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Duck chosen for living shoreline, NC 12 resiliency project

01/18/2022 by Jennifer Allen (<https://coastalreview.org/author/jennallen/>)



Aerial photograph for a proposed living shoreline and section of N.C. 12 elevated in Duck. Photo: Vanesse Hangen Brustlin

Updated to clarify length of N.C. 12 elevation

Duck officials heard late last year that the Outer Banks town had been selected for a \$1.85 million grant for a proposed living shoreline and N.C. 12 resiliency project.

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The funding is through the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities, or BRIC (<https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/building-resilient-infrastructure-communities>), program. The Federal Emergency Management Agency, which administers the BRIC program, announced the nearly two-dozen selected competitive projects (<https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/building-resilient-infrastructure-communities/after-apply/fy-2020-summary-competitive-projects-selections#elevation>) in early November 2021, but as of Friday the town was still waiting on official word.

Town Manager Joe Heard told Coastal Review that he had received information Thursday suggesting that the town's "official" BRIC grant award from FEMA likely will not occur until March 2022.

The BRIC program supports states, communities, tribes and territories as they take on hazard-mitigation projects with the goal of reducing risks from disasters and natural hazards by focusing on larger infrastructure projects. These projects are to enhance human health, provide ecological benefits and benefit a multitude of residents, according to FEMA.

During an earlier interview, Heard had explained that once the town gets the go-ahead, it can move forward with the plan to elevate a flood-prone section of N.C. 12 — the only north-south roadway through Duck.

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Duck's is one of 22 projects selected across the country for fiscal 2020. The projects are under one of seven categories: elevation, flood control, floodproofing, relocation, shelter project, utility and infrastructure protection, and wildfire management. The Duck project is in the elevation category.

Duck occupies a narrow swath of land between Currituck Sound and the Atlantic Ocean and is situated on the northern end of Dare County, adjacent to Currituck County. The town has around 500 year-round residents, but during peak season, the population can reach up to 25,000, according to the U.S. Census Bureau and the town. North of Duck, in Currituck County, the population can be in the tens of thousands during peak season. The only way for those folks to leave Currituck County is on N.C. 12 through Duck.

N.C. 12 is "a low-lying highway where floods frequently impact residents, tourists and emergency services," according to FEMA – and anyone familiar with the Outer Banks. The stretch of highway at the north end of Duck routinely floods, blocking traffic and emergency services, and is threatened by shoreline erosion.

The project

The town has proposed for the project installing a living shoreline to help protect coastal habitat and mitigate shoreline erosion, which threatens the roadway and private property, according to the BRIC application. "Flooding in the project area affects a short but critical stretch of NC 12."

"The project Includes 988 linear feet of breakwater sills, protection of 21,234 square feet of existing marsh, 12,168 square feet of marsh restoration, and 920 linear feet of riprap revetment," the application states. The proposed revetment is to prevent erosion and protect the roadway and adjacent private

property, help reduce wave energy, and prevent debris from accumulating in the roadway.

Heard explained that the living shoreline is intended to stabilize the section of the Currituck Sound shoreline along the roadway. The town obtained a substantial grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the living shoreline. The engineering design is complete and ready to be permitted.

The town also plans to add a bicycle and pedestrian pathway along this area. Duck had a fourth and final phase to complete of its sidewalk and bike lane project through the village. Coincidentally, it's the same quarter-mile stretch that would tie into an existing crosswalk north of the area, Heard said.

Nature-based solutions to improve stormwater runoff conditions are to be put in place, specifically, an infiltration trench between the roadway asphalt and the concrete sidewalk. The town obtained a grant from the Dare County Tourism Board for this project.

"So we had these two components (living shoreline and sidewalk projects) that were already locked in, but when the BRIC came up, suddenly, we're now looking at larger numbers — a capability to accomplish something much more significant than those two projects by themselves," he said.

To apply for BRIC, the living shoreline and pedestrian path projects were rolled into another project to elevate that section of Highway 12, Duck Road, in that same area, "that had been identified as the single most vulnerable piece of public infrastructure by that Western Carolina study," he said.

A 1,260-foot section of N.C. 12 will be elevated. Heard added that the town didn't think that the road work would happen for another decade, but BRIC was an opportunity to accomplish elevating the road and the other projects at the same time.

The town also plans to use subsurface infiltration chambers, which will provide a place to store runoff that will be filtered as it infiltrates the native sandy soils, avoiding direct discharge to the sound, the application states.

