

Assateague Island National Seashore Over-Sand Vehicle Use

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



The following Over-Sand Vehicle (OSV) use regulations are established to provide enjoyment of the park while protecting the fragile resources of this barrier island. Upon signing the application for the OSV permit, operators accept responsibility for knowing and following all OSV regulations. Failure to comply with these terms may result in revocation of OSV permit and/or federal prosecution. Motor vehicles are permitted only on established roads, parking areas and designated Over-Sand Vehicle areas, and are prohibited elsewhere on Assateague Island. Please help us maintain the privilege of OSV zone use by strictly complying with the regulations. Violations can be reported to Rangers by phoning 911.

PERMITS: OSV Special Use Permits are valid for one year from the month of purchase. Permit fees are \$70.00 for VAONLY permit valid in the Virginia OSV Zone only, \$90.00 for VA & MD DAY ONLY permit valid in the Virginia OSV Zone and from 5:00 AM-12:00 Midnight in Maryland OSV zone, \$110.00 for a NIGHT permit valid 24 hours in the Maryland OSV Zone and during open hours in the Virginia OSV Zone, and \$150.00 for a BULLPEN permit which is valid 24 hours in the Maryland OSV Zone, during open hours in the Virginia OSV Zone, and for overnight parking in the Bull Pen with approved self-contained campers. All vehicles using the OSV zone must display an OSV Permit, valid for the area and time of use.

OSV permits must be permanently affixed to the lower corner of the windshield on the driver's side, within seven inches (7") of the edge of the windshield. The expiration month sticker must be affixed before adhering to windshield. Cleaning and drying the area before applying the permit is recommended for best adhesion. **Lost permits are not refundable or replaceable!**

OSV permits are issued for individual vehicles in the name of the registered owner. Sale or transfer of the vehicle voids the permit. A replacement permit may be issued for the new vehicle **only if enough of the original permit, to include permit type, serial number and month sticker, is returned for exchange.** Permits destroyed in a vehicle accident may be replaced only if a police accident report is brought in for documentation. A receipt for purchase is not sufficient for permit replacement in any case.

Upgrade of permits after initial purchase may be made by paying the difference in fee. Expiration of the permit will remain the month of original purchase.

In Virginia, permits may be obtained at the Toms Cove Visitor Center, and the Herbert H. Bateman Education Center. In Maryland, permits may be purchased at the Sinepuxent Ranger Station. Permits may also be purchased by mail. Call 410-641-3030 for an application and return it to the Park (address below) with a check made payable to: Department of the Interior-NPS. Please allow up to three weeks for receipt of the permit.

VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS: To obtain an OSV permit, vehicles must meet the following specifications:

Maximum number of wheels per axle	2
Maximum number of axles	2
Maximum vehicle length	26 feet
Minimum vehicle width	5 feet
Maximum vehicle width	8 feet
Minimum vehicle ground clearance	7 inches
Gross vehicle weight rating may not exceed	10,000 pounds

All two-wheel-drive vehicles must have a minimum of 8" width of tire tread in contact with the ground.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT: OSV operators in designated zone must carry and be able to display upon request:

- A shovel with a blade at least 6" square and a handle at least 18" long.
- A vehicle jack sufficient to lift one wheel clear of the sand.
- A jack support that is at least 12" x 12" of non-bending steel, 5/8" plywood or 1/2" board.
- A tire gauge with a minimum reading of 15 pounds or less.
- A tow rope or tow strap, chain or cable with a minimum pulling strength of 6,000 pounds and at least 10 feet long.
 - 1/2" minimum diameter for nylon or Dacron ropes
 - 3/4" minimum diameter for all other ropes
 - 1/4" minimum diameter for carbon steel cable
 - 5/16" minimum diameter for chain links

LICENSES REQUIRED: All vehicles must bear valid state license plates, be properly equipped, insured and registered to operate on public highways. All drivers must possess a valid state driver's license.

INSPECTION OF VEHICLE: Authorized personnel may inspect vehicles at any time to insure compliance with licensing, permit, registration, vehicle specifications and equipment requirements. Inspections of self-contained units will be required prior to issuance of a BULLPEN permit. Call 410-641-3937 to make an appointment.

VEHICLE OPERATION: When two vehicles approach in the same track, both operators must slow and the operator with the ocean on his right shall yield the right-of-way. Vehicle speed in OSV zones may not exceed 25 miles per hour and must be reduced to 15 miles per hour whenever coming within 100 feet of vehicles, wildlife, pedestrians or people on horseback. Driving on sand dunes or vegetated areas, cutting circles or needlessly defacing the beach is prohibited at all times

PASSENGER SAFETY: Passengers may not ride on the fenders, hood, roof, sides, tailgate or in any other position on the outside of a moving vehicle. No vehicle may be used to tow a person or any recreational device over land, over water, or in the air. Use of safety belts is required.

OSV ZONES: OSV zones are shown on the maps on the back. **All sand dunes and vegetated areas are considered closed even if located within the designated OSV zone.** All vehicles must stay to the east of the black and white posts. Designated bay access points in MD are marked with orange and white striped numbered posts.

