



CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

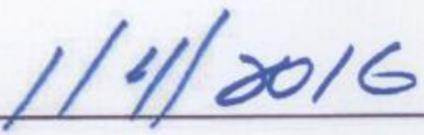
TITLE 36. CHAPTER I

**Compendium of Designations, Closures, Requests
Requirements and Other Restrictions imposed
under the discretionary authority of the
Superintendent,
Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks**

In accordance with regulations and the delegated authority provided in Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter I, Parts 1 through 7, authorized by Title 16, United States Code, Section 3, the following regulatory provisions are established for the proper management, protection, government and public use of the portion of Dry Tortugas National Park under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. These discretionary regulations are in addition to the other regulations published in Title 36 CFR, Chapter I, Parts 2 through 7. Unless otherwise stated, these regulatory provisions apply in addition to the requirements contained in 36 CFR, Chapter 1.



Superintendent



Date

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36 CFR §1.5 Visiting Hours, Public Use Limits, Closures, and Area Designations for Specific Use or Activities

(a)(1) The following visiting hours and public use limits are established for all or for the listed portions of the park, and the following closures are established for all or a portion of the park to all public use or to a certain use or activity.

To prevent conflict and hardship, on a case by case basis, any of the visiting hours, public use limits and closures described in this section may be further reduced or extended by the Superintendent or his/her designee for circumstances involving:

1. Adverse weather conditions.
2. Mechanical failure.
3. Medical emergencies.
4. Other public safety matters.

VISITING HOURS:

Visitors may enter or leave the park 24 hours a day except for areas within the park otherwise designated as closed throughout this document and as indicated below:

- The interior of Fort Jefferson on Garden Key is open from sunrise to sunset.
- The Garden Key Visitor Center is open from approximately 8:00am to 4:30pm.
- Park Headquarters on Garden Key is open from approximately 8:00am to 4:30pm.

PUBLIC USE LIMITS:

- With the exception of drinking water, possession of food and drink by visitors is prohibited within the interior of Fort Jefferson (all areas beyond the wood bridge).
- Glass containers are prohibited on all islands, except within designated campsites on Garden Key.
- White lights are prohibited on the beaches during sea turtle nesting season. Red lights are permissible.
- All areas of the park are closed to possession of helium-filled latex or Mylar balloons.

What restrictions apply to swimming snorkeling and scuba diving?

- Diving between sunset and sunrise outside 1 nautical mile of the Garden Key Light is prohibited without a Special Use Permit (permit) obtained upon arrival at Garden Key.
- Designated swim/snorkel areas are established at Garden Key and Loggerhead Key. (see Appendix C and E)
- Swimming, snorkeling and scuba diving anywhere outside the designated swim/snorkel areas, including swimming from a vessel, requires properly displaying a dive flag. Title 36 CFR 3.18 as well as Florida Statute 327.331 define the requirements for display of a divers down flag.
- Entering or exiting the water to swim, dive or snorkel off any shore of Garden Key, outside the designated swim area is prohibited.

- Swimming, diving and snorkeling in the moat surrounding the Fort is prohibited.
- Entering or exiting the water from the moat wall is prohibited, except in emergency situations.

What restrictions apply to boating?

- Anchored vessels may not be left unattended for more than 4 hours unless the boat operator is within sight of the vessel and capable of responding to it for onboard emergencies.
- Any vessel using the Garden Key dock in any manner is subject to the following restrictions:
 1. From 10:00AM to 3:00PM, the eastern half of the main dock is reserved for the concession ferry.
 2. Use of the dock if required is for emergency use, government vessels or vessels operating under permit to use the dock. If not required, other recreational and commercial vessels may use the dock in accordance with this document.
 3. Total allowable dock use for one day is two hours (cumulative) per vessel.
 4. No overnight docking is permitted.
- Any vessel using any of the courtesy slips at Garden Key in any manner is subject to the following restrictions:
 1. Total allowable dock use for one day is two hours (cumulative) per vessel.
 2. No overnight docking is permitted.
 3. Campers may use the slips for loading and unloading for a maximum of two hours and then must anchor at a designated dinghy beach area or in the designated anchorage area.
- Vessels anchoring in Garden Key Harbor must be south, southeast of a line extending from southwest channel red marker #12 to the most westernmost “Off Limits” pencil buoy off Bush Key in order to keep the channel clear.
- Vessels larger than 164 feet (50 meters) are prohibited within the park without a permit obtained from the Superintendent prior to arrival.
- Vessels engaging in park-related activities between sunset and sunrise outside one nautical mile from the Garden Key Harbor Light are required to have a permit, which may be obtained at Garden Key. Vessels are not allowed to anchor or moor outside one nautical mile at night in accordance with 36 CFR §7.27 (e)(3).
- In accordance with USCG regulation 33 CFR 110.190 and NPS regulation 36 CFR 7.27(4), the designated anchorage for commercial fishing vessels is Bird Key Harbor. The National Park Service recognizes Garden Key Harbor as a safe harbor in cases of emergency or inclement weather. When the National Weather Service issues a small craft advisory, the red “small craft advisory” pennant will be flown below the US Flag on the park's flag staff. The red triangular pennant indicates that Garden Key Harbor is open to all vessels to anchor until the advisory is lifted.

What restrictions apply to the use of park mooring balls?

- All visitor use mooring balls in the Research Natural Area are limited to 2 hours per day per mooring, if there is a vessel waiting.
- Visitor use mooring balls may only be used from sunrise to sunset.
- Vessels over 110 feet (33 m) are prohibited from using the visitor use mooring balls.
- Vessels are prohibited from attaching the mooring ball tag line directly to their vessel. Vessels must use a line from their vessel to connect to the mooring tag line.
- Vessels are prohibited from using the government mooring ball in Garden Key Harbor. In the event of an emergency, exceptions are considered on a case-by-case basis.

What restrictions apply to the use of Bush Key?

- Bush Key is open from sunrise to sunset as designated by the park superintendent, from approximately mid-October to mid-January, or when tern nesting season is complete.
- When designated as open, Bush Key is open from sunrise to sunset.
- Vessels may only access Bush key at the designated dinghy beach. (See Appendix F)
- When a land bridge exists between Garden and Bush Keys, vessels may only access Bush Key from the designated dinghy beaches or designated visitor courtesy docks on Garden Key.
- All visitors must stay below the vegetation line and above the water line, unless on a designated trail or route (see Appendix F).
- Entering or exiting the water off the shore to swim, dive or snorkel is prohibited.

