



False Cape State Park  
4001 Sandpiper Road  
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

# FALSE CAPE STATE PARK MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2010 UPDATE



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MASTER PLAN  
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*(Reviewed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation Board on June 15, 2010 and adopted by DCR Director, David A. Johnson on June 16, 2010.)*

False Cape State Park consists of some 4,321 acres of maritime forests, dunes, marshes, shrub areas, and several islands. It is located in the southeast corner of Virginia, within the jurisdiction of the City of Virginia Beach. The park site is bordered by the state of North Carolina to the south, the Atlantic Ocean to the east, Back Bay to the west, and Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge to the north. The park is in the Hampton Roads Planning District, Region 23; this area is home to more than 1.4 million people. Access to the park is from the Indian River Road exit (Route 407) on Interstate 64. The park is reached by taking Indian River Road east to Newbridge Road, Newbridge Road to Sandbridge, then south on Sandpiper Road.

In 1966, the General Assembly appropriated funds to match federal funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to acquire False Cape State Park. In 1980, the park opened with trails, boat docks, and primitive camping. In 1983, plans for the Wash Woods Environmental Education Center were developed to serve as a model environmental education facility for the public. The center is used primarily for overnight or day-use groups conducting environmental education studies.

The original master plan called for False Cape State Park to become an intensively developed facility, attracting an estimated 60,000 visitors on peak days, and as many as 25,000 on an average summer day. Concerns over environmental impacts, limits to park access through Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, and questions about the level of development appropriate for one of the few remaining unspoiled coastal spits along the Atlantic Coast, led to a much more conservative Development Plan.

The concept for future developments at False Cape State Park is based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) reached with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife for access through Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Development will be limited to ensure the current character of the park remains unchanged. The park offers a unique opportunity to explore nature in an unspoiled coastal environment. Due to the natural diversity, the large number of rare plant species, and the uniqueness of the barrier spit, the primary purpose of the park must be to protect the environment. This is done by careful routing of trails, restricting pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and carefully developing facilities. The secondary objective of the park is to provide environmental education and low impact or passive recreational activities.

Future development will take place in areas already containing facilities or areas that have been previously disturbed. Existing roads and dune crossovers will be used to the greatest extent possible to reduce the impact of any facilities on the park. a large percentage of the park's acreage has been designated as a state Natural Area Preserve in recognition of the unique natural systems in the park.

The State of North Carolina has recently made the decision to build a new bridge over Knott's Island Bay that will bring visitors to the outer banks very close to the southern boundary of False Cape State Park. This creates the need for enhanced visitor access and control functions as well as the need for a ranger presence and support facilities for visitors at the southern end of the park. A variety of facilities and activities are proposed for the Dudley Island site to help provide for the expected visitation from the south.

The current master plan has identified the need to increase the number of primitive campsites. The new campsites will be located in the same general areas as the existing sites (Barbours Hill, False Cape Landing and the beach). Outdoor coldwater showers and comfort stations with potable water are proposed for all campgrounds.

The Wash Woods Environmental Center presently accommodates 20-22 individuals; it would be expanded to accommodate 35-40 people. At False Cape Landing, a new 35-40 person environmental education center with wetlab would be constructed. These facilities would be modeled after the existing facilities at Wash Woods. At Barbours Hill, a day-use environmental education center consisting of wet lab/classroom shelter will be constructed. At the Dudley Island site, a research center is proposed, along with improvements to the existing pier. The pier would become the staging area for the park canoe programs. This area has also been identified as a potential site for a staff residence. A contact station will also be needed at the southern entrance to the park to handle expected increases in visitation.

To meet demand for access, DCR provides a visitor transportation system, both to limit impact to wildlife and to promote a high quality experience for all visitors. This visitor transportation system, as required in the 1996 MOU with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has been incorporated into Park and Refuge management plans. The large capacity vehicles used to bring visitors through the Back Bay Refuges and into the park reduce the frequency and duration of disturbances to wildlife. Other visitors come to the park by boat or by walking or riding a bicycle.

Presently, overnight guests leave their vehicles in the Little Island Park parking lot, which is owned and operated by the City of Virginia Beach, when visiting False Cape State Park. A formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the City of Virginia Beach, Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, and False Cape State Park was signed on June 12, 1998. This MOU designated an area for state park visitor parking and outlined the corresponding rules and regulations for use.

