



# Beach Access News

Town of Chincoteague  
Assateague Beach Access Committee

December 2010



## **Public Scoping Comments Submitted**

The Chincoteague Town Council has approved the recommendation of our Beach Access Committee to submit the results of the Town Questionnaire. There were over 1,200 individual comments about important issues to consider as the National Wildlife Refuge and National Seashore continue their CCP planning process. View the results on the Town website: [www.chincoteague-va.gov](http://www.chincoteague-va.gov)

Presentations by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service staff at the beach in August, and the community center in September have generated many ideas, comments and concerns. The 'top ten' issues that we believe should be adopted during the CCP public scoping review include:

- 1. 961 direct access parking spaces at Toms Cove**
- 2. Protect the beach and parking areas from storm damage**
- 3. Beach replenishment**
- 4. Relocate the recreational beach north if necessary**
- 5. 150 Chincoteague Ponies**
- 6. Post-storm restoration of public beach access**
- 7. Transit to access the beach is not reasonable**
- 8. Study economic impact to local and regional tourism**
- 9. Keep ORV access to Toms Cove Hook**
- 10. Questionnaire supports the exceptional balance of Refuge, Beach and Town**

## **Chincoteague Wildlife Refuge asks for lots of good ideas...let's help them out**

Comments may still be submitted until January 18, 2011 to: Thomas Bonetti, Refuge Planner, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 300 Westgate Center Drive, Hadley, MA 01035 or by email: [northeastplanning@fws.gov](mailto:northeastplanning@fws.gov) (include 'Chincoteague NWR' in the subject line).

**See information on reverse side about the next steps in Refuge Planning.**



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## ❖ Support for current Refuge and Seashore management plans

Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge has made a copy of the current Master Plan (1992 EIS) available on their website. ([www.fws.gov/northeast/chinco/ccp.html](http://www.fws.gov/northeast/chinco/ccp.html)) The Town supports this plan which has, with successful leadership, been able to accomplish a unique and exceptional experience for both residents and tourists while completing goals for wildlife management.

Assateague Island National Seashore has sent out notification that preliminary alternative concepts for the General Management Plan will be presented soon and comments will be welcome. ([www.nps.gov/asis](http://www.nps.gov/asis))

The Town of Chincoteague will request immediate action to protect existing public investment in the recreational beach and parking areas including dune construction, winter snow fence, and beach replenishment.

## ❖ Participate in the planning activities

An Economic Impact Analysis (using IMPLAN software) will be prepared with expertise from FWS staff and consultants and with assistance from both the Town and Accomack County. A preliminary report of the baseline conditions is due in March 2011.

The NEPA Environmental Impact Statement process requires the preparation of alternative objectives and strategies with the preparation of a Conservation Plan. FWS staff has already started on three alternatives: 'No Action' (based on 1992 Master Plan), 'More Management' (relocate beach/rebuild beach in place), and 'Wildlife-first' (increase wildlife species management/reduce human impacts). Alternatives are scheduled for presentation and public comment in July 2011.

Chincoteague VFD is currently finalizing a one year grazing permit at the Refuge for the Chincoteague Ponies based on previous year agreements. Negotiations regarding future year management plan changes are underway to be included in the CCP.

## ❖ Encourage and Inform our Elected Leadership

The Town of Chincoteague and Accomack County have hired a political consulting firm (Alcalde & Fay) to assist in providing key legislative support when necessary for maintaining the successful balance of economic, social and natural resources on the Eastern Shore.

## ❖ PLAN to visit Chincoteague Island and the Eastern Shore in 2011

Everything you love about Chincoteague Island (the #1 Beach Town in America) and the exceptional National Wildlife Refuge and Seashore at Assateague Island is ready and waiting for you in 2011. We thank you for your support and will need plenty of help in July when the alternatives are reviewed.