

Fire Island

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fire Island National Seashore
Long Island, New York



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Park Service Approves Fire Island National Seashore White-tailed Deer Management Plan

Patchogue, NY - Fire Island National Seashore Superintendent Chris Soller announced today that National Park Service (NPS) Northeast Regional Director Michael Caldwell approved the Seashore's White-tailed Deer Management Plan through a Record of Decision, available on the [NPS Park Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website](#). The plan sets forth an integrated management strategy to protect and restore native vegetation and other natural and cultural features within federal tracts of the Seashore, including the globally rare Sunken Forest.

[Deer population surveys, and vegetation and social science research](#) conducted at the Seashore indicated the need for a management plan to address impacts associated with changes in white-tailed deer abundance, distribution, and behavior. The Sunken Forest and other maritime forests on Fire Island, including Carrington, Talisman, Blue Point, and Watch Hill, are adversely impacted by heavy deer browse and are not regenerating naturally. The historic landscape at the William Floyd Estate, a unit of the Seashore located in Mastic Beach on Long Island, is also threatened by deer browse.

"We have a responsibility to manage all of the Seashore's natural and cultural resources," said Seashore Superintendent Chris Soller, "and to work toward a healthy, balanced ecosystem that supports all wildlife." The [Record of Decision and attached plan](#) help clarify NPS priorities for implementation and call for addressing issues related to the abundance of deer through education and outreach, fencing, a public hunt (in the Fire Island Wilderness only), direct reduction, and fertility control. "Deer, vegetation, and social science research conducted at the Seashore and public comments solicited during

the planning process informed the plan and the selection of this integrated management approach," said Soller.

The Seashore has begun education and outreach efforts, and will continue its deer and vegetation monitoring efforts. Fencing and an initial reduction via sharpshooting on NPS lands within the Seashore boundary will be carried out when funding becomes available. Reduction goals will be based on the most recent deer population surveys and will be guided by the impacts of deer browse as measured during annual vegetation monitoring. Maintenance of the deer population may be conducted using fertility control, should a federally-approved agent become available and meet the established criteria in the plan.

Preparation of the Seashore's Deer Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (Deer Plan/EIS) began in the summer of 2011 with an initial public scoping period. Comments received during public scoping were used to develop and analyze alternatives in the Draft Deer Plan/EIS. In July 2014 the Draft Deer Plan/EIS was released for a 60-day public review and comment period. Two public meetings were held during this time. The NPS response to public comments was included in the Final Deer Plan/EIS, released in December, 2015 for a 30-day no action period.

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About Fire Island National Seashore

About Fire Island National Seashore. Fire Island National Seashore encompasses 26 miles of ocean and bay shoreline, maritime forests, and residential communities. Fire Island's dynamic coastal landscape is home to a diversity of plants and wildlife and offers a retreat from nearby metropolitan New York. Please visit us online at www.nps.gov/fiis, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/fireislandnps, on Twitter at www.twitter.com/fireislandnps, and on Instagram at www.instagram.com/fireislandnps.

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