**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE** News Release

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**National Park Service Seeks Public Comments on Plan to Protect Species of Concern on Southeast Coastlines**

*Comment period ends October 26, 2018*

*Public scoping webinars to be held October 9 and 11*

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| ATLANTA– The National Park Service (NPS) is seeking public comments on a regional environmental assessment that examines options for protecting shorebirds, sea turtles and beach mice from the threat of depredation at NPS units in the Southeast Region. The Coastal Species of Concern Predation Management Plan Programmatic Environmental Assessment (assessment) evaluates the best available predation management options and analyzes relevant environmental issues.  Many NPS southeast coastal parks have habitats that support species of concern, including parks in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, and the US Virgin Islands. Some parks need a strategy to better protect species of concern, which includes both federally listed threatened and endangered species and state listed species — examples include: snowy and piping plover shorebirds, loggerhead sea turtle, green sea turtle, Kemp’s Ridley sea turtle, leatherback sea turtle, southeastern beach mouse and Perdido Key beach mouse — from such predators as coyote, raccoons, fox, feral hogs and others. Species of concern using coastal and dune habitats are especially vulnerable during their respective breeding seasons, generally falling between April and October. Once complete, affected parks may implement actions from the final assessment by first preparing site-specific plans.  The public is invited to submit comments on the environmental assessment through October 26, 2018. NPS has arranged a series of opportunities to encourage public awareness and involvement in the project, including:   * Public scoping webinars scheduled for October 9 and 11 to present project information. Registration is free and available online at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/sero>. The webinar will consist of a presentation followed by a Question and Answer session.; * Post-event viewing of project webinars, which will be recorded and archived on [https://parkplanning.nps.gov](https://parkplanning.nps.gov/)/sero; * A public scoping newsletter, including project details, posted at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/>sero; * Periodic updates posted at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/sero> * Electronic and postal submission of written comments postmarked no later than October 26, 2018, at 11:59 pm ET to:   Southeast Regional Office  National Park Service  Planning and Compliance Division  Attn: SERO PEA  100 Alabama Street SW, 1924 Building  Atlanta, GA 30303  or  <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/sero>  Select “Open for Comment” on the left menu.    The NPS will not be accepting public comments during the online webinar meeting. Instead comments should be submitted through the website on the 'Public Scoping Materials' page. |

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.