

Section 16

Ramp Grading

Purpose

Wind blown sand accumulates on beach access vehicle ramps. Regular ramp maintenance is required to ensure safe and unimpeded vehicular beach access by public, emergency and public safety vehicles. Ramp grading has the potential to impact sea turtles nests and/or interfere with protected species monitoring activities.

Relevant ITP Condition - G.1.i.

- i. **Ramp Grading.** “From May 1 to October 31, each year, the Permittee may authorize access for ramp grading equipment only after completion of daily nesting surveys on beaches where ramps exist and until 8:00 p .m. From November 1 through April 30, each year, the Permittee may authorize access for ramp grading equipment at any time.”

HCP Performance During 2008

Implementation: Beach Services has one employee who conducts ramp grading for eight (8) vehicular access ramps. Ramp grading is conducted every weekend on all six (6) south beach ramps. Ramp grading during sea turtle season occurs after 8:00 a.m. and is typically completed by early afternoon thus not posing a threat to unmarked sea turtles nests or interfering with rut removal at the close of the vehicle access of the beach. The staff tasked with ramp grading duties completed HCP training prior to the 2008 nesting season, consisting of instruction on what to do in the event of a daytime sea turtle event as well as instructions on surveying the wrack line for stranded turtles prior to grading activities. In addition, the ramp grader fills in large holes as he continues down the beach for grading activities.

Assessment: No reports regarding the ramp grader were reported during the 2008 nesting season.

Program Improvements: No formal changes to ramp grading are proposed for 2008.