What restrictions apply to fishing?

- Fishing is prohibited from any finger pier displaying the signage “Government Use Only” or “NPS Use Only” at Garden Key.
- Fishing off the visitor courtesy docks at Garden Key is permitted when the slip is unoccupied. In order to ensure the safety and security of privately owned vessels and to avoid conflicting use when the slips are occupied, only the members of the immediate party may fish from the occupied pier.
- Fishing off the Garden Key Dock when the concession ferry is docked is prohibited.
- Fishing off Bush Key or the Bush Key Land Bridge is prohibited.
- Fishing in or into any closed area is prohibited. Some of the closed areas include the designated swimming area, the “Coral Special Protection Zone” and “Shark Special Protection Zone”.

CLOSURES:

What areas are closed to the public?

Authority: 36 CFR 1.5

- The lands and waters within the boundaries of the Dry Tortugas National Park are closed to the use of unmanned aircraft except as provided for in this section. Launching, landing or operating an unmanned aircraft from or on the lands or waters administered by the National Park Service within the boundaries of Dry Tortugas National Park is prohibited except as approved in writing by the superintendent.

Definition: The term “Unmanned Aircraft” means a device that is used or intended to be used for flight in the air without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the device, and the associated operational elements and components that are required for the pilot or system operator in command to operate or control the device (such as cameras, sensors, communication links). This term includes all types of devices that meet this definition (e.g. model airplanes, quadcopters, drones, etc.) that are used for any purpose, including for recreation or commerce.

- Residential and service areas on all keys as designated closed by barricades or signs.
- Areas on all keys as designated closed by barricades or signs.
- Government slips and associated docks on Garden Key.
- Garden Key is open 24 hours with the exception of the interior of Fort Jefferson (all areas beyond the wood bridge entering the Fort) which is closed from sunset to sunrise. In case of an emergency, visitors may enter the interior of the fort to summon assistance.
- All other Keys, when open, are closed from sunset to sunrise.
- Hospital Key and Long Key are closed year round in accordance with 36 CFR §7.27 and persons and boats must remain at least 100 feet from the mean low tide mark, unless otherwise indicated by demarcation buoys or signage.
- Bush Key is closed as designated by the superintendent, from approximately mid-February to mid-October for protection of nesting seabirds. Persons and boats must remain at least 100 feet from the mean low tide line, unless otherwise indicated by demarcation buoys or signage.
- Hospital Key, Middle Key and East Key are closed to protect sea birds and nesting sea turtles. Persons and boats must remain at least 100 feet from the mean low tide mark, unless otherwise indicated by demarcation buoys or signage.
- The area designated as the “Shark Special Protection Zone” is closed to the public. (See Appendix D).
- The area designated as the “Coral Special Protection Zone” is closed in accordance with 36 CFR §7.27 (See Appendix D).
- Waters within the boundaries of the Dry Tortugas National Park are closed to the use of subsurface vessel lights. Underwater lights create an unnatural environment and disrupt the natural behavior of marine species. The use of high intensity artificial lights such as spot or flood vessel deck lights, stern and underwater illumination is prohibited. Use of underwater lights of any kind, other than hand held dive lights are prohibited in Park waters.

36 CFR §1.6 Activities that Require Special Use Permits

(f) The following is a compilation of those activities for which a special use permit or filming permit is required. Permits which can be obtained at Garden Key at the Dry Tortugas National Park are indicated by “(Obtained at Garden Key)”. Unless indicated below as“(Obtained at Garden Key)”, all other permits must be obtained from the Superintendent, Everglades National Park, prior to arriving at Dry Tortugas National Park.

- §1.5(a)(1) Visiting Loggerhead Key **(Obtained at Garden Key)**
- §1.5(a)(1) Vessels larger than 164 feet (50 meters)
- §1.5(a)(1) Boaters engaging in night activities outside 1 nautical mile of the Garden Key Light **(Obtained at Garden Key).**
- §1.5(a)(1) Non-motorized vessels engaging in night activities within 1 mile of the Garden Key Light **(Obtained at Garden Key).**
- §1.5(a)(1) Diving between sunset and sunrise outside 1 nautical mile of the Garden Key Light **(Obtained at Garden Key).**
- §1.5(f) Entering closed areas
- §2.5(a) Specimen collection (take plant, fish, wildlife, rocks or minerals)
- §2.17 Aircraft landing in designated areas
- §2.17(c)(3) Removal of downed aircraft or parts
- 2.22(a)(2) Property left unattended for more than 24 hours
- §2.50(a) Special Events: sporting, pageants, regattas, public spectator attractions, entertainment, ceremonies, or other similar events
 - Educational activities sponsored by educational institutions and having organized agendas
 - Boating or organized clubs
- §2.51(a) Public Assemblies, meeting, gatherings, demonstrations, parades, and other public expressions of views involving 25 or more people. (See Appendix G and map)
- §2.52 (c) Sale or distribution of printed matter
- §2.62 Memorialization (scattering ashes from human cremation)
- §3.19 Use of manned or unmanned submersibles
- §5.3 Business Operations (Commercial Use Authorizations)
- §5.5 Commercial Filming (still, video and movie)
- §5.7 Construction of buildings or other facilities
 - Construction of photographic/observation blinds
- §7.27(h)(1) Non-commercial vessels engaged in recreational Activities-Boat Permit **(Obtained at Garden Key)**
- §7.27(h)(2) Research activities

36 CFR §2.1- Preservation of Natural, Cultural and Archeological Resources

(a)(5) Standing or sitting on the edges of the fort parapet and fort openings is prohibited to ensure visitor safety from falling off and falling bricks from above and to maintain a historic appearance to the scenery.

Climbing and/or standing on cannons, artillery pieces, carriages, limbers and monument markers is prohibited

Parkour/Free-Running activities are prohibited in all areas of Dry Tortugas NP/Fort Jefferson.

36 CFR 2.20: Using roller skates, skateboards, roller skis, roller blades, coasting vehicles or similar devices is prohibited.

What park resources on Garden and Loggerhead Key are allowed for collection?

- (c)(2)(i) Up to one quart of sea grapes per person may be gathered for immediate personal consumption from trees located in public areas.
- (c)(2)(ii) Coconuts that have fallen to the ground in public areas may be gathered or removed for personal consumption.

