National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fire Island National Seashore
Patchogue, New York

6th Biennial

Fire Island National Seashore Planning, Science and Research Conference

Abstracts of Presentations

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Welcome/Orientation
General Management Planning and 21st Century Relevancy

During the summer of 2006, the National Park Service initiated the process of creating a new General Management Plan for Fire Island National Seashore. The park's current GMP was completed in 1977—30 years ago—and many changes in management philosophy, status of resources, availability of funding and staffing, and visitation patterns have ensued over those three decades. These issues will be focused toward how the Seashore stays relevant into the 21st century.

As recommended in the existing GMP and in anticipation of funding for the new GMP, the National Park Service began conducting pertinent research over the past few decades. These biennial science conferences are an avenue to relate the status of research to the general public and to other scientists and resource managers.

We appreciate your attendance at our biennial science conference to relate the state of our science and research.

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Returning the Past to the Present: Bringing the 1st Order Fresnel Lens to the Fire Island Light Station

This presentation will provide a brief overview of the project to acquire and return a First Order Fresnel Lens to the Fire Island Light Station.

In 1933, a 1st Order Fresnel Lens was removed from the Fire Island Light Station Tower as work began to electrify the navigational beacon. This lens, illuminated by a variety of fuels and lamps, had been in operation since the 1850s. The lens was loaned to the Franklin Institute, a Science and Technology Museum, located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. From 1933 to 2000, the lens was the literal and figurative focal point of the Physics Exhibit.

The National Park Service and the Fire Island Lighthouse Preservation Society are both actively involved in research, planning and design of a structure to house the lens. Integrating the history of technology, construction and people with landscape features and protecting, preserving and exhibiting the lens presents a number of unique and challenging issues and has forged a genuine partnership project.

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Coastal Dunes: 1976 – 2000

In 1976, the Fire Island foredune crestline was identified and mapped on aerial photographs. The line was registered to county tax maps to serve as the basis for the Dune Management District, an area of land- use control extending inland 40 ft (12.2 m) from the mapped crestline. More recently, the same interpreter applied the same criteria to interpret the foredune crestline on aerial photographs taken in 2000, complemented by LIDAR imagery. Comparison of the two crestline positions reveals both a general trend of change as well as locations of great variation. Overall, the foredune crestline has shifted inland a average of 13 m (42.7 m). Major deviations from the mean occur near Moriches Inlet (+50 m [165 ft]), at Cherry Grove, (+23 m [75 ft]), updrift of the groins at Ocean Beach (+2.9 m [9.5 ft], downdrift of the groins at Ocean Beach (- 29 m [95 ft], and a few other places. After adjusting for the local positive and negative effects of Moriches Inlet, the average inland crestline displacement is 16.7 m (58 ft) In many of the communities, the shifts have exceeded the dimensions of the Dune Management District. This presentation will examine the distribution and magnitudes of the changes over this period.

Panel Chair:
Mary J. Foley
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Panel Presentation:
Storm Damage Reduction Planning for the South Shore of Long Island

In this session, the USACE will present an update on the status of storm damage reduction and environmental improvement projects being considered for the Fire Island to Montauk Point Reformulation Plan. The state and federal conservation agencies (DOS, DEC, NPS, FWS) involved in the planning will discuss their agencies' participation and perspectives on some of the plan alternatives. They will also present some of their agencies' short and long term goals for the South Shore of Long Island with a focus on Fire Island.

Robin Lepore,
Coastal Management Specialist
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Status of Off- Road Vehicle (ORV) Regulation within Fire Island National Seashore

In this session, the history of Off- Road Vehicle (ORV) regulation within Fire Island National Seashore will be reviewed. In 2002, the Secretary of the Interior chartered a formal advisory group composed of two dozen stakeholder representatives to attempt to revise the existing rules. This group operated through a consensus process, called a Negotiated Rule-Making process. The presentation will cover the issues which it addressed, those which it was able to resolve, and those which it could not resolve. The status of the current draft regulations will also be covered.