"Basically everything east of the project area rises up significantly, it's part of a large dune, that goes up substantially," Heard said. There was a lot of runoff from the streets and property in that area and right now it's just a sheet of water flowing across the road, directly into the sound.

The underground component planned for north of Olde Duck Road would capture stormwater and gradually release it as the water table allows, Heard said. It's like a system that was installed at the southern end of town more than 10 years ago, "that really made a substantial difference" in an area that flooded consistently. "And we're looking for the same type of results here."

Heard added that native plants are also part of the plan to help filter any remaining roadway runoff.

"That's one of the big benefits of that as well. It's not just recreating habitat, these plants will help filter that water before it goes into the sound," he said.



Aerial photograph with the proposed projects on the stretch of N.C. 12 in Duck. Illustration: Vanesse Hangen Brustlin

By raising the roadway, installing the living shoreline and making the sidewalk improvements, the project will mitigate threats and loss associated with erosion and damage to critical Infrastructure, roadway infrastructure replacement costs, interfering with emergency vehicles and hospital access, blocking storm evacuation route, and disruption of safe pedestrian and bicycle travel, according to the application.

First steps

Heard explained that Duck had gone through several steps in applying for the BRIC program. The project and grant itself are the result of three town planning efforts in 2020.

One was when Duck did a vulnerability assessment in partnership with the Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines at Western Carolina University in February 2020. Heard said that the assessment identified the town's most vulnerable assets, which included this section of N.C. 12.

Then in June of that year, work was completed on the Outer Banks regional hazard mitigation plan, which includes Currituck and Dare counties as well as Dare's local governments, Duck, Kill Devil Hills, Kitty Hawk, Manteo, Nags Head and Southern Shores — a total of eight governing bodies.

"And again, that was a project where we spent over a year identifying what some of the hazards are and the risks that all of our communities deal with," Heard said.

In addition, each community created its own plan.

"We do have a sub plan that focuses just on Duck and the things that we hope to accomplish to make ourselves a more resilient community," he said.

The third project took place in August 2020, when work was completed on Duck's comprehensive land use plan.

Heard said the land use plan was a little over the year in the making.

"We interacted with the community in a variety of ways during that process to try to get input from property owners, citizens, business owners, and different stakeholders in the town," he said.

Christian Legner, the town's public information and events director, distributed a survey that received more than 800 responses, which was "off-the-charts" engagement Heard said for the town to only have 500 or so year-round residents.

The survey enabled town officials to "feel very confident that the types of goals, objectives and actions that we identified in that plan were the will of the community. It gives us a lot of confidence that we were heading in the right direction," Heard added.

Not long after, Heard said that town officials became aware of the BRIC program and learned that many of the town's planned projects were eligible.

The town worked with the North Carolina Department of Public Safety to apply for BRIC.

"We lumped it all together into a single, cohesive coastal resiliency project that would elevate the road, have the living shoreline, have the bike path and sidewalk, and we also have some stormwater management improvements in there as well that'll help with water quality," he explained.

Heard said he believes the project was selected because of its use of nature-based solutions, and because the road elevation would help keep N.C. 12 from becoming flooded and unpassable.

If N.C. 12 floods in that area during the peak tourist season, based on figures from Currituck County, well over 60,000 people could be stuck.

"This little weak spot would impact all of those people's ability to evacuate and their ability to receive emergency services were extremely important. We're hoping to prevent the type of situation that would cause that by doing the road elevation," he said.

Heard explained that the town hopes the project, which would fulfill key goals in previously approved plans, will also improve water quality, recreate lost habitat and increase resiliency. It could also be an educational opportunity.

It's a highly visible stretch of road, Heard said, and particularly with the bicycle-pedestrian pathway, the public can get a close look at the work.

"We've got a great opportunity to educate the public about what the project is, what it's doing," Heard said, especially with the living shoreline part of the project, "we really want to educate people about this type of nature-based alternative. We want to let people know and give them good visible examples of an alternative."

The town began in the fall working on the interpretive information and for the educational angle that explains the development and purpose of the project, "And hopefully give them something to think about if and when they're looking at a similar issue along their own shoreline. They might choose to look at this rather than a bulkhead."

The project can be an example for other communities, he said.

"To a great degree, we're on the forefront of coastal communities that are dealing with coastal resiliency and those issues," he said, adding there's interest from agencies and organizations "in getting more and more examples on the on the ground, or I guess, in this case, in the water."