36 CFR §2.2 Wildlife Protection

- (d) Spearfishing and harvesting lobster are prohibited in accordance with 36 CFR §7.27(4). Legally taken speared fish or lobster obtained outside the park must be reported prior to entering park waters. Once inside the park boundary, the reporting vessel must transit through to its intended final anchoring/mooring location without stopping or allowing its passengers/crew to enter the water until said mooring location is reached.
- (e) The use of high intensity artificial lights such as spot or flood vessel deck lights, stern and underwater illumination is prohibited. Use of underwater lights of any kind, other than hand held dive lights are prohibited in Park waters.

Determining Factor: Underwater lights cause an unnatural environment and disrupt the natural behavior of marine species.

36CFR §2.10 – Camping

- (a) Designated sites or areas and conditions for camping.
 - Camping and overnight visitor occupancy is allowed only in the designated campsites of the campground on Garden Key and aboard vessels in the designated anchorage area as defined in 36 CFR §7.27 (a) (3) (Appendix A).
 - Campers in the Garden Key Campground must register and pay the campsite fee within 1 hour on day of arrival.
 - Tents must be pitched on provided tent pads or within 10 feet of the site's designated picnic table if no tent pad is present.

- Once taken, campsites must be occupied. Sites may not be reserved by placing tents/gear or fee stubs for persons who are not yet present.
 - Hanging of hammocks, clothes, trash, towels, etc. on the trees or branches is prohibited.
 - Maximum number of persons per site is 6; maximum number of two person tents is 3.
 - Groups of 10 or more (with a maximum of 20) campers require a group site reservation in advance.
 - The campground maximum capacity is 68 total campers on a first come, first served basis with a maximum group camp capacity of 20 (by reservation).
 - Camping/overnight anchoring within the park is limited to 14 consecutive nights and to no more than 30 nights in a 12 month period.
 - Extensions of the stay limit for camping/overnight anchoring may be granted by the Superintendent or his/her designee under one of the following circumstances:
 1. Unsafe weather conditions.
 2. To facilitate an emergency repair.
 3. Medical emergencies.
 - Checkout time for the Garden Key Campground is 10:00 a.m.
- (d) Food items and trash must be stored in a hard sided container or hung on provided posts in a manner where wildlife cannot disturb it.

36 CFR §2.13 – Fires

- (a)(1) Ground fires and wood fires are prohibited throughout the park.
- (a)(1) Charcoal fires, sterno and gas/propane camp stove fires are permitted only in the Garden Key campground. Burning of wood, driftwood marine debris and/or any trash is prohibited.

36 CFR §2.14 – Sanitation

- (a)(2) Visitors are responsible for the collection and removal of all refuse they bring into or create while in the park. Public refuse receptacles are not available.
- (a)(7) Recreationally possessed fish remains produced from cleaning fish for consumption may be disposed of in waters immediately adjacent to the fish cleaning station at the Garden Key Dock or from vessels within the designated anchorage.
- (a)(7) Commercially possessed fish parts may not be discarded anywhere within Dry Tortugas National Park.

36 CFR §2.15 – Pets

- (a)(1) Pets are allowed on Garden Key, but must remain outside Fort Jefferson (not beyond the wood bridge).
- (a)(1) Pets are allowed on open keys but must remain on established walkways and below the vegetation line on the beach.
- (a)(5) Visitors must remove pet-generated waste from the park.

36 CFR §2.17 Aircraft & Air Delivery:

- (a)(3) Delivery or retrieval of a person or object by parachute, helicopter or other airborne means.
- (c)(1) Removal of a downed aircraft
- (d) FAA regulations may be found in 14 CFR Chapter 1.

Contact Everglades National Park Permitting Office for special use permit.

36 CFR §2.21 – Smoking

- (a) All federal buildings, the wooden bridge spanning the moat, the interior of Fort Jefferson and any area within 50 feet (8 m) of the main dock on land or on water, including vessels docked on or on waters within 50 feet (8 m) are closed to smoking in accordance with DRTO Smoking Policy, which is hereby adopted and are made part of these orders. (See Appendix H)

36 CFR §2.22 – Property

Geo-Caching:

Geo-Caching is prohibited throughout the Dry Tortugas NP. See also 36 CFR § 2.22. Virtual Geo-Caching does not leave any physical property on NPS premises, but instead uses existing on site features. *Virtual Geo-Caching* is permissible.

- (a)(2) Personal property may not be left unattended longer than 24 hours in the park without a permit.

37 CFR §7.27- Special Regulations

(d) What restrictions apply on Loggerhead Key?

- Loggerhead Key is open from sunrise to sunset.
- Prior to visitation, visitors must obtain a permit upon arrival at Garden Key.
- A maximum of 25 visitors per day is allowed.
- To access Loggerhead Key, visitors are allowed to land or beach their vessels in the area identified in Appendix C.
- Private vessels are prohibited from using the Loggerhead dock. It is reserved for government vessels or vessels operating under park permit to use the dock.
- Visitors must stay on established walkways on the interior and below the vegetation line on the beach.
- All buildings and structures are closed to the public.

- Swimming, snorkeling or scuba diving from shore requires a dive flag be displayed other than at the designated swim/snorkel area identified in Appendix C.

(i) How are corals and other underwater natural features protected in the park?

(1) Taking, possessing, removing, damaging, touching, handling, harvesting, disturbing, standing on, or otherwise injuring coral, coral formation, seagrass or other living or dead organisms, including marine invertebrates, live rock, and shells, is prohibited.

