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NEW JERSEY
1977
BEACH SHUTTLE EXPERIMENT
Toms River to Island Beach State Park

January 1979

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Marine Services
Office of Coastal Zone Management
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SUMMARY

During the summer of 1977, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and New Jersey Department of Transportation (DOT) instituted an experimental Beach Shuttle on holidays and weekends between the mainland communities of Toms River and Island Beach State Park, located on the Atlantic Ocean in Ocean County.

The project aimed to provide an alternate means of public access to the Park, in addition to private automobiles. The experimental shuttle aimed to determine if, at a minimum, beach visitors in automobiles, turned away from the 1,850 space parking lot at Island Beach State Park, could be attracted to the bus shuttle and thereby increase the use of the Park without harm to its ecology. The project also sought to demonstrate the feasibility to the service to other units of local, state and federal government, as well as to private entrepreneurs. DEP hoped to encourage these agencies and entrepreneurs to establish similar projects elsewhere along the shore.

Bus counts showed that 7,594 riders used the shuttle. Rider surveys indicated that Ocean County residents were the primary users of the shuttle service. Over the summer, ridership increased, peaking at times to over 1000 riders per weekend. Overcrowding at the Park, feared by some before the project began, failed to materialize.

This report describes how the project was organized, the role of the participating agencies, which included, in addition to N.J. DEP and N.J. DOT, the N.J. Highway Authority, the Ocean County Planning Board and County Employment and Training Administration, and the major issues confronted in the design and operation of the Shuttle. The report concludes with a number of recommendations including the continuation of the project and possible expansion to other areas in New Jersey.

A federal grant from the Office of Coastal Zone Management within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration subsidized the bus costs ($17,881) and made possible the Beach Shuttle experiment. The entire project cost approximately $50,000.

In the summer of 1978, DEP again ran the Island Beach Bus Shuttle, with the assistance of the N.J. DOT, N.J. Highway Authority, and N.J. Department of Energy. The Shuttle operated on 20 days, transported 7,714 passengers and cost about $42,000.

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1977, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in cooperation with other federal, state, and local agencies, operated an experimental Beach Shuttle on weekends and holidays between the Garden State Parkway (Exit 81 at Toms River) and Island Beach State Park, an oceanfront park 12 miles from Toms River. The Beach Shuttle provided bus service and entrance to the Park and facilitated public access to the beach. In recent years, the parking lots at the Park had often become full on sunny summer weekend days, forcing a temporary closing of the park to additional cars. The experiment demonstrated unquestionably the applicability of the "park-and-ride" concept to the beach access issue.

This report describes and analyzes the Beach Shuttle project, its origins, operations and results. Chapter Two explains the background and purpose of the experiment. Chapter Three documents the design and operation of the project. Chapter Four describes the major issues confronted in operating the Shuttle. And Chapter Five offers recommendations for future Beach Shuttle operations. Lastly, a series of appendices provide detailed information on attendance at the Park in recent years, the relation between park attendance and weather forecasts, the opinions and suggestions of users who completed a questionnaire and a copy of the brochure used to advertise the Shuttle.

CHAPTER TWO - ORIGIN AND PURPOSE

The Beach Shuttle concept first emerged during a June 1976 Beach Walk led by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection. The walk took six days and covered New Jersey's 126 miles of oceanfront beaches. The fact-finding walk focused public attention on the problems and opportunities facing New Jersey's forty-six beachfront communities, including the question of beach access.

During the Beach Walk, the Commissioner spoke with many municipal and county officials, state legislators, one Congressman, local businessmen, and citizens. These discussions identified the limited capacity of parking facilities on the barrier island resort communities as one physical barrier to increased beach access. Parking posed an acute constraint at shore areas with large day visitor populations, such as the Gateway National Recreation Area at Sandy Hook, Seaside Heights, Atlantic City, the Wildwoods, and the DEP-operated Island Beach State Park. Initial conversations took place during the Beach Walk between DEP staff and local officials on the idea of using special buses to bring day visitors from parking lots near the mainland interchanges of the Garden State Parkway to the barrier island resorts. This beach-oriented "park-and-ride" or beach shuttle idea first attracted public attention at the first hearing in July 1976, of the New Jersey Beach Access Study Commission, when the Director of DEP's Division of Marine Services urged the Commission's support for demonstration projects on this concept.*

The Commission's April 1977 final report, Public Access to the Oceanfront Beaches: A Report to the Governor and Legislature of New Jersey, included the following specific recommendation:

> "The state should establish beach shuttle services, in cooperation with private bus companies, to transport day visitors from parking areas near interchanges of the Garden State Parkway to resort communities and recreation facilities on barrier islands." (Report, p. 11).

While DEP'S Division of Marine Services is neither a transportation agency nor a beach recreation agency, the Division is the state agency most involved in the beach maintenance and access due to its responsibility for riparian lands management (the State-owned lands flowed by the tide), shore protection and coastal zone management, including the coastal planning program under the federal Coastal Zone Management Act. In September 1976, the Division of Marine Services, and particularly its Office of Coastal Zone Management, began planning for a Beach Shuttle demonstration project for the summer of 1977, to test the concept somewhere along the Jersey Shore. Detailed planning began in January 1977 with selection of Island Beach State Park as the target area. Planning continued throughout the spring. In early June 1977, DEP submitted a formal grant application to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Coastal Zone Management (NOAA-OCZM) for funds to subsidize the cost of the buses. And on Saturday, June 18, 1977, the nation's first Beach Shuttle service began.

*The Commission was established by the Legislature in March 1976 to study legal and physical access to the state's beaches. Also see the testimony of Donald T. Graham, Director, Division of Marine Services, DEP, before the Commission's West Long Branch hearing, July 15, 1976.

Other chapters of this report spell out the details of designing and operating the Beach Shuttle. This chapter concludes by outlining the purpose of the demonstration project and its expected results.

DEP designed the Beach Shuttle project to demonstrate the feasibility of transporting day visitors to ocean beaches by buses from remote (mainland) parking lots. The bus shuttle service had to be reliable and attractive if it was to encourage automobile riders to leave their cars and transfer to buses for the last thirty minutes of a trip to the beach.

DEP expected that implementation of the Beach Shuttle experiment, particularly at Island Beach State Park, would have the following results:

a. Increase public access to the barrier island recreation area;
b. Conserve energy;
c. Decrease traffic congestion and air pollution;
d. and, if successful, provide a basis for implementing beach shuttle services at other coastal recreation areas in New Jersey and the entire nation.

CHAPTER THREE - PROJECT DESIGN AND OPERATION

The line between designing and carrying out a project blurs quickly in an experimental, demonstration project. This chapter describes and analyzes the full range of interrelated steps taken to make the Beach Shuttle concept a reality in 1977 and provides an analysis of the funding of the Beach Shuttle. More than 7,000 people switched from cars to buses to reach Island Beach State Park during the project, which succeeded thanks to the cooperation of numerous public agencies.

Administrative responsibility for the project belonged to the Director of the Division of Marine Services. In addition, several other agencies had a major role in testing the viability of the Beach Shuttle. These federal, state, and local agencies included: the Dover Sewerage Authority which donated its parking lot in Toms River to the project; the Ocean County Employment and Training Administration which enabled federal CETA funds to be used to hire young adults to staff the shuttle buses and parking lot; DEP's Division of Parks and Forestry which permitted Island Beach State Park to be used for this experiment; the New Jersey Department of Transportation which secured the necessary buses by contract and was responsible for dispatching and scheduling bus runs and maintaining communications between the Parking lot and Island Beach State Park; and the N.J. Highway Authority which erected informational and directional signs along the Parkway which were instrumental in alerting the public to the Toms River parking lot. Finally, the Beach Shuttle would have been impossible without the financial support of the Office of Coastal Zone Management in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA-OCZM). On very short notice, NOAA-OCZM was able to grant DEP up to $40,000 to guarantee the cost of the buses and drivers and part of the cost of printing and publicity.