OSV ZONE USE LIMITS: Purchase of an OSV permit does not guarantee access to OSV zones at any particular time. Access may be reduced or curtailed due to vehicle density limits (especially in the summer), over-wash, emergency conditions or management constraints. OSV zone use limits: Maryland = 145; Virginia = 48; (18 when Toms Cove hook area is closed due to bird nesting). When these limits are reached, a closure is in effect, and vehicle access is managed on a one off/one on basis.

FIRES ON THE BEACH: In Maryland: Campfires are allowed below the high-tide line on the beach. Fires may not be left unattended and must be extinguished with water, not sand. Please allow enough time for all wood to burn to ash before extinguishing. Otherwise all fire debris (charred wood, charcoal, garbage) must be removed from the beach.

In Virginia: Open fires are prohibited in the OSV zone.

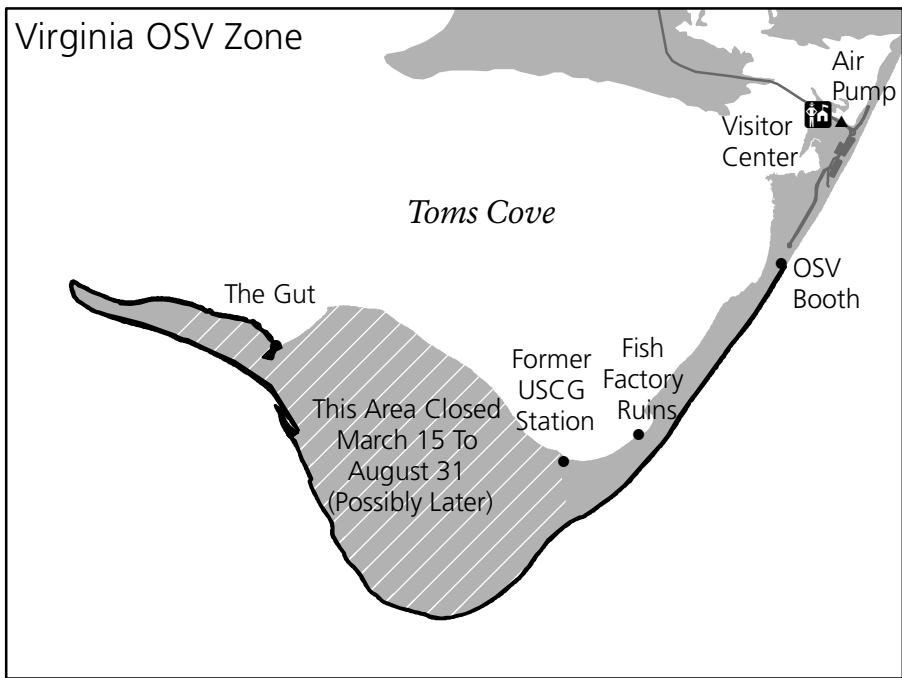
HOURS OF OPERATION: Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge is open during the following hours: May through September, 5 am - 10 pm; October, 6 am - 8 pm; November through March, 6 am - 6 pm; April, 6 am - 8 pm. Only those with a valid Overnight Fishing Permit may remain in the Refuge after hours.

Assateague Island National Seashore does not close. Overnight parking on the beach is prohibited except for those who are **actively** engaged in fishing. **Sleeping is strictly prohibited.** Self-contained vehicles are allowed to park overnight in the Bull Pen area if they are equipped with an approved toilet and permanently installed waste storage tank capable of holding 2 days volume of waste for all occupants. **Only** self-contained vehicles are permitted overnight in the Bull Pen. Wastewater (including graywater) from self-contained vehicles must be retained in vehicle's holding tank while in the OSV zone and must be emptied in an approved location outside the park or at trailer dump stations located in the Seashore campgrounds. Travel trailers and tents are prohibited in the Bull Pen at all times. Non self-contained vehicles are prohibited from parking in or adjacent to the Bull Pen from 9 pm to 6 am. Tents or other temporary shelters are prohibited on the beach between sunset and sunrise.

SANITATION: Litter or waste may not be buried or discarded in the OSV zones. It must be disposed of in designated disposal areas or removed from the Island.

OTHER REGULATIONS: All other applicable State and Federal laws are enforced. **You are responsible for knowing the regulations.** Use of your vehicle in the OSV zones is at your own risk. If you have any questions, please check with uniformed Seashore or Refuge personnel.