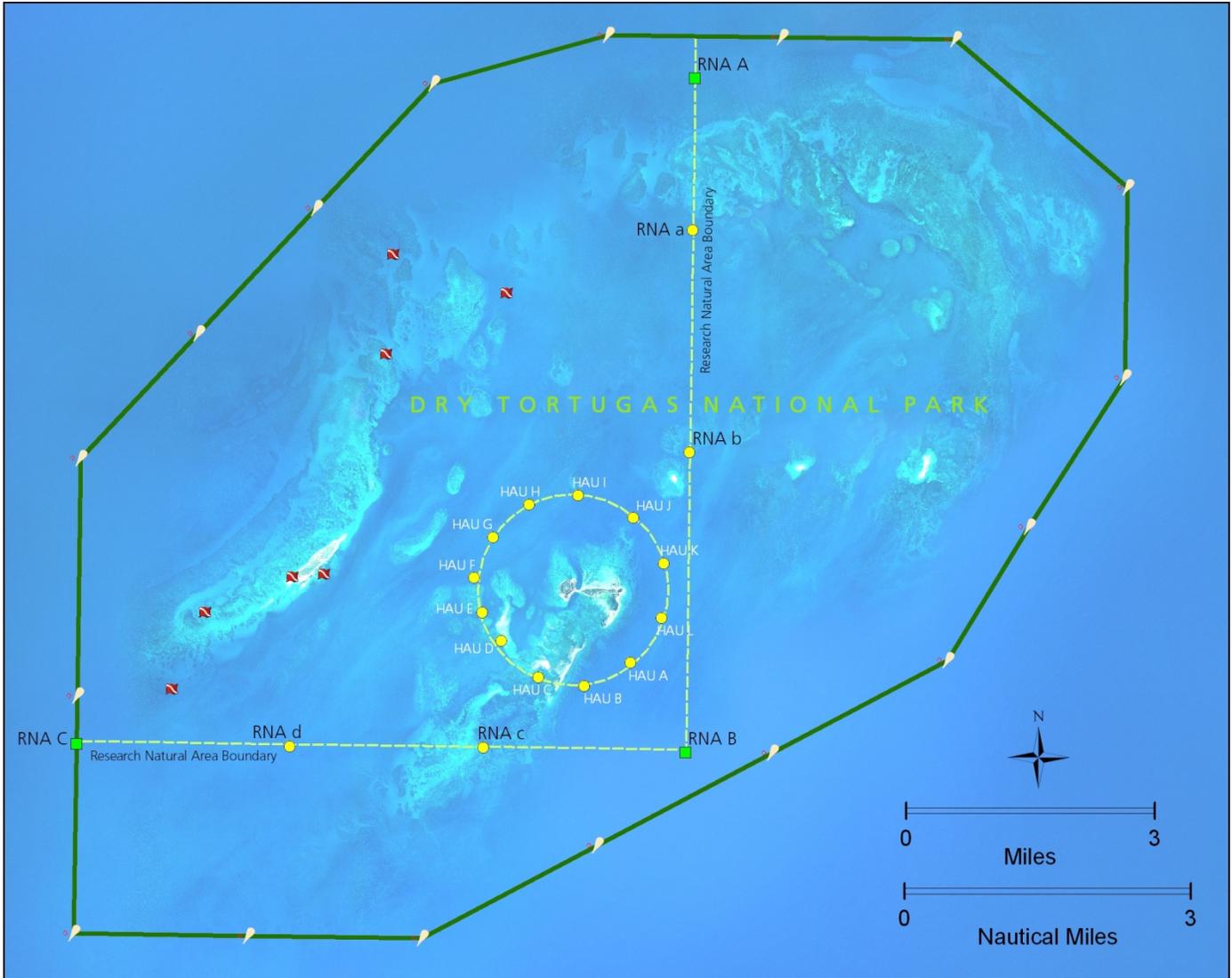
(2) Vessel operators are prohibited from allowing their vessel to strike, injure, or damage coral, seagrass, or any other immobile organism attached to the seabed.

(3) Vessel operators are prohibited from allowing an anchor, chain, rope or other mooring device to be cast, dragged, or placed so as to strike, break, abrade, or otherwise cause damage to coral formations, sea grass, or submerged cultural resources.

APPENDIX A – MAP OF DESIGNATED ANCHORAGE



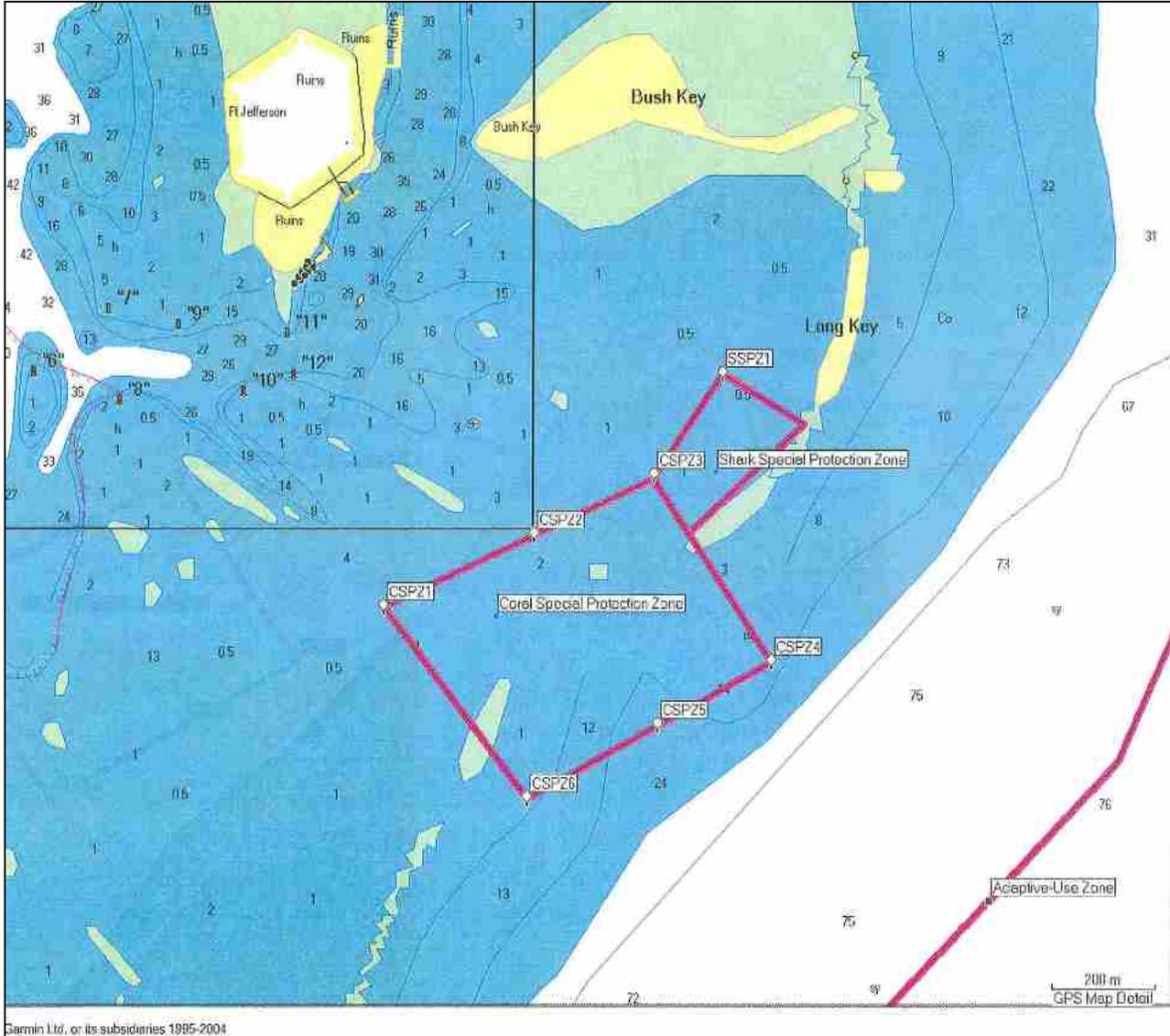
APPENDIX B – MAP OF RESEARCH NATURAL AREA