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About Jennifer Allen

Born and raised in Swansboro, Jennifer Allen graduated from Appalachian State University in 2002 and picked up a second degree from UNC-Charlotte the following year. She joined the staff of the Carteret County News-Times in Morehead City in 2005 and completed her master's at UNC-Wilmington in 2008. Jenn spent nine years writing and editing at the News-Times before joining the staff at the Town of Beaufort in 2014, where she served as public information officer and town clerk. On June 1, 2017, Jenn came aboard as assistant editor for Coastal Review Online. She has also written for Our State Magazine and other regional and statewide publications. She lives in Morehead City with her husband James and their pups, Zaphod Beeblebrox, or Z, Octavius, but for short, they call him Gus, and Ivy Harriet.

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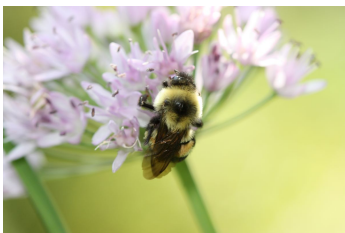
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Bids being accepted for construction of new multi-use pathway from N.C. 12 to Cape Hatteras Lighthouse

July 20, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

| By: Joy Crist (<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joycrist/>) |

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Image from Outer Banks Forever

The National Park Service is accepting bids on a federal government contract to construct a paved multi-use pathway from the intersection of N.C. Highway 12 and Lighthouse Road in Buxton to the Cape Hatteras Light Station. Interested businesses have until 4 p.m. on Aug. 21 to submit bids via the System for Award Management (SAM.gov (https://sam.gov/opp/cc30fc87a0844118bcc418aedb6a6c38/view?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)) website.

Contract Details

- **Contract Name:** Cape Hatteras Lighthouse Road Trail
(https://sam.gov/opp/cc30fc87a0844118bcc418aedb6a6c38/view?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)
- **Site Visit Date:** 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 8, 2023
- **Site Visit Location:** Interested businesses can attend a virtual site visit by sending an email to damon_griffin@nps.gov (mailto:damon_griffin@nps.gov). Read page 49 of the solicitation for details on what should be included in the registration email.
- **Summary of Work:** Construct an approximately 1.25-mile multi-use pathway that runs parallel to Lighthouse Road in Buxton and along the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse's move path toward the current location of the Cape Hatteras Light Station. The project will also integrate several locations for educational exhibits and rest areas along the pathway.
- **Notice ID:** 140P2023R0038
- **Bids Due:** By 4 p.m. Monday, Aug. 21, 2023

For questions on this contract solicitation, contact Damon Griffin at damon_griffin@nps.gov (mailto:damon_griffin@nps.gov).

"The construction of a multi-use pathway to the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse will improve visitor safety along a busy park road," said National Parks of Eastern North Carolina Superintendent David Hallac. "Cape Hatteras National Seashore appreciates the public feedback it received in advance of this important project, which is expected to be finished by next summer."

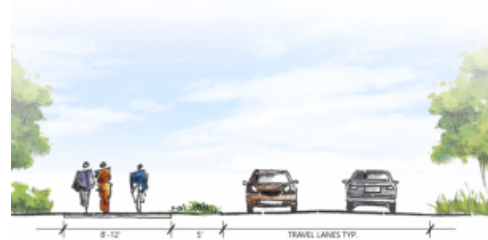


Illustration of the new pathway. Image from Outer Banks Forever.

About the new Lighthouse Road Multi-Use Pathway

In 1984 the Cape Hatteras National Seashore (CHNS) prepared a General Management plan which featured a number of proposed projects in the Buxton area, including a multi-use pathway on Lighthouse Road. Nearly 40 years later, this project is coming to fruition.

Currently, Lighthouse Road – which connects with the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, Cape Point, and the popular Old Lighthouse Beach – has no sidewalks for cyclists and pedestrians. The proposed multi-use pathway will make this popular stretch of roadway a safer area for the hundreds of thousands of visitors who head to the lighthouse and adjacent beaches every year.

The pathway will be installed in several phases. The first phase covers the stretch from N.C. Highway 12 to the lighthouse, with a 10-12-foot-wide paved multi-use pathway in two segments. The plan also includes other visitor amenities and improvements.

On May 15, 2023, National Park Service (NPS) South Atlantic-Gulf Regional Director Mark Foust signed a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for Cape Hatteras National Seashore's Construct Multi-Use Pathway in Hatteras Island District (https://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=36761&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) environmental assessment (EA), allowing the project to move forward in earnest.

For more information on the pathway, including detailed illustrations, click here (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/outer-banks-forever-shares-details-of-upcoming-cape-hatteras-lighthouse-pathway/>).



Proposed pathway route near the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. NPS image.

