



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cumberland Island National Seashore
101 Wheeler Street
St. Marys, GA 31558



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

Storm Cleanup

By CARL DAVID

The park recently completed a project to correct issues that were brought on by two tropical storms: Beryl and Debby. The island was impacted by these two storms in the months of May and June. Trails were blocked by trees and debris and some of the trails were impassable. The boardwalk at Old House Creek sustained some damage and the Dungeness Seawall had some extensive erosion. There were 14 trails that had trees removed from blocking the path, about 1600 linear feet of hand railing at Old House Creek was replaced and approximately 100 cubic yards of sand and sandbags was placed behind the Dungeness Seawall to prevent further erosion and possible collapse of the structure. We are working with the Regional Office to gather information for a plan to do a permanent repair on the Dungeness Seawall.



Contractors working to repair one of the Island's seawalls after damages sustained in tropical storms Beryl and Debby.



Employees Doug Hoffman (left) and Fred Forbes (right) cut up a downed tree at the Mainland Visitor Center.

Park News

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The Mullet Wrapper



The official newsletter of
Cumberland Island National Seashore
September 2012 through February 2013

The Cumberland Island beach is beginning to look like Spring. (NPS Photo)

Letter From The Superintendent

By FRED BOYLES

The park is working on a new initiative to develop a Foundation Statement in 2013. This has resulted in many questions like: “So what is this foundation statement thing?” A Foundation Statement is a re-examination of the park’s significance and core mission. It also defines the park’s most important resources and values. It lays out the interpretive themes or the stories that we tell to the public. Finally, because Cumberland Island is the location of designated wilderness, the park’s wilderness character is defined. Developing the Foundation Statement will use, as a basis, the park’s 1972 enabling legislation along with other legislation specific to Cumberland Island.

It’s important to define what the Foundation Statement is not. Since it does not propose a specific federal action (like constructing a new building) it does not require National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance. However, the park has sought to involve the public by inviting public comment into the process. Comment cards, a newsletter solicitation to stake holders and opening the park’s public comment web site has resulted in a robust venting of input from many. A public scoping meeting was held on January

28th in St Marys to further seek input from interested parties. The Foundation Statement is not a new General Management Plan (GMP). It could lead to a new GMP or other plans that could assist the National Park Service (NPS) in managing the Seashore. The NPS has established that each of the 400+ units of the system complete a Foundation Statement by 2016, the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the agency. With this ambitious goal, Cumberland is one of earliest parks do work on this process. Personally, I have enjoyed looking again at the fundamental values on which Cumberland Island was established as a National Seashore. I am also hopeful that this process will aid in further protection of the resources of the Island and in providing the best possible customer service to our visitors.




Fred Boyles
Superintendent

Annual Bird Count

By DOUG HOFFMAN

Cumberland Island participated in the Christmas Bird Count and the Mid-Winter Shorebird Survey again this winter. The Christmas Bird Count is held annually in the U.S. and normally in mid-December on CUIS. Cumberland draws a regular group of about 12 Georgia birders each year who look forward to scouring the island’s marshes, forest, and beach to identify and count the wide variety of bird species that call CUIS home. While the results are not in yet, the group had a productive visit. The Mid-Winter Shorebird Survey is conducted annually by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. This count focuses on shorebirds along the state’s beaches and is conducted coast wide on the same day. Cumberland usually leads the way with the highest total birds recorded annually. This year’s count was on January 17th. We recorded 29,682 birds representing 32 different species, proving that Cumberland’s 18 miles of undeveloped beach is vital for shorebirds migrating through this area in the winter. In addition to these two notable efforts, CUIS facilitates multiple annual surveys of Piping Plovers and American Oystercatchers. Both of these shorebird species have experienced significant population declines over the last several decades. The park’s Resource Management Division coordinates and oversees all bird counts on the island.



American Oystercatcher - south end of CUIS, sitting on scrape with eggs.



Piping Plover - winter migrant sighted on CUIS on it’s way back north to nesting grounds. Banded in Massachusetts. (Photo by Pat and Doris Lear)

First African Baptist Church Gets Its Bell Rung

By DOUG HOFFMAN



The First African Baptist Church welcomed an old friend back this summer – the bell. Historic photos show a bell on a post by the front steps of the church. CUIS Museum Curator John Mitchell was able to locate a suitable replacement bell and Resource Management volunteers Linda Guy and Rita Hutcherson spent two days in July milling, installing, and painting the new post and finally attaching the bell. Using the historic photographs, they were able to recreate the location of the post and the orientation of the bell. Thanks go out to Linda and Rita for a job well done.



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THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON

November 20, 2013



The park would like to extend a sincere “Thank You” to all who participated in, as well as those who cooked for, the 2012 Thanksgiving Luncheon. A good time was had by all and we hope you will join us again next year.