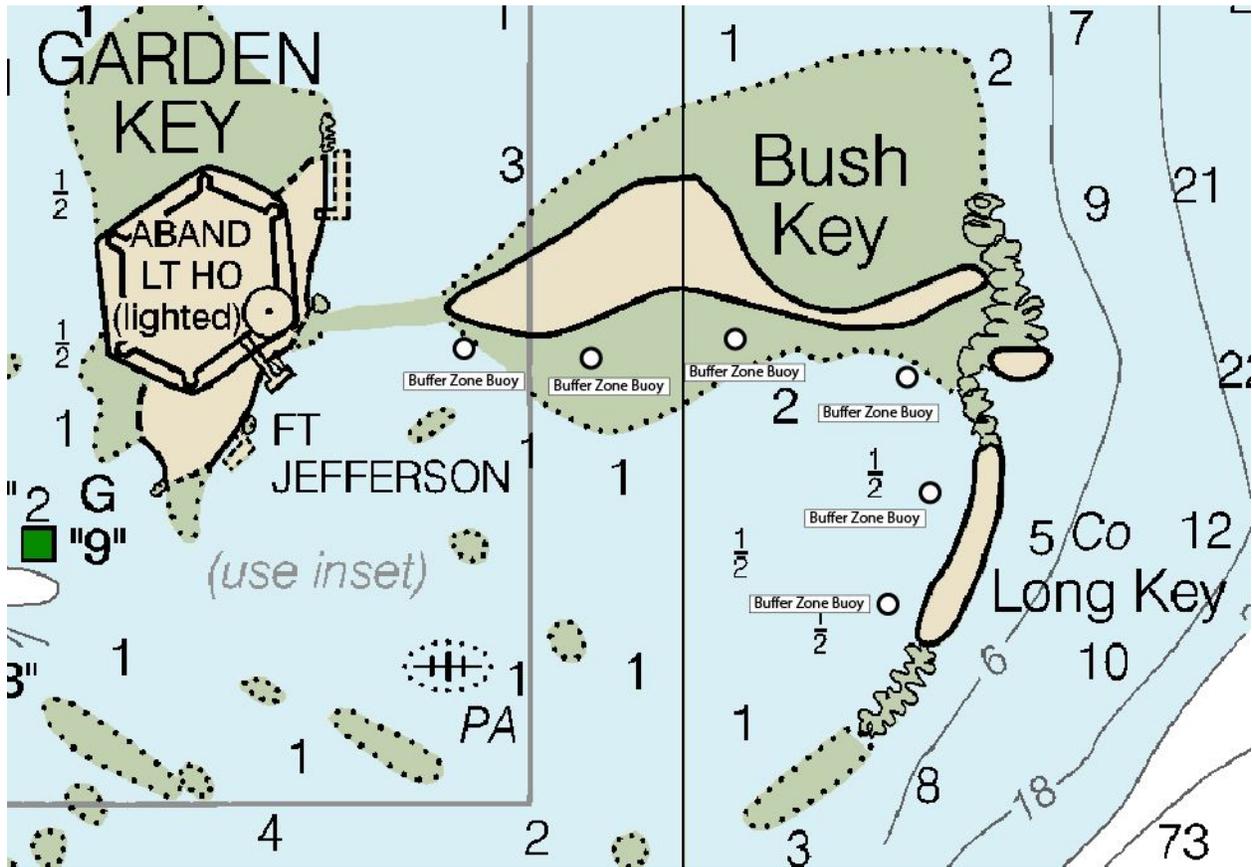
APPENDIX C-MAP OF LOGGERHEAD KEY



APPENDIX D – MAP OF SHARK AND CORAL SPECIAL PROTECTION ZONE



Appendix E – Map of Bush and Long Key Buffer Zone Buoys

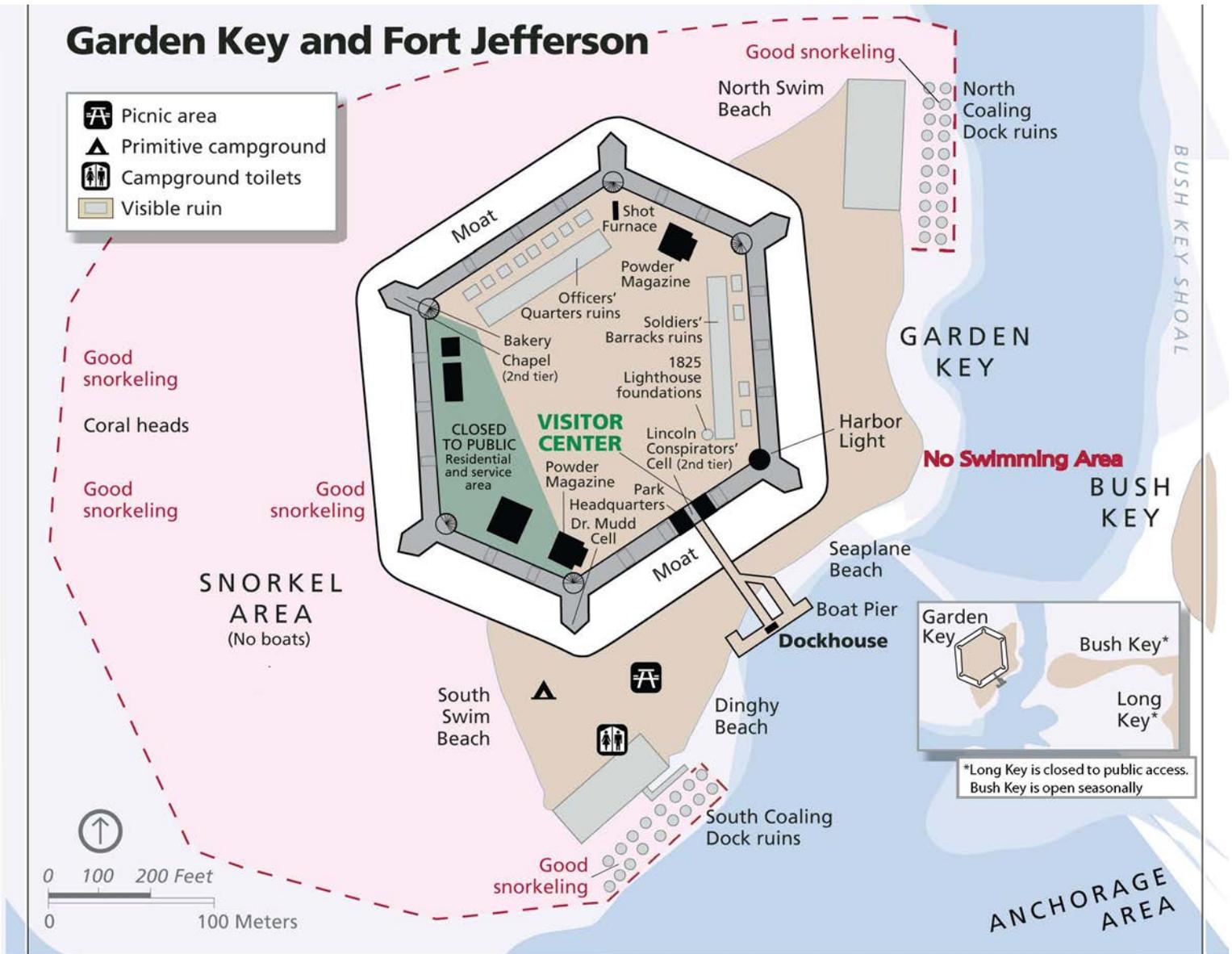


There exists a buffer zone around Bush Key and Long Key. During the seabird nesting season, Bush Key is closed to protect those nesting seabirds. Bush Key is closed to visitation from about mid-January when the birds arrive, until mid-October, when the hatchlings have fledged and all the seabirds have left.

