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## Gateway News Release

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### **Changes Will Help Motorists Exit Sandy Hook NPS and NJ DOT Develop Plan to Ease Congestion**

In an effort to better manage the traffic delays leaving Sandy Hook caused by New Jersey's Highlands Bridge replacement project, today National Park Service officials met with representatives from the New Jersey Department of Transportation (DOT), including the Director of the Division of Traffic Operations and the Director of the Division of Construction Services and Materials. "The meeting was extremely productive," said Dave Avrin, Superintendent of the Sandy Hook Unit of the Gateway National Recreation Area. "The DOT definitely shares our concerns about the impact the bridge construction is having on our visitors. We have worked together to find workable traffic flow solutions for years, and beginning this weekend we will all be implementing some changes that will make a difference to motorists when they exit the park," Avrin added.

Some of the changes made by the DOT will include a new timing sequence of traffic lights to bring vehicles off Sandy Hook more efficiently, improved communications by DOT employees with the local police who are directing traffic at intersections, and setting up the opportunity for park visitors to find out the status of traffic back-ups through the New Jersey 511 telephone traffic info line.

At the park level, on busy weekends when overcrowded roads are anticipated, Gateway staff will limit the number of cars that can enter Sandy Hook. Currently on a summer Saturday or Sunday up to 6,500 cars typically enter the park. Beginning Saturday, July 25 that number will be reduced by approximately 1,000 vehicles.

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“Between the actions taken by the DOT outside Sandy Hook and the changes we’re making internally, the time it will take visitors to exit Sandy Hook will be reduced, although only time and experience will tell us by exactly how much,” stated Avrin. He added, “Arriving early and leaving as early as noon is the best way to try to avoid traffic delays. And although swimming is only permitted when our lifeguards go on duty at 10 a.m., sitting on the beach and enjoying the early morning sun is a great experience at Sandy Hook.”

For additional information, call the Sandy Hook Visitor Center at 732-872-5970.

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