The Beach Shuttle provided parking near an exit of Garden State Parkway, round-trip bus transportation and entrance to Island Beach State Park. A 50¢ fee was charged to children and adults alike, although some younger children and senior citizens were, on occasion, allowed on buses free of charge. Visitors who chose to drive directly to Island Beach State Park were charged $5.00 per car regardless of the number of passengers. While a higher shuttle charge such as 75¢ or $1.00 would probably have still attracted singles and couples coming to the Park, it might have discouraged families and larger groups. For easy administration, DEP decided to charge a flat, across-the-board fee rather than differentiating between children, adults, and senior citizens.

A. Designing the Project

DEP began the 1977 Beach Shuttle experiment in late 1976 as a low-cost project, relying upon the good will and in-kind contributions of numerous State and local agencies. It is important to underscore at the outset the informal, ad hoc nature of DEP's increasingly intensive planning for the project, between Labor Day 1976 and the June 18, 1977 beginning of the Beach Shuttle service. The same informal approach continued through the operational summer phase of the project. In brief, DEP designed and implemented the project in a series of disjointed, incremental steps, with each step representing a new venture for DEP.

B. Selecting a Target Area: Island Beach State Park

DEP chose Island Beach State Park as the site for the Beach Shuttle Project for four reasons. First, as the largest New Jersey oceanfront beach owned and operated as a park by the State, it provided a readily available laboratory.

the administration of the Park by the Division of Parks and Forestry in the Department of Environmental Protection insured a high level of cooperation with DEP's Division of Marine Services, as well as strong control over bus activities at the beach.

Secondly, the nine-mile long barrier island Park had grown in popularity. The available parking areas were filled to capacity early on increasing numbers of sunny weekends, forcing people to be turned away. The beach itself, however, was considered sufficiently large to accommodate many more people. The most obvious solution - building more parking lots - had been rejected because the only available sites were delicate natural areas.

Third, the Park was located at a reasonable distance -- 12 miles -- from a key interchange of the major north-south access route to New Jersey's beach recreational areas, the Garden State Parkway. DEP's target area selection process included a survey of the length of the Parkway to identify interchange areas with nearby sites that could become the parking lot and transfer station required for the shuttle. Exit 80 and 81 of the Parkway at Toms River provided several possible lots, either at shopping centers or vacant lots.

Fourth, DEP had become an increasingly vocal advocate of beach access in recent years. The Department argued that the beaches and the ocean were a resource for the entire state, and that state funding and regulatory decisions should encourage beach access. The fact that DEP had not maximized the accessibility of the biggest beach it administered appeared to some as an apparent inconsistency with the Department's commitment to beach access.

C. Designing the Bus Route

The Dover Township Sewerage Authority made available an unused dirt lot it owned in Toms River, within 1,000 feet of Exit 81 of the Garden State Parkway. The lot had a capacity of over 1,000 cars, and Exist 81 was very convenient for travelling to Island Beach. State Department of Transportation (DOT) personnel cleared and graded the lot.

DOT's Bureau of Traffic Engineering helped plan the route from the parking lot to the beach, in cooperation with state and local police.

Initially, DEP hoped to provide a "contra-flow" lane for the buses to avoid openings of the eastbound drawbridge across Barnegat Bay, and speed access along the six lane divided Route 37 from the Parkway to the bay bridge. This lane would have restricted one of three westbound lanes to buses, which would have enabled the buses to travel much faster while emphasizing the benefits of mass transit to the automobile drivers being passed. (A contra-flow lane system is used for part of the New Jersey approach to the Lincoln Tunnel to New York City.) The contra-flow lane was rejected for the initial year, because the number of buses anticipated was not considered sufficient to warrant such a lane.

DEP and DOT devised a simple solution to the more limited problem of frequent openings of the eastbound span of the Thomas A. Mathis Bridge over Barnegat Bay on the bus route (the westbound span is a higher bridge without openings). N.J. DOT scheduled openings on the half hour between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays, so that bus departures could be scheduled to miss them. In the late afternoon, however, openings took place by demand, which aggravated traffic congestion and could only be avoided at random by the buses.

With the cooperation of N.J. DOT and the New Jersey Highway Authority (operators of the Garden State Parkway), promotional signs for the Beach Shuttle were placed along the Parkway and other roads. Many of the signs were designed so that they could be flipped over to indicate when parking lots at the Park were full and, therefore, when the Beach Shuttle provided the only means of access to the Park.

Bus service was supplied by Lincoln Transit Limited, a private company based in Lakewood, New Jersey. Lincoln was selected on the basis of a competitive bidding procedure administered by DOT's Bureau of Bus Operations, under the authority of New Jersey's Commuter Operating Agency. One other company submitted a bid.

Buses were scheduled to leave the parking lot at half-hour intervals between 9 and 1 P.M., and to head back from the Park from 1:30 to 5:30 P.M. While ridership was fairly evenly distributed in the mornings on buses going eastbound, people tended to leave the Park in clusters in the afternoon, requiring some to stand in the aisles.

An important scheduling consideration was the effort to keep costs down, while providing an efficient level of service. Because the bus costs were based on an hourly and mileage basis, DEP attempted to utilize the minimum number of buses for a minimum number of trips.

D. Publicizing the Beach Shuttle

The Beach Shuttle was publicized through press releases, newspaper advertisements, the flip signs on the highways, and distribution of 50,000 leaflets at highway rest stops, toll booths, and other locations (See Appendix III). In addition, press conferences on the opening day and several weeks later when the Governor rode the Shuttle to dedicate a new facility at the Park generated considerable publicity. Finally, several environmental, development, and civic groups promoted the Shuttle in their newsletters.

E. Staffing the Beach Shuttle

The planning and administration of the Beach Shuttle was conducted by staff of the Division of Marine Services, primarily the Director, staff of its Office of Coastal Zone Management, and a full-time coordinator for the project hired in mid-April 1977. He unexpectedly resigned in mid-August to attend law school. One Shuttle staff member then assumed most of his responsibilities.

Staff time for the project also came from DEP's Division of Parks and Forestry, N.J DOT and the N.J. Highway Authority. In addition, DEP requested and was assigned 14 individuals under Ocean County's Summer Disadvantaged Youth Program funded by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). Because a condition of sponsorship was to provide a 40 hour work week, DEP arranged for the youths to work 20 hours per week on Beach Shuttle operations with the remaining 20 hours to be spent working at Island Beach State Park during the week.

The tasks assigned to the CETA personnel for the Beach Shuttle operations were: (1) selling tickets, (2) controlling traffic at the parking facilities, (3) acting as hosts and hostesses on the shuttle buses, (4) distributing informational material at fairs, shopping malls and transportation centers, (5) distributing questionnaires concerning user attitudes on the shuttle project, and (6) carrying out maintenance and environmental control activities in the Park.

F. Financing

The Department of Environmental Protection never expected the Beach Shuttle to be self supporting. Rather, DEP undertook the project with the belief that the intended objectives of the project were a legitimate use of tax revenue.

The costs of the Beach Shuttle Project, described in the following pages, are not exact. All staff time devoted to the design and operation of the Shuttle has been estimated. Some costs, particularly for labor, are probably higher than they would need to be in subsequent years of operation of a shuttle.

The direct, out-of-pocket expenses for the Beach Shuttle were $20,825 and were paid with the funds provided by NOAA-OCZM. Most of this amount ($17,887) was for bus service, with the remainder paying for printing, advertising, travel and lodging for the project coordinator, rental of a portable toilet at the parking lot and incidental expenses.

Other costs for administrative staff and on-site personnel, parking lot design and maintenance, and production and distribution of the promotional signs were contributed by DEP, DOT, N.J. Highway Authority and the Ocean County Employment and Training Administration. The parking lot was provided by the Dover Township Sewerage Authority at no charge to the State. These in-kind contributions of costs totalled an estimated $30,964.