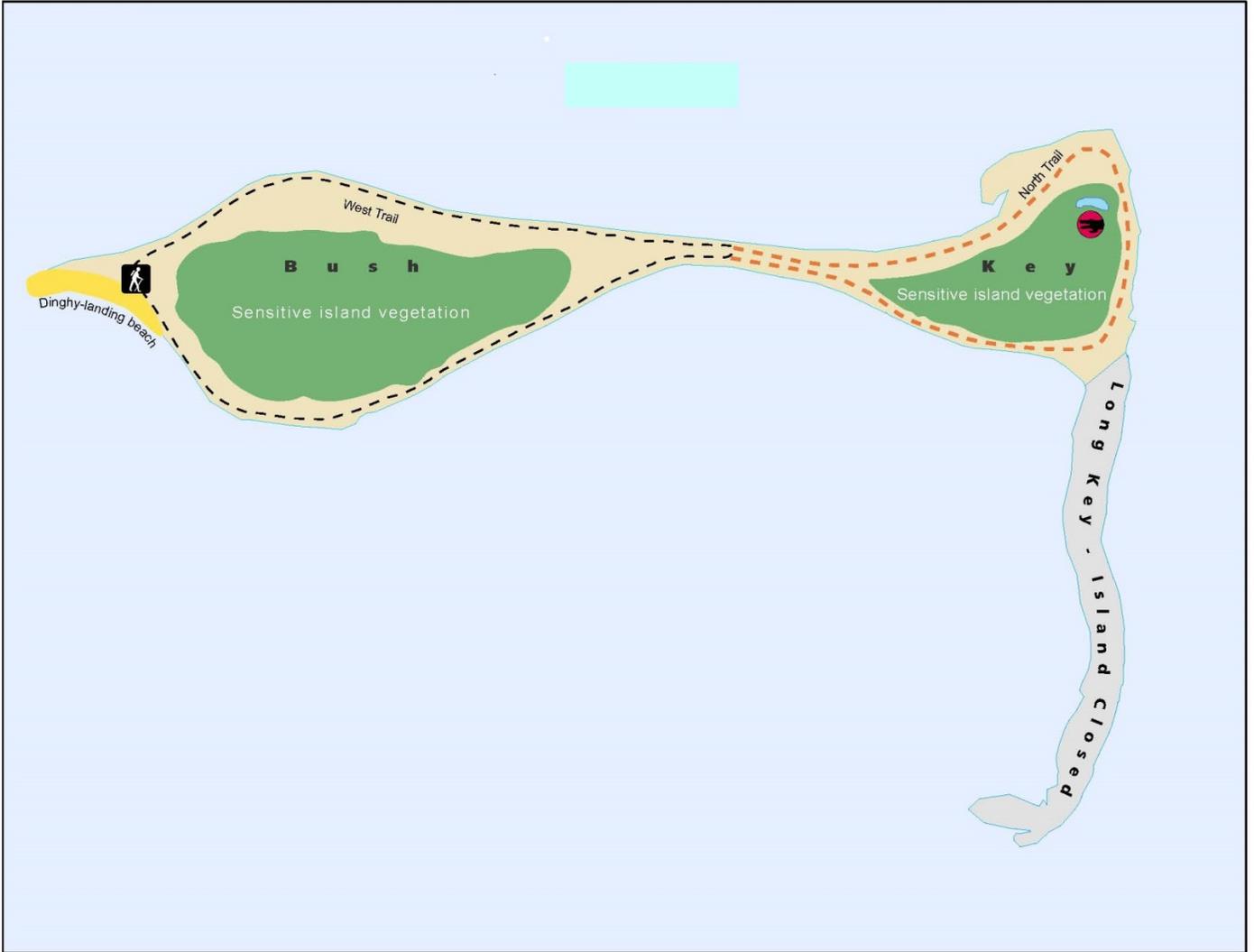
The Long Key buffer zone is in effect year-around due to a nesting rookery of the Magnificent Frigate Bird.

Persons/vessels must maintain 100 feet from the shoreline during times when closures are in effect. The 100 foot buffer zone is marked by white pencil buoys. The location of the buoys shown are representative only and may not reflect their exact location.

