

Beach parking will be ready

Wiped out by storms, Assateague project will be complete by May
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Reconstruction of parking at the Assateague Island National Seashore, seen here this week, is continuing after 95 percent of available parking was destroyed by Hurricane Sandy late last year. The Park Service plans to have all 961 parking spaces in full operation by Memorial Day weekend. / Patrick J. Hendrickson photo/Highcamera.com

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ASSATEAGUE — Visitors traveling to the island this Easter weekend will still be able to park on the southern end of the beach, says Chincoteague Wildlife Refuge Manager Lou Hinds.

A small section of parking lot No. 2 is open and the reopening of parking lot No. 1 is probable. "The Park Service hopes to have parking lot No. 1 opened this weekend but that's conditional on tides and weather," Hinds said on Wednesday.

If both parking lots are in operation, between 150 to 200 cars can occupy the spaces, according to Hinds. Hurricane Sandy's damaging winds and tides destroyed 95 percent of the parking lots in October. The superstorm also caused severe pavement erosion to Beach Road, which connects Assateague Bridge to Tom's Cove Visitor Center.

Today Beach Road is "holding up" thanks to temporary patches put in place to repair the pavement. "We fully expect the road to be repaved by Memorial Day weekend," Hinds said.

The refuge manager says the Park Service plans to have all 961 parking spaces in full operation by Memorial Day weekend.

For more information on Assateague Island National Seashore, visit www.nps.gov/asis.

<http://www.delmarvanow.com/article/20130330/ESN01/303300008/Beach-parking-will-ready>