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A GIS- based Website for the Dissemination of Coastal Erosion Monitoring Data on the South Shore of Long Island, New York

The Atlantic Coast of New York Erosion Monitoring Program (ACNYMP), a joint effort of the New York Department of State (NYDOS), the New York District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and New York Sea Grant initiated in 1995, collects information and data on beach changes and coastal processes along the 210- kilometer ocean shoreline of Long Island, New York. To date, the program has collected over 3,400 beach profile surveys at 426 locations and annual or semi- annual aerial photo surveys of the entire shoreline. Data and information such as historical shorelines, topography, locations of structures, flood zone delineations, *etc.* from other coastal projects have also been compiled and digitized as part of this effort. The goal of the ACNYMP is to provide coastal managers, regulators, government officials and the public with information that will allow them to make better decisions regarding coastal erosion hazard management. To encourage use of these data, NYSG and NYDOS worked with NOAA's Coastal Service Center to develop a GIS- based web site to disseminate monitoring program data more efficiently to a wider range of audiences. The ACNYMP Data Viewing Tool (http://dune.seagrant.sunysb.edu\nycoast) uses ESRI's ArcIMS software with customized java scripts and allows the user to search, view, and perform simple analyses on the data using any Internet browser. An integrated photo viewer module displays digitized orthogonal aerial photographs, allowing the user to simultaneously view multiple sequential aerial photographic surveys of the entire shoreline both spatially and temporally. Similarly, multiple beach profiles can be displayed and manipulated using a special profile- viewing tool. Multiple data sets can be overlaid on digital orthophoto quad base maps with resolutions of up to 0.5 feet and saved as image files or printed as high-resolution, large format (11" by 17") images. The site and associated data can be used for a variety of audiences for a range of purposes including; the development and design of erosion mitigation projects, permit review, and research efforts.

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A New National Park Service Initiative of Ocean Stewardship: Opportunities for Fire Island National Seashore and Great South Bay

The National Park Service (NPS) recently (December 2006) issued an Ocean Park Stewardship Action Plan, identifying strategies to increase conservation and management of ocean/marine resources under its jurisdiction. The ongoing General Management Plan process at Fire Island National Seashore provides an outstanding opportunity to consider strategies for enhanced ocean stewardship at the Seashore that will serve to increase our knowledge of the natural and cultural resources within the park, promote restoration and resource protection, foster partnerships, and engage park visitors, park staff, and neighbors in ocean stewardship. This Special Session will focus on opportunities available to Fire Island National Seashore to become more engaged in marine resource protection and will include perspectives from ongoing ecosystem- based conservation initiatives in Great South Bay. Academic colleagues will comment on a research agenda aimed at furthering our understanding of the functions served by shallow estuarine habitats of Great South Bay.

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Analysis of the Shallow Ground- Water Flow System at Fire Island National Seashore, Suffolk County, New York

Fire Island National Seashore (hereafter referred to as FIIS) occupies 26 miles of the barrier island for which it is named that lies off the southern shore of Long Island, New York. Interspersed throughout FIIS are 17 residential beach communities that in summer months greatly increase in population through the arrival of summer residents and vacationers, and in addition, the National Park Service (NPS) has established several facilities on the island to accommodate visitors to the National Seashore. The 2.2 million people estimated by the NPS to annually visit Fire Island pose a threat to ground- water quality as a result of the aquifer system's generally high permeability and thin unsaturated zone. Ground water contaminated by elevated nutrient levels and by pathogens in wastewater, and other human- derived substances such as organic compounds, can move through the aquifer and in turn threaten the ecological health of the adjacent back bays to which the ground water ultimately discharges.

In 2004, the U.S. Geological Survey, in cooperation with the NPS, established a 3- year program of (1) ground- water data collection that included water- level measurement and water- quality analysis, (2) development of a three- dimensional model of the shallow aquifer system and adjacent marine surface waters to identify ground- water flow patterns and rates, and (3) calculation of nitrogen loads in simulated ground-water discharges from this system to the back- barrier estuaries and the ocean.