The total estimated actual cost of the Beach Shuttle was, therefore, $51,789. The actual cost of the Beach Shuttle per ride was $6.82 or, based only on direct costs, $2.74. Revenues from the 7,598 passengers, all but a few of whom paid the 50 cent fee, amounted to $3,771.50. The total subsidy to the project was $48,017 or $6.32 per ride.

Table 1
Total Project Cost

Bus (including drivers' salaries)		$ 17,881.29
Labor		23,725.86
Traffic, Engineering, Maintenance		3,235.00
Publicity and Advertising		2,298.19
Miscellaneous		644.82
	Total	51,788.56

Table 2
Project Costs Excluding Bus Costs

LABOR		
Project Coordinator		
4 month's full time salary on $12,500 per annum		$ 4,166.66
Over time - 230 hours at $10.26/hour		2,359.80
Replacement for Project Coordinator Overtime 50 hours at $3.79/hour		1,895.00
CETA Employees		
10 people for twelve 40 hour weeks at $2.50/hour		
Half time devoted to Beach Shuttle		6,000.00
Division of Marine Services		
Staff support a total of approximately 100 hours by the Director, Chief of the Office of Coastal Zone Management and two other staff at an average of $12/hour		1,200.00
Department of Transportation. Bus Inspectors and Dispatchers - 684 hours at $10.35/hour		7,079.40
	TOTAL	$23,725.86
Traffic, Engineering and Maintenance		
(Costs in this category were absorbed by N.J. DOT)		
Engineering and Landscaping:		
Evaluation		200.00
Maintenance:		
Installation of traffic sign		400.00
Sign Fabrication and Maintenance		600.00
Vehicle Usage		80.00
Site Clearance		134.00
Surveying Costs		421.00
Traffic Engineering		1,200.00
Engineering Services		200.00
	TOTAL	$ 3,235.00
Publicity and Advertising		
Printing of Pamphlet		$ 985.00
Newspaper Advertising		1,313.19
	TOTAL	$ 2,298.19

MISCELLANEOUS

ITEM		AMOUNT
Pencils		$ 16.50
Clipboards		15.00
Tickets		23.70
Portable Toilet		130.00
Lodging (5 nights)		146.50
Car Mileage		$ 313.12
	TOTAL	$ 644.82

Table 3
Calculation of Cost of Bus

Costs Per Hour		
Drivers' Wages		$ 9.12
Payroll Taxes		.91
Workmen's Compensation		.34
	TOTAL PER HOUR	10.37
Costs Per Mile		
Maintenance		
Parts & Repairs		$ .0496
Tires & Tubes		.018745
Mechanics' Wages		.0710
Greasing & Washing		.0291
Transportation		
Fuel & Oil		$ .0734
Dispatcher's Wages		.0367
Insurance		
Liability		$ .0535
Fire, Theft, & Collision		.0202
Injury & Damage Claims		.0024
Administrative & General		
Office Salaries		$ .0358
Telephone & Communications		.0067
Operating Rents and Costs of Facilities		
Rents and facilities		$ .0300
Operating Taxes		
Fuel Tax (State & Federal)		$ .0120
Mileage Tax (NJ)		.0030
	TOTAL PER MILE	$ .4422

CHAPTER FOUR - ISSUES

The Beach Shuttle brought 7,594 people to Island Beach, but not without problems. Many problems were perhaps inevitable in the first year of such a venture, while others, most notably funding, are likely to be continuing issues.

A. Start-Up

Although the target area of Island Beach State park was decided upon early, identifying a suitable lot close to the Garden State Parkway to park cars proved more difficult. In January, staff from the Division of Marine Services were still surveying vacant lots in Toms River for a suitable site. It was not until February that permission from Dover Township Sewerage Authority was obtained to use its parking lot. Another month elapsed before memos were exchanged between the Commissioner of DEP and DOT designating staffs to work on the project. It was May, before steps were taken to obtain federal funding and, while Lincoln Transit Company had been identified as early as March as the likely bus contractor, an agreement for bus services was not signed until the day operations began, on June 18, 1977.

A chronology of these events is provided in Table 4.

Table 4
Chronology of Selected Events
Leading to Operation of Beach Shuttle
at Island Beach State Park

September 1976	Identification of Island Beach State Park as target area.
January 1977	Survey of vacant land for suitable parking lot near Garden State Parkway.
March 1977	Exchange of memos between Commissioners of DEP and DOT.
	Lincoln Transit Company, Lakewood, New Jersey identified as bus contractor.
	DOT Coordinator designated to work with DEP. Preliminary meetings held between DEP and DOT.
April 1977	Full-time DEP Coordinator designated within Division of Marine Services DEP.
	Discussions between DEP and DOT on contra-flow lanes.
	Preliminary signing discussions with N.J. Highway Authority.
	Request submitted to Ocean County Employment and Training Administration for CETA personnel.
May 1977	Decision made to forgo contra-flow bus lane.
	Discussion with Island Beach State Park Supervisor regarding hours of operation, signing, etc.
	Contract between DOT and Lincoln Transit Company prepared.
	Request for funding submitted to NOAA.
June 1977	Publicity start up Questionnaire drafted Funding received from NOAA Bus contract signed Brochure providing information and directions designed and printed.

B. Project Coordinator - Staffing and Tasks

The Beach Shuttle Project clearly suffered because the Project Coordinator was not hired until mid-April and had to leave before the project's conclusion. The tasks a coordinator should perform are substantial and, by definition, require much work on weekends. The hiring of an assistant to the Coordinator merits future consideration.

Described below are some of the tasks that a Beach Shuttle Project Coordinator should perform, based on the 1977 experience at Island Beach State Park.

1. Coordination with Department of Transportation regarding hiring of buses, establishment of routes, fabricating and installing signs along road.

2. Identification and acquisition of permits needed for placing signs along local, municipal, state roads.

3. Resolution of potential insurance and contracting problems. (In the future DEP should establish an understanding with bus contractor that drivers will avoid idling engines while passengers are boarding busses).

4. Supervision of landscaping and maintenance of parking lot; installation of benches, portable toilets, telephones, bicycle racks, etc.

5. Establishing equipment needs with personnel at target area such as the design and installation of appropriate informational and directional signs, telephones, benches, etc.

6. Briefing municipal (especially public safety) officials and local organizations on proposed program and soliciting their support. (As events turned out in Ocean County, the locality ended up being a principal beneficiary of the program).

7. Briefing, training and supervision of personnel who will staff parking lot and buses. Briefing should provide trainees with a "basis and background" of program and acquaint them with how to handle emergencies - bus breakdowns, sick passengers sudden storms which could disrupt bus schedule, etc.

8. Development of publicity and advertising campaign. Care should be taken to provide clear and fool-proof directions to parking lot, and advertisements should be placed in largest newspapers early in the program.

   - Briefing of radio, television and newspaper press. Try to obtain intensive radio and television coverage towards end of week. Requests to broadcasters should be made to have announcements follow "good" weather forecasts and held off in case of inclement weather. Good public relations should make such cooperation possible.

   - Effort should be made to have key personnel in DEP and Department of Energy speak on radio and television about shuttle service in terms of energy conservation, traffic decongestion and relief on local parking facilities.

   - Environmental groups should be provided with timely information and flyers to distribute at various conferences. They should be encouraged to arrange nature walks and hikes at the target area.

- The opening day of the service should be filled with fanfare, including participation by noted political, sports and entertainment celebrities.

9. Establishment of Questionnaire. The information provided from the questionnaires distributed during the 1977 shuttle program was valuable. Questionnaire surveys should constitute part of any future program. If CETA personnel are hired in the future, they should be trained to collate and review responses and act on suggestions where indicated.