APPENDIX F – MAP OF GARDEN KEY SWIM/SNORKEL AREA



APPENDIX G – BUSH KEY MAP



APPENDIX H – MAP OF DESIGNATED AREA FOR PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES AND SALE/DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATTER



DESIGNATED AREAS FOR PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES/MEETINGS AND SALE/DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATTER

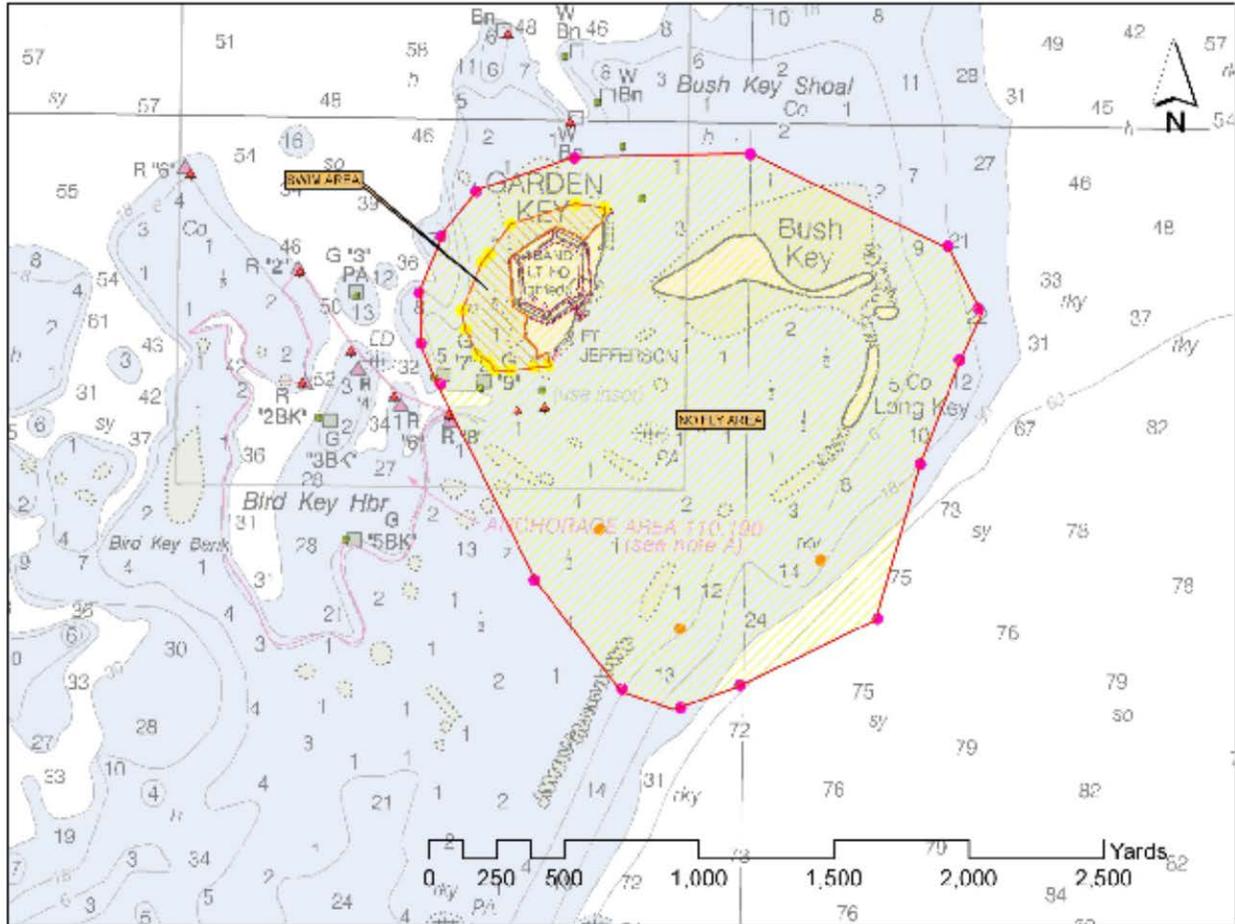
In compliance with 36 CFR 2.51 and 2.52, maps identifying locations approved for public assemblies/meetings and the sale/distribution of printed matter have been prepared. The following areas are designated as inappropriate for these uses based on the criteria set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations.

1. All undeveloped areas of the park are closed to these activities, as these activities would unreasonably impair the atmosphere of peace and tranquility maintained in wilderness, natural, historic or commemorative zones. 36 CFR 2.51(e) (2) and 2.52(e) (3).
2. All offices, exhibit rooms, maintenance areas, natural trails, boat docks, campgrounds, and historic structures are closed as these activities would unreasonably interfere with interpretive, visitor service, or other program activities, or with the administrative activities of the National Park Service. 36 CFR 2.51(e) (2) and 2.52(e) (3).

Public use areas not specifically mentioned above are open as follows:

Garden Key: The land area of Garden Key bounded on the east by the walkway to the public docks, the north by the moat wall, the west by the campground, and the south by the shoreline, as shown on the accompanying map.

APPENDIX I – DRY TORTUGAS NATIONAL PARK NO FLY ZONE



APPENDIX J – SMOKING POLICY

This policy identifies locations and guidelines for smoking pertaining to all public buildings, government administrative buildings, employee work space, and shared employee living space within Dry Tortugas National Park implementing 41 CFR Part 101.20, 36 CFR 2.21, and 310 DM 11. This policy applies to all NPS, contractor, and concessionaire employees and visitors.

Smoking is defined as the use of any flame ignited or electronically vaporized tobacco product or nicotine containing oil or similar product.

Electronic cigarettes are prohibited from use in any designated non-smoking area.

Other electronic smoking devices are prohibited from use in any designated non-smoking area.

All park buildings and vehicles (exception, open boats) are closed to smoking with the only exception being private residential quarters. Shared quarters are closed to smoking.

The interior of Fort Jefferson (starting at the wooden bridge) is closed to smoking with the exception of private residential quarters.

Smoking is permitted outdoors, however disposal of cigarette butts should be in appropriate receptacles.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Employees will not be allowed to walk through non-smoking areas while smoking or carrying lighted tobacco products.

Employees and supervisors who smoke should not request permission to smoke of nonsmokers. Asking a subordinate if he/she objects to the supervisor smoking is inappropriate considering the supervisor/subordinate relationship.

Smoking receptacles should be used in all “Smoking” areas.

Smoking is not permitted when traveling in Government vehicles.

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICY

Employees must not attempt to personally enforce the regulations by confronting other employees. Employees who believe that smoking regulations are being violated should report such violations to their immediate supervisor or, if he/she is violating the policy, to the next supervisory level or union representative.