The shallow aquifer system was characterized from the results of exploratory drilling, water- level monitoring, water- quality sampling, geophysical surveying, and flow modeling that were conducted during this study. The investigation focused on four areas—the communities of Kismet and Robbins Rest, the NPS visitor center at Watch Hill, and the undeveloped Otis Pike Fire Island High Dune Wilderness. Thirty- five observation wells were installed within FIIS to characterize subsurface hydrogeology and establish a water- table- monitoring network in the four study areas. Three sets of water- level elevations were collected at all wells to identify the directions of ground-water flow and provide data for flow- model calibration. One well in each study area also was equipped with a continuous water- level recorder to document ground-water fluctuations due to natural recharge, tides, and other factors such as wave height and wastewater disposal. Water samples were collected from all wells and analyzed to determine the spatial distribution of nutrients from wastewater and natural sources. A subset of these wells was resampled to assess the seasonal variability of nutrient concentrations. Results suggest that total nitrogen (TN) concentrations within the communities are comparable to those in similar settings along coastal areas of the southern Long Island mainland. The highest TN concentrations—up to 10 milligrams per liter (mg/L)—were found downgradient of the Watch Hill leach field; the lowest—less than 0.1 mg/L—were within the National Wilderness.

Model results indicate that the direction of fresh ground- water movement throughout FIIS is controlled primarily by the combined effect of wave setup and tidal pumping, which together heighten the water table near the ocean shore. This water-table over- height directs most ground- water flow and associated contaminants away from the ocean and toward the back bays and, therefore, has important consequences for ground- water- resource management within the park, which must consider most of the island as a potential source area to the adjacent wetland and estuarine habitats within the boundaries of FIIS.

Sara Stevens
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The Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network Natural Resource Inventory and Monitoring Program

Fire Island National Seashore is one of eight National Park units that comprise the NPS Northeast Coastal and Barrier Inventory and Monitoring Network (NCBN). As part of the National Park Service's effort to "improve park management through greater reliance on scientific knowledge," a primary role of the Inventory and Monitoring (I&M) Program is to collect, organize, and make available natural resource data and to contribute to the Service's institutional knowledge by facilitating the transformation of data into information through analysis, synthesis, and modeling. Specific goals of the program include inventorying natural resources and park ecosystems under National Park Service stewardship to determine their nature and status and monitor park ecosystems to better understand their dynamic nature and condition and to provide reference points for comparisons with other, altered environments. The NCBN has collaborated with park managers and subject matter experts to develop an issue based "Vital Signs" monitoring program to assess the ecological integrity of its parks, including Fire Island National Seashore. The Network is now developing protocols to monitor such things as shoreline change, estuarine nutrient enrichment, nitrogen inputs to parks, salt marsh vegetation and nekton.

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Submarine Groundwater Discharge (SGD) along Fire Island Seashore into Great South Bay

Groundwater enters Great South Bay both under the north shore of the bay and from Fire Island. Groundwater from Fire Island also reaches the coastal ocean. Previously determined water budgets include a discharge of freshwater across the bay floor of about 0.1, 0.4 or 1.4 x 10^9 L d^{-1}. Based on direct measurements only along the bay's north shore, a total combined discharge of both fresh and salty groundwater across the bay flow was estimated to be between 0.3 and 1.3 x 10^9 L d^{-1}. A recently completed budget of dissolved radium in the bay, used as a geochemical tracer of groundwater, was calculated to represent an SGD flux of between about 5.4 and 7 x 10^9 L d^{-1}; these water fluxes are approximately 10% of the tidal prism volume and 1% of the total bay volume. These volume fluxes represent an average submarine groundwater discharge (SGD) of about 3 cm d^{-1} (cubic centimeters of pore water per square centimeter of sediment per day), which is consistent with available, direct measurements.

Along the north shore of Fire Island, direct measurements of SGD were made at Talisman, Sailors Haven and Watch Hill. SGD at Talisman reached rates over 20 cm d^{-1} near the shore. SGD here showed a tidal modulation with infiltration occurring during high tide, and an exponential decrease with distance from shore. SGD appears to be driven by both the differences in hydraulic head between the bay and the ocean, and by the onshore hydraulic gradient. SGD at rates greater than 25 cm d^{-1} was observed offshore at Sailors Haven and Watch Hill. Elevated values offshore could be due to leakage from deep aquifers or to heterogeneities in the bay floor creating pathways of greater hydraulic conductivity. Local areas of low flow rates (less than 4 cm d^{-1}) are likely to be underlain by sediments of low hydraulic conductivity such as a buried salt marsh peat discovered at Watch Hill. The presence of the bulkheaded harbor at Talisman did not seem to alter the local SGD.