The phased development plan for False Cape State Park is arranged by development node. Priority developments are those that enhance the park's ability to serve overnight guests, especially those participating in educational programs. New educational facilities are proposed as well as improvements to existing facilities. To meet the expected increase in visitation from the south, facilities are proposed for the Dudley Island development node. Staff housing in the park is substandard and there is a high priority to upgrade two residences now and the third in a later phase.

The total cost to develop the park is \$ 104,839,137. The following list identifies the facilities included in each phase of development.

### **Phase I**

#### Washwoods

- Construct Dorm for 24 students
- Repair/replace pier

#### Barbours Hill

- Campsites – (7) additional sites w/small Bathhouse
- Day-use environmental education center (2500 sf w/ restrooms)
- Wet-lab with Classroom Shelter (large shelter size)
- Beach Campsites (7) w/sweet smelling toilet/outside shower
- Replace Assistant Manager's residence

#### False Cape Landing

- Repair/replace pier

#### Little Island Gateway Exhibits (orientation to False Cape)

Estimated cost to complete Phase I:                 \$7,091,253

### **Phase II**

#### Dudley Island

- Staff residence
- Contact station
- Scientific research center
- Pier repairs
- Road Upgrade –(improve the 3-1/2 miles of sand "road" from Washwoods to Dudley Island. The upgrade must be gravel.)

#### Wash Woods,

- Replace Chief Rangers Residence

Estimated cost to complete Phase II:                 \$9,041,760

### **Phase III**

#### False Cape Landing

- Campsites – 7 additional sites w/small bathhouse
- Beach- sweet smelling toilet/outside shower
- Environmental education center/dorm with wet lab/ classrooms/kitchen (40 occupants)

#### Washwoods

- Replace Park Manager's residence

Estimated Cost to complete Phase III:                 \$88,706,124

## **Staffing and Operations**

Presently, the park is staffed with five positions, a park manager, assistant manager, chief ranger, park ranger, and a program support technician. In addition to the existing positions, there should be another park ranger position. Taking into consideration the ongoing re-benchmarking efforts, and the strong interest in expanding the existing interpretive and educational components of the park offerings, chief ranger–interpreter and park ranger–interpreter positions were identified as a need for the site. False Cape, with its unique natural environment and complex cooperative management, has proposed environmental education and research facilities identified in each of the 3 development phases. The size and logistical challenges of the park will require an increased number of staff to maintain and operate these additional facilities as they are developed. An additional park ranger is proposed for phase 2 and an additional chief ranger and park ranger with the development of phase 3. As the proposed phased development is completed, along with the proposed existing staff, these additional positions will be necessary in maintaining the new and existing facilities, trails and in the major environmental program development.

The park’s FY2010 budget is \$479,000 including salaries. At full build out and fully staffed to properly manage and operate the park, the budget will need to be approximately \$1,015,000, an overall increase of about 53%. (See next page)

<b>EXISTING (FY 10)</b>	<b>BUDGET SHORTFALL*</b>	<b><u>PHASE 1</u></b>	<b><u>PHASE 2</u></b>	<b>PHASE 3</b>	<b>FULL BUILD OUT</b>
<b>PARK STAFFING</b>	<b>VACANT</b>		<b>NEW</b>	<b>NEW</b>	<b>PARK STAFFING</b>
Park Manager					Park Manager
Asst. Park Mgr.					Asst. Park Mgr.
Chief Ranger				Chief Ranger	Chief Ranger (2)
	Chief Ranger – Interp.				Chief Ranger – Interp.
Park Ranger	Park Ranger		Park Ranger	Park Ranger	Park Ranger (4)
	Park Ranger – Interp.				Park Ranger – Interp.
Program Support Tech.					Program Support Tech.
<b><u>SALARY TOTAL</u></b>					<b>SALARY TOTAL</b>
\$273,000	\$130,000		\$40,000	\$90,000	\$533,000
<b>WAGE TOTAL</b>	<b>REDUCTION</b>				<b>WAGE TOTAL</b>
\$56,000	\$17,000	\$52,000	\$37,000	\$63,000	\$225,000
<b>OTPS TOTAL</b>					<b>OTPS TOTAL</b>
\$150,000	\$17,000	\$29,000	\$20,000	\$41,000	\$257,000
<b><u>TOTAL BUDGET (FY10 dollars)</u></b>					<b><u>TOTAL BUDGET (FY10 dollars)</u></b>
\$479,000	\$164,000	\$81,000	\$97,000	\$194,000	\$1,015,000

NOTE – All costs (salary, wage, OTPS (Other than Personnel Services)) are based on FY10 budget projections.