Disputes should be resolved through informal discussions at the lowest level possible.

Supervisors must exercise sound and reasonable judgment in enforcing the smoking policy.

APPENDIX K

STATEMENTS OF FINDING IN SUPPORT OF CLOSURES DRTO SUPERINTENDENT'S COMPENDIUM – 2015

On January 19, 2007, special regulations for Dry Tortugas National Park (DRTO) went into effect. They are codified in 36 CFR §7.27. These regulations replaced the special regulations for the abolished Fort Jefferson National Monument. They also implemented provisions for visitor use and resource protection identified in the 2001 General Management Plan Amendment (GMPA).

Many of the regulations previously in effect at DRTO via the Superintendent's Compendium are now found in the special regulations. The compendium identifies specific restrictions, conditions, public use limits and closures using the discretionary authority of the superintendent granted by Chapter 1, Part 1 of 36 CFR §1.5(a). They are actions deemed necessary for the administration of the park in concert with its enabling legislation and NPS management policies for the benefit of the resource and the visitor. Articulations of the reasons for closures are set forth in this justification as required by 36 CFR §1.5 (c).

§1.5(a) (1) Public Use Limits

Possession of food and drink by visitors is prohibited inside the Fort, except water. This restriction will prevent clutter of the historic scene by litter, and attraction of insects, birds and Norway rats.

Food and drink in glass containers are not permitted on any of the islands. The purpose of this regulation is to prevent visitor injuries by keeping glass off the beaches and other areas where people walk barefooted. An exception to this restriction is made to allow employees, their guests, and VIP's to possess glass containers in the designated residence area of the park and campers using the Garden Key Campground.

The use of bright lights must be minimized to maintain a night sky that meets the expectations of park visitors so as to not create excessive or unnecessary light.

Balloons are prohibited because they present a threat to scenic and environmental values, are non-biodegradable and when entering the water are a threat to endangered sea turtles as they resemble jellyfish which are a primary dietary item for sea turtles.

What restrictions apply to swimming and diving?

Diving from sunrise to sunset outside 1 nautical mile of the Garden Key Light requires a permit to enable monitoring of activities and enhance safety in a remote ocean location.

There are several areas where frequent vessel traffic makes swimming hazardous. Areas such as an active harbor or channel, seaplane beach and dinghy beaches are closed to recreational swimming. As a safety measure, entering and exiting the water is permitted only at the designated swim beaches. Swimming, snorkeling and diving outside those areas requires a dive flag to increase visibility and safety. The moat is closed to swimming, snorkeling and diving due to poor water quality and to protect resources in shallow water. Accessing the Garden Key swim area from the moat wall is prohibited for safety reasons and to protect cultural and natural marine resources which are abundant along the wall.

What restrictions apply to boating?

Vessel operators are responsible for assuring the vessel's anchor is holding and no emergencies occur. It is prudent to require operators to check on their vessels at least every 4 hours.

Due to space limitations on the Garden Key dock and visitor slips, restrictions have been identified to assure availability by the commercial ferry boats, the park's service vessel and the public.

Vessels are not permitted to anchor in any active channel; doing so is illegal and creates a dangerous hazard to navigation.

Due to draft and anchoring constraints, vessels over 110 feet (50 m) must obtain a permit prior to arrival.

What restrictions apply to the use of park mooring balls?

All visitor use mooring balls in the Research Natural Area are limited to 2 hours per day to allow others use of the mooring. Visitor use mooring balls may only be used from sunrise to sunset as anchoring outside 1 nautical mile of the Garden Key Light between sunset and sunrise is prohibited and the moorings replace the act of anchoring. Vessels over 110 feet (50 m) are prohibited from using the visitor use mooring balls as the moorings are not designed to hold larger vessels. Vessels must follow procedures for attaching to balls to not damage the system and cause failure. Vessels are prohibited from using the government mooring ball in Garden Key Harbor to assure access for park vessels and emergencies.

What restrictions apply to the use of Bush Key?

Bush Key is open as designated by the park superintendent when tern nesting season is complete. For safety reasons Bush Key is open from sunrise to sunset. To reduce damage to shallow marine areas and island vegetation, vessels may only access Bush key at the designated dinghy beach, visitors must stay below the vegetation line and above the low water line (unless on a designated trail or route) and entering or exiting the water off the shore to swim, dive or snorkel is prohibited.

When extant, fishing from the isthmus (land bridge) between Garden and Bush Keys is prohibited. This is due to the high volume of foot traffic between the keys and the increased possibility of conflicting use between hikers and anglers as well as its proximity to ecologically sensitive and protected areas.

What restrictions apply to fishing?

Fishing off Government slips at Garden Key is prohibited to provide security and quick access to park vessels for emergencies and safety to visitors in an area where lines and equipment may be on the dock.

Fishing from the shoreline is permitted from the west dinghy beach, but no closer than 50 feet (15 m) from the concrete wall of the coaling dock ruins.

Fishing is permitted from the two easternmost visitor courtesy piers, provided that they are not occupied by a private vessel. In that case, fishing by the occupants of the boat is permissible.

Fishing from the main dock is allowed when the Yankee Freedom Ferry is not present.

Fishing from the dinghy beach immediately adjacent to and east of the main dock is allowed.

Fishing from the seaplane beach is allowed when the seaplane is not present.

What areas are closed to the public?

To protect government and personal property, all residential and administrative areas, as well as areas marked by barricades or signs are off-limits to the public.

Government slips and associated docks on Garden Key are closed to public access to provide security and quick access to park vessels for emergencies and safety to visitors in an area where lines and equipment may be on the dock.

The interior of the Fort is closed sunset to sunrise to protect residential quarters, government equipment, and historical resources. It also prohibits visitors from climbing on the walls and damaging resources or injuring themselves in the dark. The interior of the Fort, including stairwells, is unlit and the top of the Fort wall and the interior edges of the casemates have no safety rails.

Bush Key is closed as designated for protection of the Sooty and Brown Noddy Terns during nesting season. This island is the site of the largest nesting colonies of these two species in the continental United States.

Hospital Key, Middle Key and East Key are closed to protect nesting birds and nesting sea turtles. The Masked Booby colony can change nesting locations yearly and is facilitated by closing these keys. East and Middle Keys have been identified as critical nesting beaches for sea turtles. All sea turtles are listed on the Endangered Species List.

The area designated as the “Shark Special Protection Zone” is closed to the public. The area has been designated a “special protection zone” critical to nurse sharks during mating season and protection year round.