10. Record Keeping:

- Accurate counts of passengers and cars for each day are essential.

- Weekly reports including passengers, car and bus counts, costs and revenues and weather conditions are minimal reporting requirements. Weekly reports should be distributed to all participating agencies. Special problems and actions taken should be noted in the report.

- Questionnaires should be reviewed and analyzed weekly and origin of riders should be mapped for later evaluation. Summary of data from questionnaires should also be distributed to participating agencies on a weekly basis.

C. CETA STAFF

Two basic problems were encountered in working with CETA personnel. The first was maintaining an adequate level of motivation and morale as a result of a $2.50 per hour salary. Only some of the workers were able to accept the justification of gaining experience and being involved in a new and exciting environmental program, along with the overall lack of other suitable employment.

The second and most difficult problem was coordinating activities with park personnel. Eventually it was necessary to hire a supervisor for these workers, placing their job responsibilities under the management of the Division of Marine Services as opposed to the park maintenance personnel.

The main problems stemmed from the youths having to fill out their schedule working in the park. Some had been promised opportunities to participate in environmental resource projects that never came to fruition.

To alleviate this problem in the future, a portion of the beach shuttle budget should be allocated to hiring college age youths for work limited to the beach shuttle and the various support activities associated with it. The additional twenty hours should be spent in publicity and promotion related activities and in analysis of the rider questionnaires.

It should be noted that the services of the CETA youth personnel were greatly appreciated by the public and should be retained for use on future shuttle projects.

D. Police Coordination

Dover Township police and the New Jersey State Police were informed of the shuttle program and invited to attend meetings with the participating agencies. Originally it was hoped that the police would flip signs on the Garden State Parkway which would indicate that Island Beach State Park was full and alert drivers to the alternate beach shuttle lot at Exit 81. Later this idea was abandoned and the function was performed by staff from the Toms River parking lot.

E. Publicity

Little advance publicity was prepared the first week of the operation in order to test the shuttle route, and the adequacy of the directional and informational signs leading to the parking lot, and to evaluate the communication system which DOT established between the Toms River parking lot and Island Beach State Park. Consequently, ridership was low.

On August 8th when the Beach Shuttle was operating smoothly, Governor Brendan Byrne formally dedicated and rode the Shuttle to the Park, where he also dedicated a new bathhouse. He was accompanied by Richard Gardner of the Policy and Program Development Office of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Coastal Zone Management, state officials and press which reported the event in Monday's newspapers. This was the only occasion over the summer which focussed specific media attention on the Shuttle program.

Several media--newspapers, radio, television and print--were used to disseminate information, some of which were more effective than others. Newspaper articles proved to be the most effective means of public education regarding the Beach Shuttle. It was not, however, until the Shuttle had somewhat proven itself that DEP was able to obtain the level of coverage desired. The effective use of newspapers requires systematic press releases beginning three months or more in advance of the start of operations, allowing a newspaper to follow the progress of the shuttle service through the planning stages, and continuing to report on progress throughout the summer. With a systematic plan of press releases and personal contact beginning in late winter or early spring, it might be possible to demonstrate that the State was giving the project considerable attention and thereby stress its importance and newsworthiness.

In general, coverage by the local Ocean County newspapers was more extensive than that in the northern portions of the state where a majority of the population resides. A few letters indicated that some Ocean County residents feel the service was strictly oriented to them rather than to the state as a whole.

It is unfortunate that the newspaper advertisements were not placed until the end of August. Advertising in the state's most widely circulated paper, the Newark Star Ledger, was ruled out because of cost. Because of poor weather over the Labor Day Weekend, it was not possible to evaluate the effectiveness of this form of direct advertising.

Radio stations in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania were sent a series of public service radio spots. In addition, three local Ocean County stations agreed to broadcast up-to-date information concerning the Beach Shuttle each day of operation.

With better preparation and personal contact, DEP believes that radio could be a very effective means of informing the public of the shuttle's existence. Providing the public service message on a tape cartridge rather than in writing might have increased their use.

Two factors inhibited the use of television as an instrument of public education: the relative distance of the site from the broadcasting cities and the lack of sensationalism associated with the project. The project did get television coverage on one occasion by the New Jersey Public Television Network during a Shuttle brochure distribution campaign at Penn Station in Newark on a Thursday evening at rush hour. Representatives from the New York television networks, however, failed to show up. According to the questionnaire results, however, the television coverage had little influence on ridership.

The planning, printing and design of a brochure describing the Beach Shuttle project is important to the successful promotional and publicity activities associated with the project. In 1977, DEP printed and distributed 125,000 brochures describing the shuttle (See Appendix 3). Twice this number could have been utilized. Brochures were distributed at the following locations:

a. The New Jersey Garden State Parkway - Toms River and Asbury Park toll plazas and northern rest stops. In the future more brochures should be printed and distributed at additional toll booths.

b. At Penn Station in Newark, New Jersey by CETA personnel during peak commuter hours.

c. Island Beach State Park booth and gatehouse - brochures were also handed out when the park closed and cars were backed up. Some of these cars subsequently turned back to Toms River in order to utilize the Beach Shuttle.

d. State pay envelopes - brochures were included once in the pay envelope of State employees in Trenton (20,000 brochures to 13 departments).

e. Shopping Malls - CETA employees handed out brochures at the Ocean County and Monmouth County Malls during Friday evening shopping hours.

f. The Division of Travel and Tourism in the Department of Labor and Industry was given 10,000 brochures to be utilized at its various distribution points.

g. Shuttle buses - brochures were available on the shuttle buses.

h. Retail Establishments - brochures were left on an ad hoc basis at various retail establishments.

No posters were made in 1977. In the future, posters should be made and placed in buses, subways, trains, store windows and other prominent places.

In 1977, the role of New Jersey's environmental groups in the promotion of the beach shuttle was minor. They could play an important role, however, in future similar efforts. If the Beach Shuttle can be considered an offspring of the 1976 Department of Environmental Protection's Beach Walk, then the American Littoral Society is at least a grandparent by the virtue of its role in helping to initiate the Beach Walk. Since then, the American Littoral Society and other groups have enthusiastically supported the project verbally and have publicized it to their membership and in their summer publications. In the future, the Society and others should be invited to participate in publicizing such projects. Possibly, if they had been given more advance notice, more of their members might have received the necessary information to use the service. The environmental groups could help in the public education process through making short presentations for use on, or while waiting for, the bus. They should also be encouraged to arrange special hikes or beach walks to coordinate with the shuttle service. They should be used as staff support to further an idea in which they believe.

New Jersey's Department of Energy should also be involved in publicizing the Beach Shuttle as a part of its mandate to promote energy conservation pursuant to the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975.

F. Weather

As important as publicity might be, it cannot offset the realities of the weather. Weather at the shore is hard to predict. Often conditions will be ideal at the shore while less than perfect elsewhere in the State. In August, the weather was often quite unpredictable and, while forecasts were poor, conditions ended up being perfect for the beach. Poor weather forecasts were responsible, in large part, for the drop in ridership in August. Appendix 4 lists the weather forecasts published in the afternoon edition of the Trenton Times on the Friday preceding the weekend, and indicates the actual ridership that weekend.

Operationally, weather posed difficulties in trying to determine the number of buses that would be needed on any given day. Under the contract with the bus company, DEP had to decide to cancel shuttle operations by 6 a.m. or else pay for the full daily cost of the buses. In some instances the prevailing weather conditions in the immediate vicinity of Island Beach State Park appeared excellent for a large beach visitor turnout and resulted in a request for large number of buses. Poor conditions, eleswhere, however, produced a smaller turnout and buses were then left standing or sent back to the station.

Obviously, in the future weather forecasts will have to be monitored carefully to give forecasts due consideration in determining beach visitor projections on a given day.

DEP successfully used the following procedure to call off operations due to inclement weather.

