

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Friday, April 27, 2012  
[PERMALINK](#)

CONTACT: [Crystal Feldman](#), [Spencer Pederson](#), or [Jill Strait](#)  
202-226-9019

## Witnesses Testify National Park Service Management Plans Severely Limit Access, Harm Local Economy, Endanger Jobs

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands held a [joint legislative and oversight hearing](#) on [H.R. 4094](#), the “Preserving Access to Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area Act,” and, “Access Denied: Turning Away Visitors to National Parks.”

*“Although today we focused on two examples, Biscayne National Park in Florida and Cape Hatteras in North Carolina, these overly restrictive policies show signs of developing into a nation-wide problem. This is a continuation of anti-visitation policies driven by the Obama Administration that will undercut the tourism industry, hurt local businesses, and destroy jobs,”* **said Subcommittee Chairman Rob Bishop (UT-01).**

The National Park Service has severely limited access to Cape Hatteras National Recreational Area through the implementation of a restrictive management plan and environmental lawsuits from activist environmental groups.



H.R. 4094, sponsored by Rep. Walter Jones, would overturn a final rule implemented by the National Park Service as well as a 2008 U.S. Court Consent Decree by reinstating the Park Service’s 2007 Interim Management Strategy to govern visitor access and species

protection at Cape Hatteras. The legislation will restore visitor's access to Cape Hatteras while also ensuring the protection of local wildlife and its habitat. Re-opening this Congressionally designated "recreation area" will stimulate the Island's recreation-dependent economy and foster job creation.

*"This bill is about jobs and taxpayers' right to access the recreational areas they own. H.R. 4094 will restore balance and common sense Park Service management in Cape Hatteras National Recreational Area. It will reverse the significant job loss and economic decline that Hatteras Island has experienced since access was cut off to many of the most popular areas of the seashore,"* **said Rep. Walter B. Jones (NC-03).**

The National Park Service is pushing a new management plan at Biscayne National Park that will eliminate access to over 10,000 acres of sport fishing waters and dissuade visitation to other areas of the park despite strong objections from the surrounding community and opposition by the world renowned scientists of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Fishing, boating, diving and other recreational activities within the Park drive the local economy and support hundreds of jobs. Prohibiting these activities and restricting Park access will negatively impact the local economy, dissuade tourism and cause job loss.

*"Biscayne National Park is part of the heritage of our community and is of great significance to many South Florida families. My intent is to help preserve the unique culture surrounding South Florida's water-centered way of life, while also protecting our environment and maintaining access,"* **said Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (FL-18).**

*"No one cares more about Biscayne National Park than Floridians and those who utilize the park. Restricting access should be a last resort after all other alternatives have been exhausted. It is my hope that we can all work together on a plan that both protects the Park and remains accessible for the public to enjoy,"* **said Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (FL-21).**

###

<http://naturalresources.house.gov>  
[Facebook](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Twitter](#)