During the summer between 6 June and 25 July, 2005, the water table elevation across Watch Hill decreased at a rate of about 4 mm/day, while during the same period the water table at the Pines rose 3 mm/day, the same rate calculated for the artificial recharge. Artificial recharge apparently is sufficient not only to prevent losses due to evapotranspiration from depressing the water table, but also to elevate the water table above pre- summer levels. Artificial recharge during the summer also appears to be rapid enough to raise the water table without immediately depressing the saltwater/freshwater interface.

SGD along the ocean shore should be driven by the same mechanisms as on the bay side of the barrier island, though enhanced by the presence of waves and a greater tidal range. SGD along the ocean shoreline, however, is not likely to be an influential factor of sediment stability and mobility. Even in populated areas, where the water table was elevated during the summer due to waste- water discharge and the hydraulic gradient may be doubled, the expected, associated SGD would be too low to be significant in the transport of sediment.

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Water Quality Monitoring Program for Great South Bay and Adjacent Waters, Fire Island National Seashore, Patchogue, New York

Fire Island National Seashore (FINS) has identified 14 locations in Great South Bay to monitor for Total and Fecal Coliform, Chlorophyll- a, Conductivity, Dissolved Oxygen (DO), Nitrates, pH, Phosphates, Salinity, Turbidity, and Temperature. These parameters are critical in determining long- term water quality conditions Park- wide. Methodology for monitoring parameters are provided by National Park Service (NPS) Director's Order #83 (National Park Service 1999), and the *Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater* (Clesceri et al., 1998).

Criteria for determining water quality conditions in marine/estuarine systems are based on the type of contact (uses) people have with the water system. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EA) guidelines for primary contact (bathing) uses are employed by the National Park Service as criteria to monitor water quality. Public health risk and environmental health issues are both addressed in NPS Director's Order #83, which is currently implemented for water quality programs.

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Effects of Bulkheads on the Bay Shore of Fire Island National Seashore

This project assesses the effects of bayside bulkheads on resources in Fire Island National Seashore and suggests alternative actions for protecting against beach erosion. Components include 1) identifying the characteristics of shore- parallel protection structures; 2) identifying their effect in creating drift compartments; 3) identifying park resources that are affected; 4) conducting a detailed field study at one of the bulkheads to identify short- term changes in beach processes, sediment transport and beach topography; 5) conducting annual ground- level measurements east and west of four bulkheads to identify long- term erosion rates; and 6) providing guidelines for alternative shore- protection strategies.

The detailed field study occurred 14 to 25 October 2004 in front of and adjacent to a bulkhead on the east side of the community of Cherry Grove. Wind speed and direction were monitored using a wind vane and anemometer. Longshore currents and wave orbital velocities were measured using an electromagnetic current meter. Water- level data were collected using pressure transducers placed 1 m and 10 m bayward of the bulkhead and on the low tide terrace on three shore- perpendicular transects east of the structure. Topography was measured at 1- m intervals along the transects. Sediment samples were taken on the beach, low tide terrace, and eroding upland. Estimates of longshore sediment transport rates at mid surf zone were obtained using streamer traps. Results reveal that wave reflection off the structure is conspicuous, but there is little difference in depth of activation of sediment on the low tide terrace adjacent to the structure relative to locations away from the structure. Conspicuous changes in beach profile occur on the foreshore near the structure, with pronounced erosion and accretion cycles occurring with shifts in wind direction from northwest to northeast.

The annual topographic surveys are being conducted in the fall from 2004 to 2008 on the east and west sides of bulkheads at Fire Island Pines, Cherry Grove, Sailors Haven and Kismet at distances varying from 2 m to 68 m from the ends of the structures. Supplemental sites 260 m east and 168 m west of Fire Island Pines are being surveyed beginning in 2006 to serve as control sites, free of bulkhead influence. The greatest rate of erosion of the upland 2004- 2005 was 3.3 m at a site 65 m east of the end of the bulkhead at Fire Island Pines. Changes on the active beach were greater than changes in upland position, with 7.6 m of beach accretion occurring immediately east of the bulkhead at Cherry Grove. Less upland erosion occurred 2005- 2006, when beaches east of the bulkheads had greater erosion rates. Pronounced differences in shoreline change between sites and within sites occur because outcrops of peat substrate, beach wrack and tree roots act as local sediment traps and divide the shore into numerous small drift cells and erosional hot spots. Bulkheads increase the mobility of beaches immediately adjacent to them, but are only one of the factors contributing to fluctuations in the bay shoreline.