1. Inform the bus company that operations had been cancelled, in which case no buses would be dispatched and no charges incurred.

2. Notify Island Beach State Park that the Shuttle had been cancelled.

3. The Park would then notify State and local police who, in turn, would activitate the "closed" signs on the Garden State Parkway, Route 9, and Route 527. (This procedure was terminated early in the program because of communication problems).

4. The Park would also notify local radio stations which announced the closing over the air.

During the 12 operating weeks, there were four days when the Shuttle did not operate due to inclement weather.

G. Ocean Pollution

A factor that could have, but apparently did not affect ridership were reports of various forms of ocean pollution. On July 7th, DEP started to issue weekly (Thursday) press advisories on beach and ocean conditions. While ridership was low on the weekend following the July 13th power blackout in New York that resulted in the discharge of untreated sewage into New York Harbor and coastal waters for two days, no conclusion can be drawn since the following weekend ridership was at an almost record level despite the less then ideal ocean conditions.

H. Overcrowding

Response to the Beach Shuttle, as indicated by the feedback from the questionnaires, was very favorable. There was, however, concern by some that shuttle riders would overcrowd and spoil Island Beach State Park.

Before the project began, Island Beach State Park personnel indicated that 1,000 people, in addition to those filling the Park parking lots, could result in overcrowding at the swimming areas. Since ridership never exceeded 1,000 people on any day, this fear was not realized.

I. Use of Energy

Some individuals called DEP's attention to the inconsistency of promoting the shuttle service as an energy conservation program, while, at the same time, allowing buses to idle engines and run their air conditioners. This practice of some bus drivers should be remedied in the future.

J. Bicycle Racks

DEP wanted to provide bicycle racks on the buses so that Shuttle users could have their bicycles at the Park. Unfortunately, the only known available racks cost over $1,000 each, preventing further consideration of this idea.

CHAPTER FIVE - RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Extend the pilot project initiated at Island Beach State Park in 1977 (and operated in 1978) for additional years, on a weekend basis at a fee of at least $0.50, to determine if ridership can be increased if publicity is improved.

2. Consider a Shuttle service to Sandy Hook as a second demonstration project, because of its proximity to the landlocked urban northern and eastern counties, and to relieve traffic congestion on roads leading to the National Recreation Area. The Sandy Hook unit would still afford the Shuttle's sponsors considerable management control by virtue of the National Park Service's administration of the Park. If Sandy Hook were designated as a target area, speed to the park should be emphasized and offered as the incentive to use the shuttle. Sponsors should in this case seriously explore establishing a contra-flow lane or obtain permission to use shoulders along Route 36 for buses.

3. Consider other alternative target areas. In view of the rider interest in Atlantic City, the city should also be considered a potential target area. A sponsor would, however, have less control over various aspects of the service. Other sites to be explored include the Wildwoods. The possibility of boat shuttles from, for example, Liberty State Park in Jersey City to Sandy Hook or Island Beach, should also be explored.

4. Reduce staff on buses if labor costs prove to be the major constraint to continuing the beach shuttle program. This staff reduction could be arranged by having one person stationed at the target area to meet all buses. Before allowing passengers to disembark, this person would board the bus and explain where people should pick up returning buses, what to do in the event of a sudden thunderstorm or other emergency, and answer any other questions. On the return journey, questionnaires would be issued to passengers upon boarding buses and later collected by staff as riders unload.

5. Include the Department of Energy in planning and implementation of any future shuttle program in view of its mandate under the Federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975.

6. Seek new state and federal funding sources for the subsidies necessary for the shuttle, like any public transportation.

7. Designate the roles and responsiblities of shuttle managers and staff early in the year. One or two people should be responsible on a full-time basis for implementing a shuttle program similar to that established at Island Beach. The first function is that of an Operations Manager and the second is as a Publicity Director.

8. Post numerous informational and directional signs on appropriate roads, and at target area and include days and hours of service.

9. Develop publicity and brochures early. Posters should be placed in buses, subways, trains and other public places. Key staff of the sponsor should be briefed and prepared to speak about the program in their discussions and speeches throughout the state.

10. Brief environmental groups early about the program so they can play a supportive role and in turn pass information to their constituency and prepare to sponsor nature walks and hikes using the shuttle as the vehicular means to reach the target area.

11. Use a timetable, such as following, to guide the planning of future shuttle projects. This timetable is designed for a shuttle to begin in June which coincides with start-up of lifeguard protection at Island Beach State Park. The timetable can be modified as appropriate.

NOVEMBER:

1. Decision to run a shuttle should be made at Commissioner level.
2. Identification of target area for shuttle program.
3. Designation of coordinating agency.
4. Identification of funding sources and establishment of budget account in respective agencies.
5. Memorandum from Commissioners to staff designating appropriate personnel to work on project.
6. Identification of appropriate inland parking lot (and alternative) to serve as target area.

DECEMBER:

1. Finalize arrangements for use of parking lot
2. Determination of bus route(s)
3. Solicitation of bids on bus contract
4. Contact with local and county officials
5. Contact with state agencies
6. Determination of grant needs
7. Preliminary budget plans
8. Press release

JANUARY:

1. Final decision on location
2. Plan and contacts for inter-agency coordination
3. Determination of personnel and equipment needs
4. Finalize bus route
5. Preliminary signing plan
6. Brochure design
7. Preliminary grant proposal
8. Press release

FEBRUARY:

1. Further budget development
2. Poster design
3. Finalize bus contract
4. Preliminary operational plans
5. Contact with environmental groups

MARCH:

1. Finalize budget
2. Final sign plan
3. Final brochure design
4. Final poster design
5. Develop publicity plan
6. Submit grant requests
7. Press release

APRIL:

1. Begin poster production
2. Begin sign production
3. Questionnaire design
4. Final coordination with other agencies
5. Production of questionnaire

MAY:

1. Placing of road signs
2. Acquisition of equipment and supplies
3. Promotional mailings (newsletters)
4. Arrange possible lot maintenance
5. Financial operational plan
6. Hire operational personnel
7. Explain nature of program to bus contractor and ensure comply with environmental energy conservation policies espoused by Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Energy

JUNE:

1. Press Conference
2. Heavy Publicity Campaign
3. Brochure distribution
4. Poster Distribution
5. Start-up

APPENDIX I - ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful acknowledgement is made to the numerous agencies and individuals for their assistance, cooperation and support in making the Beach Shuttle possible:

N.J. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
David J. Bardin, Former Commissioner
Division of Parks and Forestry:
Alfred Guido, Acting Director
Frank Guidotti
Mark Pitchell, Island Beach State Park
John Verdier, Superintendent of Island Beach State Park
Division of Marine Services
Donald T. Graham, Director
Ronald Thompson, Project Coordinator
Edward Lutz, Administrative Assistant to the Director
Office of Coastal Zone Management
David N. Kinsey, Chief
Marvin Atwood
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Bernice Wilson

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Bureau of Bus Operations
Neil Sternstein, Chief
William Carroll, Senior Transportation Analyst
Charles Deacon
Dennis McDonald
Tom Lorenc, DOT Coordinator
John Simonse

N.J. HIGHWAY AUTHORITY
Salvatore A. Bontempo, Chairman
Commissioner Charles Starkey
F. Joseph Carragher, Executive Director
Robert Harjes, Chief Engineer
John Simonse

