

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
ASSATEAGUE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE
7206 NATIONAL SEASHORE LANE
BERLIN, MD 21811

ADMINISTRATIVE CLOSURE ORDER
ISSUED March 26th, 2026
CN#26-001

EFFECTIVE APRIL 2nd 2026

An Administrative Closure Notice, effective April 2nd, 2026, is hereby established for designated portions of Assateague Island National Seashore to protect nesting shorebird populations, including the federally protected Piping Plover, which is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Species including herons, egrets, gulls, terns, plovers, and skimmers nest in dense colonies, in sensitive coastal habitats along the Seashore. Human entry into these areas is a direct disturbance that can cause nest abandonment, resulting in mortality of eggs and chicks due to exposure, predation, or trampling. Because many species—particularly plovers—nest on open sand or sparsely vegetated areas, their nests are difficult to detect and highly susceptible to unintentional disturbance. Any disturbance, even brief, can result in significant reproductive failure across entire colonies and may constitute a violation of federal law.

The closure includes the following areas within the boundaries of Assateague Island National Seashore:

- North End
- All island interior beach habitat along the northern section of Assateague Island National Seashore (north of Assateague State Park) is closed to all entry between KM 0.5 - KM 9.5. This includes habitat from the ocean high tide line west to the bayside high tide line. Over Sand Vehicle (OSV) Zone. The island interior beach habitats between KM 21.8 - 22.8 and 23.5 - 24.5 of the Maryland OSV Zone are closed to all entry. This includes habitat from the existing OSV boundary west to the vegetated shrub line. Pine Tree Campground and the Fox Hills Road at KM 23.5 are still open for public access.

In accordance with 36 CFR, Chapter 1, Parts 1-7 authorized by Title 54 USC, § 100751(a), and 36 CFR 1.5 (a)(2) I hereby direct that the above listed areas be closed until further notice.

Updates to this notice will be provided as breeding season continues.

For further information, please contact Superintendent Hugh Hawthorne at (410)-629-6080 Ext 6080 or via email: Hugh_Hawthorne@nps.gov

(Authority: Section 1.5, Chapter 1, Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations)

Hugh Hawthorne, Superintendent