The beach along Beach Plum Island is very narrow. High tides tend to rise to the toe of the dune. Beach Plum Island Preserve is one of the last stretches of undeveloped barrier island in Delaware. Hunting and disturbance of wildlife or vegetation is prohibited. Pedestrians are prohibited in the southern portion of the island also closed to beach vehicles.

Potential closure when nesting birds are present
Surf fishing vehicle permits are issued for the calendar year. They allow vehicles to access designated beaches at Cape Henlopen, Delaware Seashore and Fenwick Island State Parks and Beach Plum Island Nature Preserve for the sole purpose of surf fishing.

A surf fishing permit is valid only for two-axle vehicles that are licensed and registered to operate on public highways.

The surf fishing vehicle plate and current sticker must be properly displayed on the vehicle for which the permit was issued and shall be affixed prior to operation on the beach.

About Your Surf Fishing Permit

• Vehicle use on the designated beaches is restricted to persons actively engaged in surf fishing. Operation of a permitted surf fishing vehicle on the beaches administered by the Division for reasons other than traveling to and from fishing areas for the express purpose of surf fishing is prohibited.

• "Actively engaged in surf fishing" means a person is taking all reasonable and necessary actions to maximize the probability of hooking and landing game fish by rod, reel and line attached to a baited rig, artificial lure or artificial fly. Persons are also actively engaged in surf fishing when they are within 50 feet of their fishing equipment and are tending, casting and recasting their fishing equipment.

• Any permitted surf fishing vehicle parked for any period of time on state park beaches without one or more persons who arrived in that vehicle being actively engaged in surf fishing is prohibited.

• The use or operation of any vehicle whatsoever on, over, across state park sand dunes is expressly prohibited, except when displaying a valid Delaware surf fishing vehicle permit and crossing dunes at authorized dune crossings, which are designated and maintained for this purpose.

• No vehicle shall be driven through, over or upon any beach area that has been posted as an endangered and/or protected species bird nesting area.

Violations and Fines

• Violation of the rules and regulations may result in a fine of $50 to $250 for a first offense and $100 to $500 for a second offense. Violators will be cited and permits may be revoked if state park regulations are not followed.

• The use of mechanically-propelled bait or line castsers is prohibited on all surf fishing beaches.

• The surf fishing vehicle permit serves as the vehicle operator’s fishing license when fishing in designated Delaware State Park surf fishing areas. Other anglers must have valid fishing licenses issued by the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife. In addition, a Fishermen’s Information Network (FIN) number is required to fish in Delaware waters. FINs are available at delaware-fin.com/registerfin.asp or by calling 1-800-432-9228.

• Dogs are allowed in all surf fishing vehicle areas, but must be under control and on a leash not to exceed six feet in length.

• In addition to giving access to designated beach areas, the surf fishing permit allows entry to day areas in most Delaware State Parks.

• The Carry-In, Carry-Out program is in effect in all surf fishing areas. Trash receptacles are not provided, remove all of your trash and dispose of fishing line properly.

• Surf fishing areas are subject to closure at any time in the event of weather conditions (high tides, coastal storms, etc.). Surf fishing vehicle areas may be limited for the duration of such an event. Closure is deemed necessary for property management, protection of flora, fauna and their habitats, or when it is in the best interest of the health, safety and general welfare of visitors.

• In order to protect fragile plants and grasses that stabilize the dunes, and to leave nesting sea birds undisturbed, people, pets and vehicles are not allowed on the dunes or in bird nesting areas. Only designated crossings may be used to cross the dunes. Violations are subject to fines.

• Designated surf fishing beaches are open for other recreational activities. Caution must be exercised when sharing the beach.

• The beach ecosystem is very important and must be protected. Any damage done to the dunes should be reported to the nearest park employee.