LINCOLN BUS TRANSIT
William Van Looy

DOVER TOWNSHIP SEWERAGE AUTHORITY
Robert Conte, Executive Director
John Broome

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Tom Kennedy
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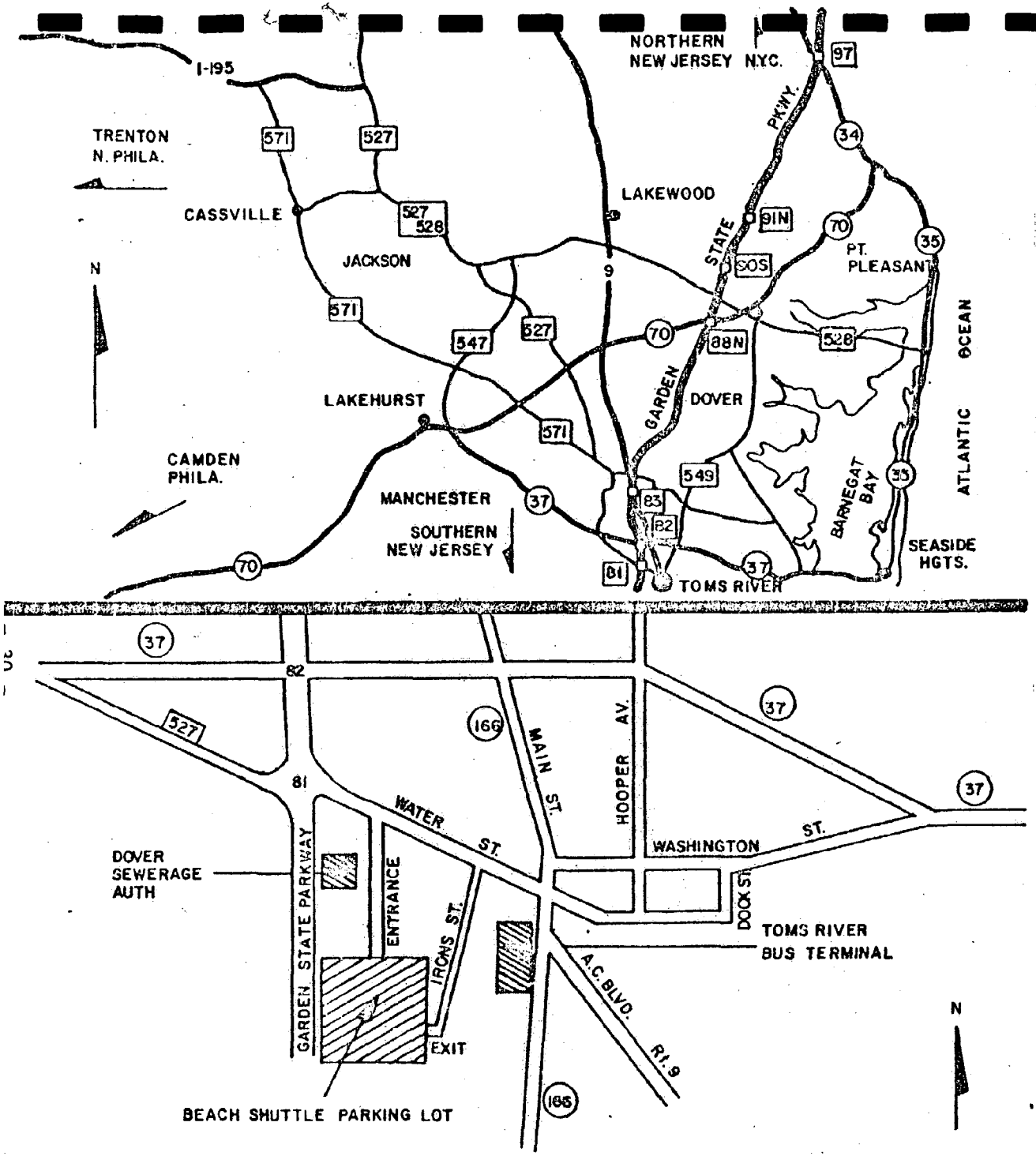
Tim Kiempfe
Ruth Bellow
Robert Hilton
Kenneth Tookes
Samuel Costanzo
Richard Costanzo
Abbey Spector
Tom Cambria
Scott Vaschal
Jim Sullivan
Pamela Johnson

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Office of Coastal Zone Management
Richard Gardner
Kathryn Cousins

APPENDIX II - ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK ATTENDANCE 1974-1977

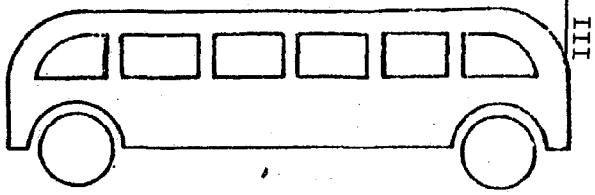
	1974	1975	1976	1977
January	3,654	5,085	2,305	2,195
February	1,883	4,593	6,383	3,438
March	6,412	9,350	7,481	6,107
April	18,964	12,135	17,995	15,217
May	21,668	40,791	24,305	50,468
June	57,958	99,860	67,466	60,067
July	135,999	170,948	121,282	190,070
August	187,384	164,145	134,705	160,650
September	37,484	19,206	34,368	43,432
October	18,738	13,775	10,143	11,238
November	9,978	10,720	6,093	3,831
December	4,019	2,414	2,083	2,029
TOTAL	504,131	533,002	434,609	548,692

NOTE: One parking lot at the Park was closed to public in 1976.



ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK

APPENDIX III



BEACH SHUTTLE

50¢

Let's protect our earth

AT EXIT 81 OF GARDEN STATE PARKWAY

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

GOVERNOR
Brendan Byrne

COMMISSIONER
Rocco D. Picci

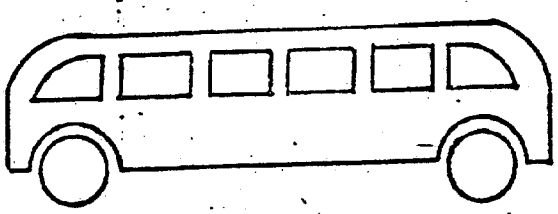
APPENDIX IV

Going to ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK this weekend?

SAVE

- TIME
- MONEY
- ENERGY

USE THE BEACH SHUTTLE



AT EXIT 81 OF GARDEN STATE PARKWAY

ONLY 50¢ PER PERSON

NO OTHER ADMISSION CHARGE!

Entrance to the Park costs $5.00 per car regardless of the number of occupants, on weekends and holidays. The Beach Shuttle costs 50¢ per person. This fee includes parking in Toms River, transportation to and from the Park, and entrance into the Park.