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Relationships of Sea- Level Rise, Barrier Island Processes, and Salt Marshes at Fire Island National Seashore

The geomorphic development and maintenance of back- barrier salt marshes is controlled by many factors including sea- level rise, estuarine circulation patterns, sediment loads, and barrier island landward migration processes. Over the past 50- 90 years, sea level in the vicinity of Fire Island has been rising at a rate of about 2.8- 3.9 mm y^{-1} and this rate is predicted to accelerate with global warming. Marsh surface elevation must keep pace with the rise in sea level. With sea level rise greater than marsh surface elevation increase, marshes will become submerged, marsh soils become waterlogged, and plant growth becomes stressed, often resulting in conversion of vegetation-dominated marsh to mudflat or open water habitat. It appears that some marshes in the NY area are not keeping pace with the rise in sea level and are drowning (e.g., Jamaica Bay).

The purpose of this study was to determine if Fire Island salt marshes are keeping pace with sea level and to evaluate processes that are most influential in controlling salt marsh development and maintenance. Based on the chronology of sediment cores, the existing broad expanses of salt marsh on Fire Island (e.g., Great Gun, Hospital Point-Old Inlet) began formation about 200- 400 years ago and are associated with storm-induced inlets and barrier island overwash events. To evaluate current trends in marsh development processes, marsh surface elevation tables (SET) were installed at three marsh sites along the barrier island in 2002. During the past 4 years, the increase in marsh surface elevation was less than the long- term record of sea- level rise, and in fact one site showed an elevation decline. If this trend were to continue, it is likely that the Fire Island marshes will become wetter; however, our 4 year sampling period represents a brief moment in the long- term record of marsh development. Our deep core chronologies show episodes of great variability in marsh sedimentation rates over the past century, but continued monitoring will determine if the current marsh elevation deficit represents a short or long- term trend.

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Assessing Changes Associated with Beach Scraping to the Beach/Dune System at Fire Island National Seashore

Fire Island National Seashore (FIIS) makes up the majority of a ~52 km long barrier island that runs along the south shore of Long Island, New York. Within FIIS are a number of private communities with houses and community infrastructure, and in many cases these are built on or just behind the primary dune line. A series of severe storms in the early 1990s caused widespread damage to many houses and boardwalks. In response to these damaging storms, many communities began to create protective, artificial dunes along the beach- front row of houses by bulldozing sand from the beach face to the back beach area, a practice known as beach scraping. The National Park Service has granted permits for scraping as recently as 2006, and in light of the park service policy that requires that natural coastal processes be maintained as much as possible, there is some concern as to whether the practice of scraping may be permanently altering the natural resources in the park, both in the scraped and adjacent unscraped areas.

This study is designed to provide information on the impacts of beach scraping along two study sites on Fire Island, one on the western side of the park near Fire Island Lighthouse, and the other on the eastern side of the park near Otis Pike Fire Island High Dune Wilderness Area. Each study site contains portions of the beach where scraping has taken place, and areas that have not been scraped. In addition, each area encompasses both developed and undeveloped locales.

In order to investigate the impacts of beach scraping, we are first characterizing the geomorphology of FIIS, with a concentration on the beach and dunes, and mapping how the beach and dunes respond seasonally over relatively short time periods. This is being accomplished through semi- annual topographic surveys. By comparing the topography from one time period to the next, we are mapping spatial variations in beach change, as well as quantifying volumetric losses and gains. In addition, beach profiles for the areas are well- established and provide a greater temporal dataset for assessing permanent modification to the beach/dune system. Profile data exist from just before the first beach scraping began, and have been collected repeatedly over the past fourteen years. The profiles are being converted to tabular, digital format and beach characteristics and changes to the characteristics are being quantified. For longer term assessments, we will be creating a database of historical topography based on aerial photography, with which we will determine long- term volumetric changes to the system.

Results of our initial field surveys have indicated erosional/accretional cells with length scales of approximately 500 m, which are consistent in both the western and eastern study areas. These are likely related to the absence (or presence) of nearshore bars wherein material in the erosional areas is transported towards the offshore through breaks in the discontinuous bar system.