2013 - 2014 Hunt Dates

Hunt Type	Date		Quota	Game	Age
Archery	October	7, 8, 9	125	Hog and Deer	14 years old and over
Ladies	October	21, 22, 23	50	Hog and Deer	14 years old and over
Primitive Weapons	November	4, 5, 6	100	Hog and Deer	14 years old and over
Primitive Weapons	December	2, 3, 4	100	Hog and Deer	14 years old and over
Adult/Child	December	15, 16, 17	50	Hog and Deer	12 - 16 years old
Modern Weapons	January	6, 7, 8	100	Hog only	14 years old and over
Modern Weapons	January	20, 21, 22	100	Hog only	14 years old and over

2014 - 2015 Hunt Dates

Hunt Type	Date		Quota	Game	Age
Archery	October	6, 7, 8	125	Hog and Deer	14 years old and over
Ladies	October	20, 21, 22	50	Hog and Deer	14 years old and over
Primitive Weapons	November	3, 4, 5	100	Hog and Deer	14 years old and over
Primitive Weapons	December	1, 2, 3	100	Hog and Deer	14 years old and over
Adult/Child	December	14, 15, 16	50	Hog and Deer	12 - 16 years old
Modern Weapons	January	5, 6, 7	100	Hog only	14 years old and over
Modern Weapons	January	26, 27, 28	100	Hog only	14 years old and over

Safety Corner



By JAMES OWENS

Cumberland Island National Seashore participated in a Safety Stand Down on Wednesday January 23, 2013. The day was quite successful in developing over 20 new JHAs for the park developed by 5 work groups. Everyone rolled up their sleeves and made this a collaborative effort.

However, our work is not done. As we move through our normal tasks, more hazardous work will be identified that we have not developed a JHA for. When that happens, please take the time to alert a member of the Safety Committee, Safety Officer or your Division Chief. This will be our notice to develop a new JHA.

Another important aspect of developing JHAs is to make use of them. If they sit in the I-Drive, never to be consulted then our work will have been a waste of time. Make use of them, review them prior to doing that type of hazardous work and share them with others on your work team. During that process, you may find improvements or revisions that will need to be made to a JHA. This is a good thing since they are dynamic documents that should be reviewed and updated as needed. For those of you that weren't able to attend, please take time to look at the JHAs on the I-Drive.(its a folder inside Safety Committee).

Finally, thank you to the Safety Committee for taking time to help with this process and for organizing the day and making it the success that it was.



The Resource Management Division developed several Job Hazard Analysis (JHA's) for their work area.

Quote Corner

“Be just, and fear not. Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's, Thy God's and truth's.”

-William Shakespeare

Public Comments on Foundation Statement

By FRED BOYLES

As a part of developing a new Foundation Document for Cumberland Island National Seashore, the park used several methods to seek public input on a series of questions about the park's significance, issues, and opportunities. The park sent 152 comment cards to park stakeholders and other interested parties. News releases and notification via the park's website also asked for input from the general public. The public comment period was from December 11, 2012 through January 11, 2013. On January 28th a public open house was held at the park's visitor center in St. Marys in the evening. That event was attended by 31 people. Each person had a chance to talk with members of the planning team and offer input on four specific questions.

The four questions asked as a part of the process were:

- What is most important about Cumberland Island National Seashore?
- What should the American people know about Cumberland Island National Seashore? What are its most important stories?
- What are the greatest threats to Cumberland Island National Seashore?
- What opportunities for visitor experiences, recreation or resource protection efforts would you like to see at Cumberland Island National Seashore?

Members of the team recorded the responses to each of the questions so they could be added to the comment summary report that was used during deliberations held by the National Park Service team developing the Foundation Document. With the public meeting and other input received, a total of 97 people offered input into the process. Comments on a wide range of viewpoints were given.

During the last week in January, an interdisciplinary planning team comprised of National Park Service staff from park, regional, and national offices held a Foundation Document workshop on Cumberland Island. All of the public comments received were included in this workshop as a part of the process of preparing the document. “Input from the public was most helpful to our deliberations. It was good to learn the love that people have for the Island, as well as the many differing views on how it can be managed,” commented Carrie Miller, project manager, NPS Denver Service Center – Planning Division. The Foundation Document for Cumberland Island National Seashore is expected to be completed in the Fall of 2013.



It was a lively atmosphere at the park's mainland visitor center on the evening of January 28th when 31 park supporters came out of offer input in developing a Foundation Document for the Seashore. Barbara McDowell is seen here talking to Carrie Miller from the Denver Service center of the National Park Service about those attributes at Cumberland Island that are most important.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Cumberland Sea Turtle Internships Rank #1

By DOUG HOFFMAN



The Student Conservation Association (SCA) ranked Cumberland Island's sea turtle internships number 1 on their list of "Top 10 Unbelievably Cool Internships for Spring/Summer

2013." A visit to the park by the SCA's southeastern partner coordinator, Nicole Pierson, in 2012 likely prompted this ranking. Nicole spent a day on turtle patrol with CUIS interns Ashton Turner and Haley Gilles last summer and was overwhelmed by the project. Other internships in the "Top 10" list included parks in Hawaii, the Grand Canyon, and Alaska to name a few. Cumberland Island utilizes SCA interns for numerous projects annually including the sea turtle project. This year we plan on using one 6-month and one 3-month intern to conduct the turtle project. Our turtle internships are highly sought after by people across the United States.