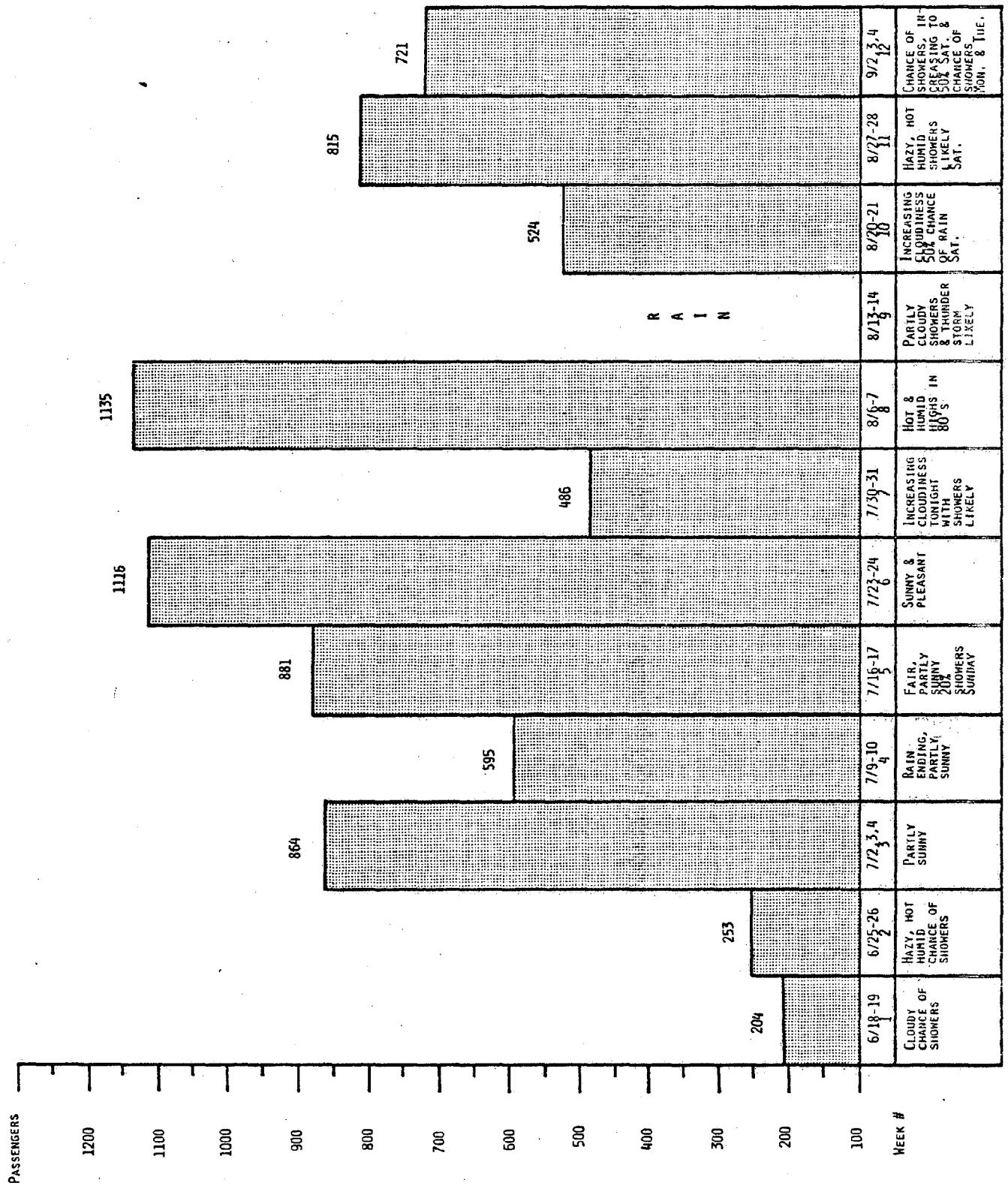
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

GOVERNOR Brendan Byrne

COMMISSIONER Rocco D. Ricci

APPENDIX V

RIDERSHIP AND WEATHER OUTLOOK
FOR WEEKEND AS REPORTED IN
TRENTON TIMES ON FRIDAY
PRECEDING WEEKEND.



APPENDIX VI

Sample Questionnaire

JUN 18 1977

SUMMER 1977

ISLAND BEACH SHUTTLE SERVICE

NEW JERSEY DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

DIVISION OF MARINE SERVICES

RIDER QUESTIONAIRE

We are very pleased that you have decided to use the ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK SHUTTLE SERVICE. By completing this short survey you will be helping us to analyze this summer's operation, as well as, aiding us in the planning process for future shuttles along the Jersey Coast and the rest of the nation's coastline recreational areas.

1. In what county do you reside? _____ (County) _____ (State)

2. How did you learn about the shuttle service?

   a. Newspaper _____
   b. Radio _____
   c. TV _____
   d. Friend _____
   e. Bus shuttle brochure _____
   f. Road sign _____
   g. Other _____

3. Are you a regular visitor to Island Beach State Park?

   YES _____ NO _____

4. If you are a regular visitor, how frequently do you visit the Park?

   a. Once a week _____
   b. Twice a week _____
   c. More than twice a week _____
   d. Once a month _____
   e. Twice a month _____

5. Have you used the shuttle in the past?

   YES _____ NO _____

6. Will you use the shuttle in the future?

   YES _____ NO _____ NOT SURE _____

7. Would you use the shuttle if it were offered on a weekday?

   YES _____ NO _____

8. What do you think of the shuttle service? Was it

   a. Convenient _____
   b. Fast enough _____
   c. Enjoyable _____
   d. Unsatisfactory _____

9. What prompted you to use the shuttle?

a. Convenience _____
b. Cost _____
c. Like to try new things _____
d. Environmental concerns _____

10. To you, what is the most important reason for having a bus shuttle?

a. Save money _____
b. Conserve energy _____
c. Preservation of ecologically sensitive land _____
d. Decreased traffic congestion _____
e. Increased access to the park _____
f. Decreased air pollution _____
g. Convenience _____

11. Was the lecture presented on the bus of value?

YES _____ NO _____ SOME _____

12. In general how do you feel about the bus shuttle? Do you have any suggestions that can help us to better meet the needs of the public?

Comments: _____

_____

_____

Thank you for your cooperation. This experimental beach shuttle service is partially supported through state and federal funds and is operated cooperatively by:

N. J. Dept. of Environmental Protection
N. J. Dept. of Transportation
N. J. Highway Authority
U. S. Dept. of Commerce - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

APPENDIX VI

Revised Questionnaire Summer 1977

Today's Date

ISLAND BEACH SHUTTLE SERVICE

NEW JERSEY DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

DIVISION OF MARINE SERVICES

RIDER QUESTIONNAIRE

We are very pleased that you have decided to use the ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK SHUTTLE SERVICE. Please take a few moments to complete this questionnaire, which will help the DEP analyze the feasibility and desirability of continuing the shuttle and encouraging other agencies in New Jersey, as well as around the nation, to initiate beach shuttle services next summer.

1. Where do you live?

   _____ County _____ State

2. How did you learn about the shuttle service?

   a. Newspaper ____
   b. Radio ____
   c. TV ____
   d. Friend ____
   e. Brochure ____
   f. Road sign ____

3. Are you a regular visitor to Island Beach State Park?

   Yes____ No ____

4. Have you used the shuttle in the past?

   Yes ____ No ____

5. Will you use the shuttle in the future?

   Yes ____ No ____ Not sure ____

   If not, why not? _____

6. Would you use the shuttle if it were offered on a weekday?

   Yes ____ No ____

7. What prompted you to use the shuttle?

   a. Convenience ____
   b. Cost ____
   c. Like to try new things ____
   d. Environmental concerns ____
   e. Park closed, only access to park ____

8. To you, what is the single most important reason for having a bus shuttle?

a. Save money ____
b. Conserve energy ____
c. Preservation of ecologically sensitive land ____
d. Decreased traffic congestion ____
e. Increased access to park ____
f. Decreased air pollution ____
g. Convenience ____

9. In general, how do you feel about the bus shuttle? Do you have any suggestions that can help us to better meet the needs of the public?

Comments: _____

_____

_____

10. Should a similar service be inaugurated elsewhere along the New Jersey coast?

Yes ____ No ____

If yes, where? _____

11. This experimental beach shuttle service is made possible by a federal grant, to subsidize part of the cost of the bus service. Would you use the beach shuttle service if the price per person (still including some sudsidy) were (check one):

a. $1.00 per person ____
b. $1.50 per person ____
c. $2.00 per person ____

Check the highest fare you would be willing to pay. Remember in the case of Island Beach State Park that the park is still likely to close in mid-morning of summer weekends, and the beach shuttle will be the only way of entering the park at these hours.

Thank you for your cooperation. This experimental beach shuttle service is partially supported through state and federal funds and is operated cooperatively by:

N. J. Department of Environmental Protection
N. J. Department of Transportation
N. J. Highway Authority
U. S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Ocean County Officials

APPENDIX VII - ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRES

As part of the beach shuttle experiment, questionnaires were handed out to riders on their return from Island Beach State Park to provide them with an opportunity to evaluate and comment on the service. The questionnaires also provided DEP with information regarding rider attitudes. The questionnaire was revised over the summer to determine if people would be prepared to pay a higher price to reduce size of the subsidy. Appendix VI includes samples of both questionnaires. It should be noted that the questionnaires were not administered in any formal or rigorous way and that responses may not always be valid. For example, the questions were not answered by everyone using the shuttle: the response ranged from 4 percent when staff ran out of questionnaires to 75 percent. In addition, in response to the question "What is the single most important reason for having a bus shuttle", people checked off several times rather than one. As many shuttle users became regulars, they tired of responding each week to the same questionnaire and improved even though, later on, they were requested to limit their response to the first "Where do you live?" question.

