day in the sun, frolicking in the ocean or walking along the shoreline, respect the power and dynamic nature of the barrier beach.

Fire Island Inlet to Montauk Point Reformulation Study

Fire Island and the south shore of Long Island are vulnerable to flooding and storm damage from hurricanes and winter northeasters. The 1938 hurricane alone destroyed 265 houses, killed 45, created eleven new inlets, and flooded 20 square miles of the mainland. A March 6, 1962 storm destroyed 47 homes and damaged another 75 on Fire Island.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is working with an interagency group of Federal and State partners, undertaking the *Fire Island Inlet to Montauk Point Reformulation Study* to address coastal erosion along 83 miles of the south shore of Long Island between Fire Island Inlet and

Montauk Point. The purpose of the on-going study is to identify, evaluate and recommend long-term solutions for hurricane and storm damage reduction for homes and businesses within the floodplain of the study area, while maintaining or enhancing natural resources. The study area includes 26 miles of Fire Island National Seashore coastline.

The Corps will develop a comprehensive long-term plan of protection for areas that are prone to flooding, erosion and other storm damage. A goal of the plan is to replace numerous uncoordinated measures that have been used to protect individual properties with a comprehensive management approach that considers the entire coastal system.

Coastal management measures will address issues such as the condition of inlets, including the need for sand bypassing, and emergency response to storm events. Storm damage reduction options may include structural and non-structural options, and may supplement the effectiveness of coastal management measures. While Coastal Management and Storm Damage reduction features may be implemented with federal funding support, the Floodplain Management Plan is implemented at the state, county and community level.

The Corps of Engineers welcomes comments from the public throughout the planning process. Information is available on-line at the USACE New York District web site: www.nan.usace.army.mil/fimp

Fire Island Facilities Update

New Park-wide Concessioner, Noticeable Improvements for 2006



Fire Island Concessions, LLC, is the latest park-wide concessionaire for Fire Island National Seashore. Its 10-year contract began in May 2005, and by summer's end, many infrastructure improvements had already begun.

Fire Island Concessions, a company formed by local business people who love Fire Island National Seashore, is dedicated to serving the needs of park visitors at Watch Hill, Sailors Haven/Sunken Forest, and Barrett Beach/Talisman. The company's express purpose is to improve the park lands for sensible public use and to provide the park visitor with the finest service possible. It was formed to preserve and promote that approach and is now a proud partner with the National Park Service.

Today, Fire Island Concessions operates many of the facilities that are so important to help you enjoy a memorable day at the seashore.

Come to Watch Hill by boat and dock in our 188-slip marina. Many boaters appreciate the coin-operated pumpout station, the 50-amp electricity and our general store and snack bar. The Watch Hill Tiki Bar opened in 2005, while the Watch Hill restaurant is being reconstructed in 2006.

Sailors Haven/Sunken Forest, often called the crown jewel of our seashore, has a 48-slip full service marina, snack bar, and gift shop. Taking care of your basic needs allows the visitor to focus on enjoying park resources and learning more about the seashore.



Watch Hill



Quiet reclusive Barrett Beach/Talisman is now under development, but is quite the spot for boaters who like to anchor in the bay and wade in to the beach for a waterside picnic.



The old Sailors Haven Motel was removed in November 2005, and the Sailors Haven Marina was rehabilitated over the winter and spring of 2005-06.



William Floyd Estate Manor House is documented, scraped and painted in 2005-06.



Watch Hill Nature Trail was re-routed and resurfaced in the fall of 2005.



Portions of the Fire Island Lighthouse will be repaired by special historic preservation teams.

Fire Island Lighthouse

By car via the Robert Moses Causeway

Fire Island Ferries
631-665-3600 or 666-3600
www.fireislandferries.com

Bayshore to:

Kismet*
Saltaire
Fair Harbor
Dunewood*
Atlantique*
Ocean Beach
Seaview*
Ocean Bay Park*
**Seasonal Only*

Cross-bay and lateral water taxi

Fire Island Water Taxi
631-665-8885
www.fireislandwatertaxi.com
Seasonal Only



Fire Island Lighthouse

Directions

Located at the southern terminus of the Robert Moses Causeway, just east of Robert Moses State Park. Parking available at Robert Moses State Park Field #5 (fee for parking).

1-mile walk from Kismet.