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Results from the Implementation of the Distance Sampling Population Estimate Method for Determining White- tailed Deer Frequency throughout Fire Island National Seashore

The distance sampling transect method has been implemented on Fire Island National Seashore's island communities as a means for determining white- tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) frequency. Results have shown that communities have experienced the full spectrum of potential results, from a dramatic decrease in white- tailed deer herd numbers, to steady population numbers, to an increase in population numbers in some communities. Scientists from United States Geological Surveys (USGS) and National Park Service (NPS) continue to conduct this research to gain a better understanding of population distribution patterns for white- tailed deer.

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Mosquito Surveillance and Transmission Patterns of West Nile Virus

Mosquitoes were surveyed on Fire Island in 2001 using CO_2- baited CDC miniature light traps, and gravid traps baited with hay infusion and oak leaf infusion. Common species included *Aedes sollicitans*, *Aedes vexans*, and *Culex pipiens*, which are also abundant in Fire Island National Seashore's surveillance samples. These species can potentially serve as vectors of West Nile Virus (WNV), and a study is currently underway of possible sites of viral activity on Fire Island. This project is part of a larger study that includes analysis of WNV transmission patterns in parts of Suffolk County, and transmission dynamics of WNV between birds and mosquitoes at Gateway National Recreation Area, NY. The overall goal of this study is to develop effective surveillance tools that can predict epizootic activity of this virus, and provide information for efficient management.

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Fire Island National Seashore Mosquito Surveillance and Management Program

The Fire Island National Seashore (FIIS) mosquito surveillance and management program was implemented in 1998 in response to public concern over Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), and later West Nile Virus (WNV). Although in the past six years there have been a few relatively common isolations of WNV in two areas (Watch Hill/Davis Park and Saltaire), there has not been a strong consistency in where WNV has been detected on FIIS. Mosquito sampling for the 2006 trapping season began on June 9th and the last traps were set on September 25th. A total of 17 traps were maintained throughout the park in six different surveillance sites for the entire season. Two types of traps were used: CO_2- baited light traps and gravid traps (baited with fermented organic water). Typically, the light traps yielded a significantly greater amount of mosquitoes than the gravid traps. In 2006, only a single WNV- positive mosquito pool was detected within the FIIS jurisdictional boundaries, a collection isolated from the Watch Hill employee residence area. Though this trap location is one at which FIIS had not previously sampled, this detection (along with others from this area in the past) suggests frequent circulation of WNV in the Watch Hill/Davis Park locale. Therefore, sampling should continue to increase our understanding of viral transmission patterns at this site.

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Park Flight: Monitoring Overwintering Survival & Evaluation of International Avian Wintering Habitat

Efforts to gather data on avian species goes beyond what occurs each summer season along Fire Island National Seashore (FIIS). Piping plovers, as well as numerous other species of migratory birds, travel south each fall to their wintering habitats. The *Monitoring Overwintering Survival* (M.o.S.I.) program was created during 2002- 3 when 29 avian monitoring stations were established throughout areas in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. It is the goal of the M.o.S.I. program to provide estimates of monthly, overwintering and annual survival rates; as well as provide indices of late winter physical conditions for migratory avian species. Since 2003, personal efforts have been conducted in areas of Costa Rica, National Parks in Panama, and Connecticut, North America in an effort to collect data utilizing mist-netting procedures and banding stations across wintering ranges for migratory bird species as a means to link winter population parameters with breeding season vital rates and population trends.

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Recent Trends and Observations in Piping Plover Abundance and Productivity throughout Fire Island National Seashore

Since its designation as a federally threatened species under the Endangered Species Act in1986, the status of the piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) has been closely monitored throughout the beaches of Fire Island National Seashore. Within the past decade, monitoring data collected each breeding season have displayed a significant rise in the number of piping plover breeding pairs and chick productivity. Increased population trends, predominantly along the seven-mile stretch of the Otis W. Pike Wilderness Area have resulted in modifications and adaptations to current monitoring techniques and methods. Continuing efforts in public outreach and education have proven to be critical for the species success.

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Fire Island

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fire Island National Seashore
Long Island, New York

Fire Island Inlet at Sunset

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

Fire Island has been a special place for a diversity of plants and animals and people for centuries. Today, its unspoiled beaches provide habitat for sensitive flora and fauna, and solitude and spiritual renewal to civilization-weary people.

Fire Island National Seashore provides a variety of opportunities to explore and enjoy an Atlantic Coast barrier island ecosystem and its history. Thank you for helping protect and preserve this American treasure.