Status of Cumberland's Red Bay Trees

By DOUG HOFFMAN

The red bay tree, once a common member of the mid- and over-story forest layers along the Atlantic Coast, has been in a state of decline since the non-native ambrosia beetle entered the U. S. in 2005. Since that time most adult red bays have been lost to a fungus transmitted during the beetle's boring activity. Cumberland Island has partnered with the U. S. Forest Service since 2007 to monitor the progression of red bay decline. Forest Service entomologists established 19 study plots on the southern portion of the island from Dungeness northward to Greyfield. Most of the adult trees in these plots died within the first two years, but displayed re-sprouting from the roots afterward. The most recent monitoring this January showed that of 174 mature trees identified in 2007, 72% are still hanging on via root sprouts; 6% are still live trees;

and 22% have died completely. There is considerable regeneration of the species throughout the island in the form of seedlings. It is uncertain whether these trees will survive to adulthood. Currently, beetle numbers are extremely low in the local area. If they remain low, the trees may be able to rebound. Only time will tell.



A dead red bay tree at the Alberty House in 2009. Result of the red bay ambrosia beetle fungus causing Laurel Wilt Disease.

2012-2013 Hunt Season Results

By DOUG HOFFMAN

The smoke has finally cleared on the last public hunt of the season. The late January hunt saw 55 hunters remove 30 hogs from the island. Overall, Cumberland's public hunts produced 24 deer and 94 hogs this fall. Hunter participation was in line with the two previous years, with this year logging 244 participants. Numbers seem to have leveled off, but are still 100 people below the average hunter participation in 2009 and 2010. This year's deer harvest is average, falling within the range of deer harvest figures for the last 7 years. Hog harvest was higher this year and could be a sign of increased reproduction with the late summer rains. Hunter success was 15% for deer and 25% for hogs. Cumberland offers 6 public hunting opportunities annually, starting with an archery hunt in October; primitive weapons hunts in November and December; a parent/child hunt in December; and 2 hog-only hunts in January.

This year's January hunts fall within the 75th anniversary of the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Program. Fees collected from hunting and fishing license sales help support wildlife, fisheries, and natural resources conservation efforts. Hunting and fishing generate \$198 million in state and local tax revenue, help create 31,000 jobs, and have a total annual economic impact of over \$3 billion in Georgia alone. The state celebrated Sportsman's and Coastal Day at the capitol on January 17th with speeches given by the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. In addition to the state's wildlife and fisheries economic impact, it is estimated residents and tourists generate in excess of \$2 billion annually in tourism revenues along the Georgia coast.



By CARL DAVID

Repair & Replace

The park has been trying to determine the best way to manage its "Household" garbage disposal for years. We have purchased a "Stationary" compacting unit that will take the place of the open container that has been used for many years. This will help out in many ways but a few of the most important are:

1. A closed container will hopefully eliminate the amount of debris that is scattered throughout the historic landscape and also prevent the wildlife from scavenging for food.
2. The compacting system will reduce the number of barge trips required to haul the waste to the mainland for pickup and disposal. Until we have actually begun the process it is hard to give accurate numbers but we are expecting that this number may be reduced as much as half.
3. The COST SAVINGS!!!!!! The costs won't necessarily show up in the amount of waste that we dispose of because 2,000 pounds is 2,000 pounds no matter how often it is taken off for disposal. The savings will come from less fuel usage for operating the barge/landing craft and less usage means less maintenance on the vessel.

Please help the park and dispose of your trash in its proper container. The "Compactor" should only be used for your Household trash and perishable items not large items such as bed frames and furniture. There is still an open dumpster located on the East side of the Carriage House that is for "Construction Debris" and large items. Hazardous waste should not be thrown in any of the dumpsters.



The park's new "Stationary" compacting dumpster which is located next to the Wagon Shed behind the Carriage House.



Maintenance Mechanic Richard Hagford wearing one of his many hats, operating the park's new, computer-operated router.

New Signs Help Guide Visitors

The park has purchased a new sign making machine (Router). Sign making will become more "Efficient" and "Uniform". Rick Hagford has taken the initiative to learn how to operate the system, which is computer operated. As time permits, he is replacing old and broken signs. His plan is to eventually put distances on the trail and road signs to provide visitors more information as they are hiking the trails. Stop in at the Carriage House on a rainy day and you may get a glimpse of the sign making process.