Sailors Haven

By ferry via the Sayville Ferry Service
631-589-8980
www.sayvilleferry.com

Lv. Sayville

Lv. Sailors Haven

June 16 thru September 4
Monday thru Friday

*9:00am	*9:30am
10:15am	10:45am
11:40am	12:10pm
1:15pm	1:45pm
2:15pm	2:45pm
*3:30pm	*4:00pm
5:00pm	5:30pm

Saturdays, Sundays, & Holidays

*9:00am	*9:30am
10:15am	10:45am
11:40am	12:10pm
1:15pm	1:45pm
2:15pm	2:45pm
*3:30pm	*4:00pm
5:00pm	5:30pm
6:00pm	6:40pm

Trips marked * run rain or shine. Others may be canceled in inclement weather. Call for weather update if in doubt
(631) 589-8980



Sailors Haven

Directions

LIE (I-495) or Sunrise Hwy. (Rt.27) to Nicholls Rd. (Rt.97) South. Approx. 5.5 miles to third light, Montauk Hwy. (Rt. 85), make right. Go under R.R. overpass, make left at first light, Foster Ave. in Sayville. Follow green & white "Fire Island Ferry" signs to terminal.

Barrett Beach

Summer 2006
Ferry Service by special charters from Patchogue only, call **631-475-1665**



Talisman/Barrett Beach

Directions

Access by private boat to Barrett Beach only.

Fire Island Map

Watch Hill

By ferry via the Davis Park Ferry Company, Inc. **631-475-1665**
www.davisparkferry.com

Lv. Patchogue

Lv. Watch Hill

May 13 thru June 23

Monday thru Friday

8:45am	<i>begins 5/30</i>	
10:15am		10:55am
3:30pm		4:30pm
6:30pm	<i>Friday 5/27 Only</i>	7:00pm

Saturday and Sunday

& 5/29 Memorial Day		
8:45am	<i>begins 5/27</i>	
10:20am		11:00am
12:15pm		1:00pm
3:30pm		4:30pm
6:15pm	<i>5/27, 5/28, 5/29</i>	7:30pm

June 24 thru September 4

Monday thru Friday

8:45am		11:00am
10:15am		12:30pm
1:30pm		2:30pm
3:30pm		4:30pm
5:30pm		6:15pm
7:00pm	<i>Friday Only</i>	8:15pm

Saturday & Sunday 7/4 and 9/4 Labor Day

8:45am		9:15am
10:20am		11:00am
12:15pm		1:00pm
1:45pm		2:30pm
3:30pm		4:30pm
5:30pm		6:15pm
7:30pm		8:15pm



Fire Island Wilderness

By car or bus via the William Floyd Parkway **631-281-3010**



William Floyd Estate

By car via the William Floyd Parkway **631-399-2030**



Watch Hill

Directions

Located on West Ave. Patchogue, NY. From LIE (I-495) to Exit 61 South (County Rd 19) or Sunrise Hwy (Rt 27) to Exit 52 South (County Rd. 19). About 1 mile down, bear left, cross Main Street.

Fire Island Wilderness

Directions

Located at the southern terminus of William Floyd Parkway. Parking available at Smith Point County Park.

William Floyd Estate

Directions

LIE (I-495) or Sunrise Hwy (Rt.27) to William Floyd Parkway (2 miles) south. Cross over R.R., and make left onto Neighborhood Rd. (Mastic Business District), to end of road, follow William Floyd Estate signs to main parking lot. Follow boardwalk to the house.

Sailors Haven Summer Programs 2006

Fire Island
National Seashore



Daily Schedule: July 1 - September 4, 2006

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:30 a.m.	Visitor Center 9:30-6:00	Visitor Center 9:30-5:00	Visitor Center 9:30-5:00	Visitor Center 9:30-5:00	Visitor Center 9:30-5:00	Visitor Center 9:30-5:00	Visitor Center 9:30-6:00
11:00 a.m.	Sunken Forest Tour	Sunken Forest Tour	Sunken Forest Tour	Sunken Forest Tour	Sunken Forest Tour	Sunken Forest Tour	Sunken Forest Tour
11:00 a.m. <i>Every other week</i>	Lifeguard Demonstration						
2:00 p.m.				Jr. Ranger Workshop		Catch of the Day	Children's Stories & Crafts
2:30 p.m.	Sunken Forest Tour						Sunken Forest Tour
7:00 p.m.					Enchanted Evening Tour <i>(Group Program)</i>		
Lifeguards on duty Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Saturday-Sunday, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.							

Ranger-Conducted Programs



Sunken Forest Tour

Monday - Friday 11:00 a.m.