Assateague Island National Seashore • 7206 National Seashore Lane • Berlin, Maryland 21811 • 410-641-3030
Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge • P. O. Box 62 • Chincoteague, Virginia 23336 • 757-336-6122

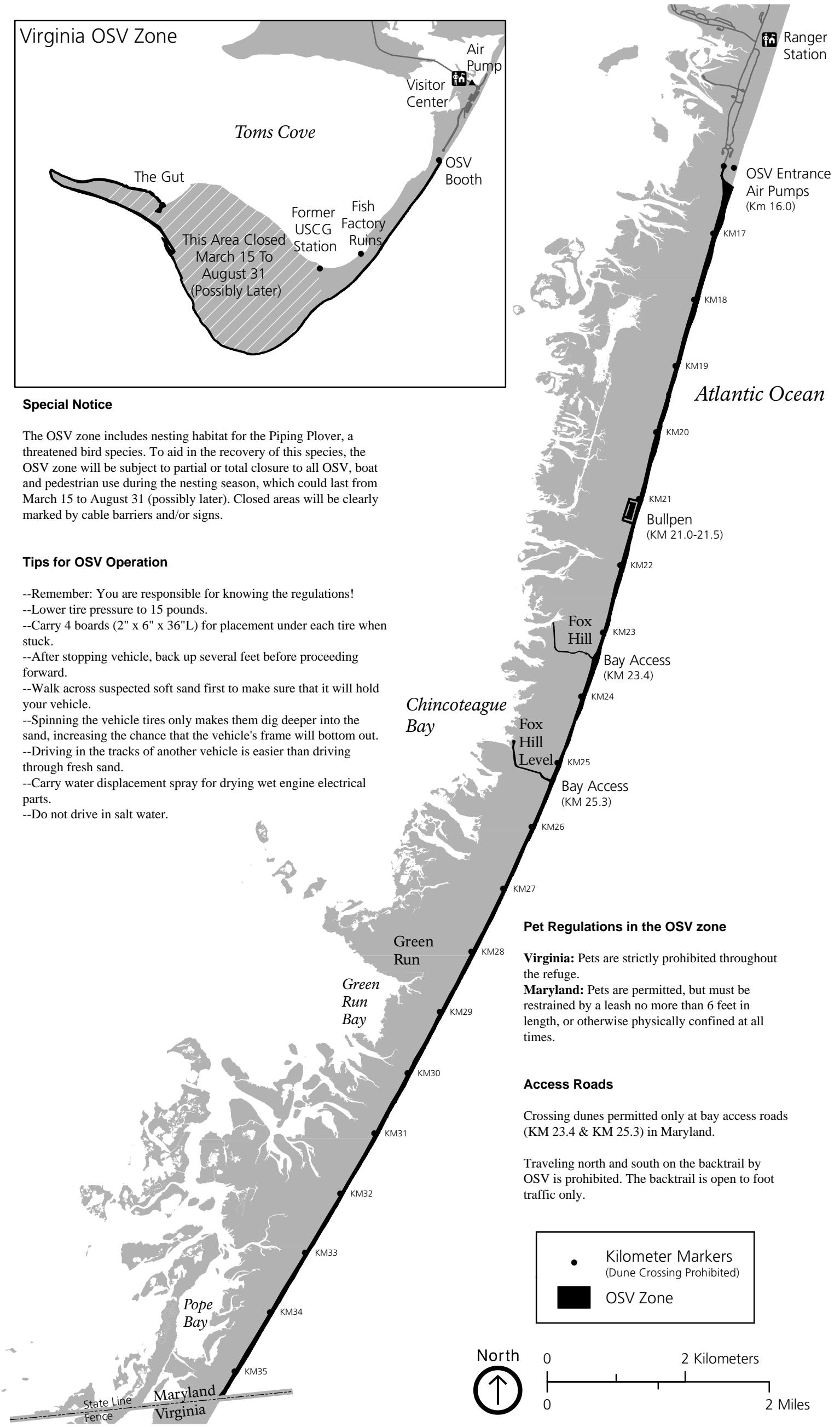


Special Notice

The OSV zone includes nesting habitat for the Piping Plover, a threatened bird species. To aid in the recovery of this species, the OSV zone will be subject to partial or total closure to all OSV, boat and pedestrian use during the nesting season, which could last from March 15 to August 31 (possibly later). Closed areas will be clearly marked by cable barriers and/or signs.

Tips for OSV Operation

- Remember: You are responsible for knowing the regulations!
- Lower tire pressure to 15 pounds.
- Carry 4 boards (2" x 6" x 36"L) for placement under each tire when stuck.
- After stopping vehicle, back up several feet before proceeding forward.
- Walk across suspected soft sand first to make sure that it will hold your vehicle.
- Spinning the vehicle tires only makes them dig deeper into the sand, increasing the chance that the vehicle's frame will bottom out.
- Driving in the tracks of another vehicle is easier than driving through fresh sand.
- Carry water displacement spray for drying wet engine electrical parts.
- Do not drive in salt water.



Pet Regulations in the OSV zone

Virginia: Pets are strictly prohibited throughout the refuge.
Maryland: Pets are permitted, but must be restrained by a leash no more than 6 feet in length, or otherwise physically confined at all times.

Access Roads

Crossing dunes permitted only at bay access roads (KM 23.4 & KM 25.3) in Maryland.

Traveling north and south on the backtrail by OSV is prohibited. The backtrail is open to foot traffic only.

● Kilometer Markers (Dune Crossing Prohibited)
 ■ OSV Zone