\*Budget Shortfall represents positions that were frozen or needed as part of the re-benchmarking effort, and operating costs reduced due to state wide budget reductions.

# LEGEND

- PROPOSED FACILITIES
- EXISTING FACILITIES
- PARK BOUNDARY
- PARK PROPERTY
- HIKING TRAILS
- MULTI-PURPOSE TRAIL
- RPA SETBACK LINE



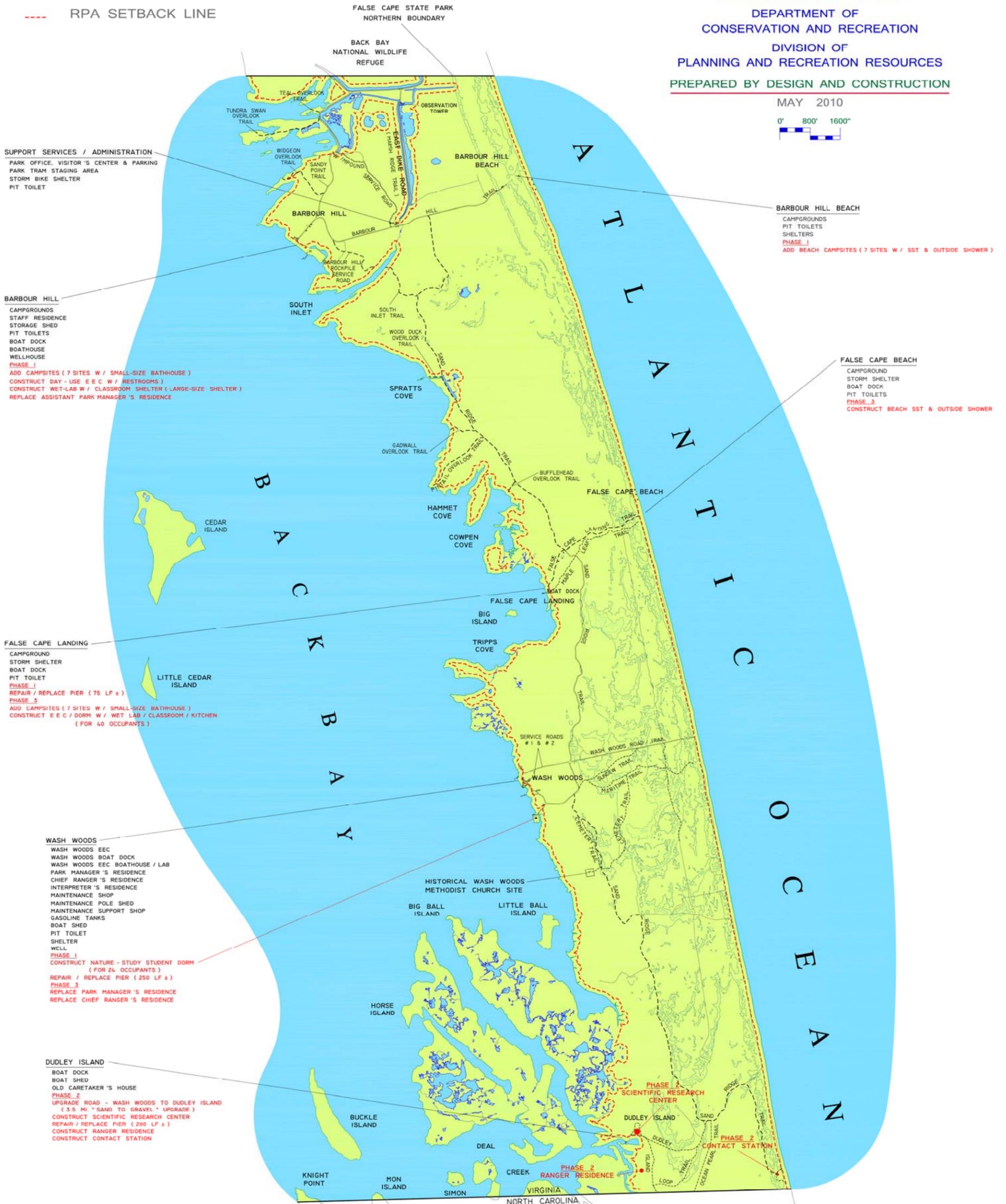
# MASTER PLAN FOR FALSE CAPE STATE PARK

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
 DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION  
 DIVISION OF PLANNING AND RECREATION RESOURCES  
 PREPARED BY DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

MAY 2010



**PHASE 1**  
 LITTLE ISLAND GATEWAY EXHIBITS  
 FOR ORIENTATION TO FALSE CAPE



**SUPPORT SERVICES / ADMINISTRATION**  
 PARK OFFICE, VISITOR'S CENTER & PARKING  
 PARK TRAM STAGING AREA  
 STORM BIKE SHELTER  
 PIT TOILET

**BARBOUR HILL**  
 CAMPGROUNDS  
 STAFF RESIDENCE  
 STORAGE SHED  
 PIT TOILETS  
 BOAT DOCK  
 BOATHOUSE  
 WELLHOUSE  
**PHASE 1**  
 ADD CAMPSITES (7 SITES W / SMALL-SIZE BATHHOUSE)  
 CONSTRUCT DAY-USE EEC W / RESTROOMS  
 CONSTRUCT WET-LAB W / CLASSROOM SHELTER (LARGE-SIZE SHELTER)  
 REPLACE ASSISTANT PARK MANAGER'S RESIDENCE

**BARBOUR HILL BEACH**  
 CAMPGROUNDS  
 PIT TOILETS  
 SHELTERS  
**PHASE 1**  
 ADD BEACH CAMPSITES (7 SITES W / SST & OUTSIDE SHOWER)