In spite of these shortcomings, the survey yielded much useful data over the twelve week period. Below is an evaluation of the 12 questions asked.

Question 1: Where do you live?

Figures indicated that over 80 percent of shuttle users came from New Jersey, with at least 30 percent coming from Ocean County. This seems to indicate an unanticipated pent-up demand for this type of service in Ocean County. Conversations with passengers over the summer months revealed that one member of the family would often drive the others to the Toms River parking lot and come back later to pick them up. The low cost of the Shuttle probably encouraged more Ocean County residents to use the Park as a neighborhood resource. While the $5.00 park entrance fee might have required a family as a whole to decide to go to the Park, the 50 cents-per-person fee posed no such constraint. In this respect, the Shuttle provided greater freedom to individual families to decide what to do with their leisure time.

Not entirely unexpected was evidence that the majority of shuttle users came from the northern counties of the state, although a few did come from Burlington, Altantic and Camden counties. Between 9 and 17 percent of the users were out-of-state residents from Pennsylvania, New York and elsewhere.

Question 2: How did you learn about the shuttle service? (newspaper, T.V., radio, friend, bus shuttle brochure, or road sign)

Word of mouth perhaps was as important as newspaper and road signs in providing information on the bus shuttle, particularly after the first weekends of the shuttle.

Question 3: Are you a regular visitor to Island Beach Sate Park? (yes-no)

About 50% of the users considered themselves regular visitors.

Question 4: If you are a regular visitor, how frequently do you visit the Park?

Twice a week or more	2%
Once a week	26%
Twice a month	11%
Once a month	20%

Question 5: Will you use the shuttle in the future? (yes - no)

Most people indicated that they would use the shuttle again.

Question 6: Would you use the shuttle if it were offered on weekdays? (yes - no)

Over 80 percent of the responses indicated that they would.

Question 7: What prompted you to use the shuttle? (Convenience?, Cost?, Like To Try New Things?, Environmental Concerns?)

Approximately 70 percent of responses indicated that cost and convenience were the motivating factors to use the shuttle.

Between 10 and 18 percent liked to try new things, and between 15 and 17 percent indicated concern for the environment.

The response "Park Closed, only Access to Park" was placed on this question in the revised questionnaire developed in August. Responses ranged from 1 to 10 percent. This item should be placed on questionnaires from the beginning in future to permit better evaluation of this item.

Question 8: To you what is the most important reason for having a bus shuttle? (Conserve Energy?, Preserve Ecologically Sensitive Land?, Decrease Traffic Congestion?, Increase Access to Park?, Decrease Air Pollution?, Convenience?

As indicated in the introduction to this section, riders checked off more than one item. This question is similar to the preceeding one and responses were consistent with "money savings" and "convenience" cited as the most important factors. "Protection of the environment" was given least weight, even though users were probably more environmentally aware than other random public groups, which was confirmed by the comments made to Question 11.

Following in order of priority is how shuttle users ranked the above factors on a scale of 1 to 7 with the lowest number being weighed as the most important: Save Money, Convenience, Decrease Traffic, Conserve Energy, Increase Access to Park, Preserve Ecology, and Decrease Air Pollution.

Question 9: Was the lecture presented on the bus of value? (yes, no, some)

Reponse to this was favorable.

Question 10: In general how do you feel about the shuttle? Do you have any suggestions that can help us to better meet the needs of the public?

Out of over 3,000 responses, only a handful were totally negative. The rest were supportive or offered constructive criticism.

The negative comments were of this nature:

"No I wouldn't take it (shuttle) again unless lot was full; it is too much bother."

"Like all mass transit, it's slow.

Several Ocean County residents were concerned that the Shuttle would produce overcrowding along the 10 mile beach.

Comments on the service indicated that riders:

- wanted a better method of ticketing, since many people lost tickets. A method of stamping people's arms was suggested.
- suggested season passes
- wanted more publicity
- requested special express lanes for buses
- requested weekday service
  "If the bus was offered on weekdays it would be possible for me to go to the park more often".
- urged more drop off points into the Park
- hoped there could be no standees in aisles of buses
- urged that the running of bus engines be stopped, avoiding wasting fuel, while buses were waiting to be boarded
- requested better litter controls

Some wanted more conveniences such as:

- telephone at Island Beach State Park bathhouse
- benches at Toms River Parking Lot
- loudspeakers on all buses
- music on bus
- smoking-sections -- on the other hand non-smokers complained about smoking!
- no air conditioning on return trip because of wet suits, others complained of lack of same, while still others complained that air conditioning represented a waste of fuel.

Transportation Planning

Some expressed a wish that shuttle be connected to other forms of transportation to make it possible for them to use mass transit all the way to Island Beach State Park:

"connect it to other means of transportation. Now it has to be reached by car."

"connect shuttle to the nearest railroad station, we would come the whole way by mass transit."

Mostly, however, the comments were supportive. One person -- before the questionnaire on fees was added -- even stated:

"You could double the fare and we would still use it."

Where possible, comments were acted upon. It should be noted that while environmental concerns were of secondary importance to "cost" and "convenience" as indicated in the analysis of Question 11, shuttle riders, nevertheless, demonstrated a high degree of sensitivity for environmental protection and energy conservation.

Question 11: Should a similar shuttle service be inaugurated elsewhere along the New Jersey Coast? (yes - no). If yes, where?

The response to this question was favorable. Places most frequently identified for beach shuttle service were: Seaside Park, Sandy Hook, Atlantic City, Wildwoods.

Note that many people both under this question and under Question 10 suggested extending the shuttle to Seaside Park, which is adjacent to Island Beach. DEP initially considered making a bus stop off at Seaside Park, but rejected this concept due to bus franchise obstacles and a concern by some municipal officials that the bus shuttle might divert visitors away from Seaside Park. Since Seaside Park offers many amusements, a future beach shuttle would probably have to be extended into the evening to return passengers to the Toms River parking lot.

The question was revised during August to include the following question:

"The experimental beach shuttle service is made possible by a federal grant, to subsidize part of the cost of the bus service. Would you use the beach shuttle service if the price per person (still including some subsidy) were (check one) a.) $1.00 pr person; b1) $1.50 per person or c.) $2.00 per person? Check the highest fare you would be willing to pay. Remember in the case of Island Beach State Park that the park is still likely to close in mid-morning of summer weekends, and the beach shuttle will be the only way of entering the park at these hours.

This was possibly one of the most important questions to be asked in view of the high cost of subsidizing mass transit. The responses are indicated below:

COASTAL ZONE
INFORMATION CENTER

Table 10

Response to Question Concerning Riders' Attitudes
Toward Raising Price of Shuttle

Users Willing to Pay	Aug. 6-7		Aug. 20-21		Aug. 27-28		Sept. 2-3	
$1.00 per person	122	63%	20	83%	69	30%	151	76%
$1.50 per person	30	15%	1	4%	16	7%	36	18%
$2.00 per person	11	6%	1	4%	4	1%	11	6%
No response	31	16%	2	4%	139	61%	2	
	194		24		228		200	

A failure to answer the question was placed in a "no response" column for purposes of analysis and regarded as a negative response. The sampling period was too short to allow for any but superficial conclusions to be drawn. These however, indicate that few people would be willing to pay more than $1.00 for the type of service that was offered.

Note: Because of a mix-up, the revised questionnaire was not handed out on August 13 - 14.

NOAA COASTAL SERVICES CENTER LIBRARY
3 6668 00001 2205