Saturday & Sunday 11:00 a.m. & 2:30 p.m.

Meet at Sailors Haven Visitor Center

Explore the unique wonders of the crown jewel of Fire Island—the Sunken Forest. Meet the ranger at the visitor center for a boardwalk stroll. 1½ hour.

Junior Ranger Workshops

Wednesday 2:00 p.m. *(Sign-up in advance or by noon)*

July 5 through August 30

Meet at Sailors Haven Visitor Center

Be a part of the Junior Ranger program at Fire Island. Our Junior Ranger team presents a different program each week to help kids ages 5-12 learn about the special places and things protected by Fire Island National Seashore. 1½ hour.

Enchanted Evening in the Sunken Forest

Thursday 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. *(minimum group size of 30)*

Meet at Sailors Haven Ferry Terminal in Sayville

Reservations required: 631-589-8980; Fee charged.

Enjoy a leisurely ferry ride across the Great South Bay as the sun starts to set. Discover the mystique of the Fire Island's Sunken Forest as darkness falls. Ranger-guided evening tour through the forest, followed by light refreshments.

Sailors Haven Visitor Center

Monday - Friday 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday - Sunday 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

631-597-6183

Catch of the Day

Friday 2:00 p.m. *(Sign-up by noon)*

Meet at Sailors Haven Visitor Center

Discover the common marine life in the Great South Bay as you use a seine net and dip nets. Participants must wear water shoes. Plan to walk about ½ mile. 1½ hours.

Children's Hour: Seaside Stories & Crafts

Saturday 2:00 p.m. *(Sign-up by noon)*

Meet at Sailors Haven Visitor Center

Come listen to stories about the seashore environment. Whether it's whales, horseshoecrabs, turtles, birds, deer, trees or the stars, kids of all ages will be entertained while learning all about our natural world. Create a craft related to each week's subject, so you can take home your own souvenir. 1 hour.

Lifeguard's Surf Rescue Demonstration

Every other Sunday 11:00 a.m.

Meet at Sailors Haven Lifeguard Stand

See the lifeguards in action as they demonstrate what it takes to hone their skills as surf rescue lifeguards. ½ hour.

Watch Hill Summer Programs 2006

Fire Island
National Seashore



Daily Schedule: July 1 - September 4, 2006

Ranger-Conducted Programs

Junior Ranger Workshops

Thursday 2:00 p.m. *(Sign-up in advance or by noon)*

July 6 through August 31

Meet at Watch Hill Dune Station

Be a part of the Junior Ranger program at Fire Island. Our Junior Ranger team presents a different program each week to help kids ages 5-12 learn about the special places and things protected by Fire Island National Seashore. 1½ hours.

Guided Canoe Tour

Friday, Saturday, & Sunday 11 a.m. *(Reservations by 10:00 a.m. the day of the program, in person at visitor center)*

Explore the Watch Hill salt marsh, some of nature's most productive real estate. Canoes, paddles, life jackets provided, but participants must be able to swim. 2 hours.

Catch of the Day

Friday 2:00 p.m.

Meet at Watch Hill Visitor Center

Learn about the marine life in the Great South Bay as you use a seine net and dip nets to discover the wonders of the bay. Participants must wear water shoes. 1½ hours.

Early Morning Stroll with a Ranger

Saturday 8:30 a.m.

Meet at Watch Hill Visitor Center

Take an early morning stroll either through the salt marsh down the beach and discover an awaking barrier island. 1 hour.

Watch Hill Visitor Center

Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Friday - Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

631-597-6455

Children's Hour: Seaside Stories & Crafts

Saturday 2:00 p.m. *(Sign-up by noon)*

Meet at Watch Hill Dune Station

Come and listen to the stories about the environment. Whether it's about whales, horseshoe crabs, or the stars you will enjoy learning all about the natural world. Create a craft relating to the subject so that you will remember about all the new things you have learned and can teach others. 1 hour.

Watch Hill Evening Program

Saturday 7:00 p.m. *(8:30 pm for Star Gazing)*

Meet at Watch Hill Dune Station

Guest speakers will provide a variety of intriguing programs about Fire Island. Details are posted weekly in the visitor center. 1 hour.

NPS Patrol Horse Demonstration

Sunday 2:00 p.m.

Meet at Watch Hill Visitor Center

Meet at the Visitor Center and you will be escorted to the barn area. Here you will meet the ranger who takes care of this magnificent animal. They will demonstrate their skills and explain how the animal is cared for. 1 hour.