

Wasque Beach Recommendations

1. West Entrance

- a. A 30-foot mat made from coconut has been purchased to install from the designated accessible parking spot to Katama Bay. It may not reach the water's edge, and the grade is very steep, well above 8 or 10%. **The slope could be mitigated if a longer mat was used and installed cross-wise across the slope making sure there is no cross slope exceeding 2.5%. It is recommended that be determined.**
- b. The small parking lot itself is firm and stable.
- c. One accessible porta potty is located up the trail about 75 feet from the parking lot and longer from the beach/Katama Bay. Apparently the placement of this porta potty at this location was required by the Edgartown Conservation Commission for aesthetic reasons. Part of the route to the porta potty is also not firm and stable and of course some distance away from the parking lot and the accessible space without any valid or compelling reason. **The porta potty should be moved adjacent to or on the parking lot. It is recommended that TOR seek reconsideration from the Commission. We would certainly support the request.**

2. **Trail/route from east to west entrance.** It has previously been recommended that this wonderful trail be made fully accessible. It is wide enough as is, and there are only a few areas where relatively minor work needs to be done. Very recently, closer to the west entrance over a span of about 50 feet, the trail was terraced with 4 or 5 cross-boards to prevent erosion. This rendered this area and much of the trail inaccessible to wheelchair users and others. **It is recommended another method be created to address the erosion problem, if possible, so that accessibility in that area can be restored.**

3. **Metal Stairway to the Beach from Dune/Cliff.** Due to erosion these steps were recently installed replacing a previous stairway. Based on the height from the beach to the dune/cliff, it is roughly estimated that a ramp of approximately 85-95 feet could have and still could be installed at a grade of no more that 8.33%. It potentially could extend straight out. Given the distance to the water from the dune/cliff, which is probably about 250 feet, this would not appear to be overly invasive aesthetically or otherwise. Alternatively the ramp could be cross angled or switch backed so it would not protrude out more than about 25 to 30 feet. Either way a beach mat would be necessary from the end of the ramp to the high water mark (HWM). **It is recommended that these options or other alternatives be evaluated and, if feasible,¹ engineered by the appropriate professional.** Wasque is an expansive and beautiful beach and this may be one of the few areas or opportunities to make the beach itself (as opposed to just Katama Bay) accessible to young and old alike of all abilities.

Richard Cohen, Dukes County Associate Commissioner for Disabilities
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¹ Of course it may be that creating an accessible route along the lines described may not be feasible and qualify as one or more of the exceptions. Even if an exception applies, measures must be taken to make the site as accessible as possible. For the exceptions, see page 2 of the accompanying progress report on cross cutting recommendations applicable to all beaches which further cites and references USDA Accessibility Guide Book, pp. 31-35, 76 at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Accessibility-Guide-Book.pdf>