**FALSE CAPE BEACH**  
 CAMPGROUND  
 STORM SHELTER  
 BOAT DOCK  
 PIT TOILETS  
**PHASE 3**  
 CONSTRUCT BEACH SST & OUTSIDE SHOWER

**FALSE CAPE LANDING**  
 CAMPGROUND  
 STORM SHELTER  
 BOAT DOCK  
 PIT TOILET  
**PHASE 1**  
 REPAIR / REPLACE PIER (75 LF ±)  
**PHASE 3**  
 ADD CAMPSITES (7 SITES W / SMALL-SIZE BATHHOUSE)  
 CONSTRUCT EEC / DORM W / WET LAB / CLASSROOM / KITCHEN (FOR 40 OCCUPANTS)

**WASH WOODS**  
 WASH WOODS EEC  
 WASH WOODS BOAT DOCK  
 WASH WOODS EEC BOATHOUSE / LAB  
 PARK MANAGER'S RESIDENCE  
 CHIEF RANGER'S RESIDENCE  
 INTERPRETER'S RESIDENCE  
 MAINTENANCE SHOP  
 MAINTENANCE SUPPORT SHOP  
 GASOLINE TANKS  
 BOAT SHED  
 PIT TOILET  
 SHELTER  
 WELL  
**PHASE 1**  
 CONSTRUCT NATURE-STUDY STUDENT DORM (FOR 24 OCCUPANTS)  
 REPAIR / REPLACE PIER (250 LF ±)  
**PHASE 3**  
 REPLACE PARK MANAGER'S RESIDENCE  
 REPLACE CHIEF RANGER'S RESIDENCE

**DUDLEY ISLAND**  
 BOAT DOCK  
 BOAT SHED  
 OLD CARETAKER'S HOUSE  
**PHASE 3**  
 UPGRADE ROAD - WASH WOODS TO DUDLEY ISLAND (3.5 MI. SAND TO GRAVEL UPGRADE)  
 CONSTRUCT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH CENTER  
 REPAIR / REPLACE PIER (200 LF ±)  
 CONSTRUCT RANGER RESIDENCE  
 CONSTRUCT CONTACT STATION

**PHASE 2**  
 SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH CENTER  
**PHASE 2**  
 CONTACT STATION

**PHASE 2**  
 RANGER RESIDENCE