



Limited Beach Access

Please stay in the areas as depicted within the red line on this image and within the boundaries established by the two “Area Closed” signs.

On September 8, 2011, Tropical Storm Lee began making his presence known by deluging an already saturated Northern Neck of Virginia. Westmoreland County received record breaking rains, culminating in Lee dumping nearly 26 inches in 24 hours. Hurricane Irene had just passed through the area two weeks before, most of the damages at George Washington Birthplace National Monument consisted of downed trees. Lee, however, proved far more destructive. The already saturated ground resulted in more trees being felled, loss of portions of trail around Burnt House Point near the Memorial House and loss of land along the Potomac shorelines as flood waters removed beaches, scoured marshes, and deposited a vegetation debris field almost two miles down stream from Bridges Creek to Popes Creek. Bridges Creek is the marsh and stream system to the left of this parking area and had six feet of flood waters flowing from bank to bank. As the waters flowed over park lands, it gouged the hole on the left side of the beach, front and left of the parking area.

Although the damage is severe, it will be interesting to see how recovery takes place on its own. Successive storms, such as nor'easters and future tropical depressions, will rework the sands and beaches erasing some of the effects of Lee and creating others. Vegetation is already beginning to grow and stabilize some of the sands and it is our hope that some of this vegetation will remain to provide some much needed protection along the coast. In an effort to allow the area to recover on its own, the National Park Service has provided limited access to the beach. Visitors can help by staying within the boundaries of the two “Area Closed” signs and by watching where one walks to avoid stepping on emerging vegetation. Your assistance is greatly appreciated and we will all see what natural recovery will do in the years to come.



Please stay between the two “Area Closed” signs and avoid trampling emerging vegetation. There are about 100 yards of cleared beach to safely walk.



Please avoid crossing into and onto scoured areas and climbing on unstable banks.



Please keep children off the steep banks. This area was land on September 7th, and is now a new estuary. The banks are delicate and the grasses are beginning to take root.