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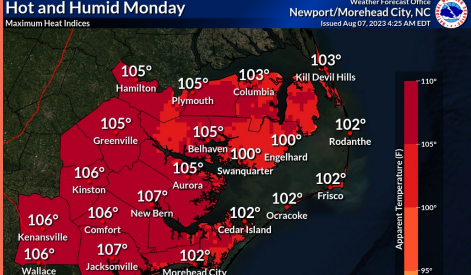
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Youth Conservation Corps spend the summer improving the Cape Hatteras National Seashore

August 8, 2023 (/2023/08/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | By: Joy Crist
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joycrist/>)

On Friday, August 11, the five members of the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) program will wrap up a busy summer season making the Outer Banks a more attractive place to visit, alongside personnel from the National Park Service. The YCC is a unique summer job that's offered at scenic parks and destinations all over the [...] Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | Full Article (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/youth-conservation-corps-spend-the-summer-improving-the-cape-hatteras-national-seashore/>)

Sea turtles are starting to hatch along the Cape Hatteras National Seashore

August 7, 2023 (/2023/08/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

Sea turtle hatching season has begun on the Cape Hatteras National Seashore (CHNS) with several nests that have hatched in the past few days, and many more approaching the hatching window, per an update from CHNS. When a nest is within its hatching window, (typically after 50-60 days of incubation), park biologists install black filter [...] Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | Full Article (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/sea-turtles-are-starting-to-hatch-along-the-cape-hatteras-national-seashore/>)

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July 25, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

The Cape Hatteras National Seashore (CHNS) announced several recent updates related to recreational activities and events on Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands in their most recent edition of the Cape Chronicle Newsletter. News items and events related to the National Seashore for the week of July 25 include the following: Seashore Updates Cape Hatteras National Seashore's 10 [...] Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | Full Article (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/10-priority-orv-ramps-open-at-630-a-m-starting-aug-1-and-more-national-seashore-updates-for-july/>)


Sea turtle release scheduled for Tuesday morning at Coquina Beach ...

July 24, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

Two sea turtles will be going home on Tuesday, July 25, after being rehabilitated by the North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island's Sea Turtle Assistance and Rehabilitation (STAR) Center, and the public is invited to come out and watch the turtles as they head back to the ocean. A juvenile green sea turtle and a [...] Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | Full Article (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/sea-turtle-release-scheduled-for-tuesday-morning-at-coquina-beach-on-bodie-island/>)

Bids being accepted for construction of new multi-use pathway from ...

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Nesting birds prompt closure of beach at South Point

July 17, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | By: Connie Leinbach
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/connie-leinbach/>) | From The: Ocracoke Observer (<https://ocracokeobserver.com/>)

A recent increase in nesting Least Terns on Ocracoke's South Point prompted National Park Service staff to close that section of the beach from near to the entrance at Ramp 72 to the end of the island. The closure, in effect July 3, begins just .11 miles south of the ramp entrance, said Meaghan Johnson, [...] Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | Full Article (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/nesting-birds-prompt-closure-of-beach-at-south-point/>)

With 206 nests so far, 2023 is turning into another active year fo ...

July 11, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | By: Joy Crist
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joycrist/>)

Mid-July marks the halfway point of the sea turtle nesting season on the Cape Hatteras National Seashore (CHNS), and with 206 nests recorded so far, 2023 is on track to be another highly active year for visiting sea turtles on Hatteras, Ocracoke, and Bodie Islands. "We just past the halfway point of our sea turtle [...] Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | Full Article (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/206-sea-turtle-nests-recorded-so-far-2023-is-on-track-to-be-another-highly-active-year-for-visiting-sea-turtles-on-hatteras-ocracoke-and-bodie-islands/>)

banks-driving-on-the-beach/with-206-nests-so-far-2023-is-turning-into-another-active-year-for-sea-turtles-on-the-cape-hatteras-national-seashore/)

National Park Service accepting bids on Cape Hatteras Lighthouse r ...

July 6, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

The National Park Service is accepting bids on a federal government contract to repair the exterior and interior of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. Interested businesses have until 5 p.m. Aug. 3 to submit bids via the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) website. Contract Details Contract Name: Repair Cape Hatteras Lighthouse Contractor Site Visit Date: 10 a.m. Wednesday, [...] Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | Full Article (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/national-park-service-accepting-bids-on-cape-hatteras-lighthouse-repair-contract/>)

New lifeguard services added at Rodanthe Beach Access

July 1, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

Cape Hatteras National Seashore (Seashore) has partnered with Dare County to add lifeguard services at Rodanthe Beach Access, per a recent Seashore press release. The popular beach location will be staffed with lifeguards seven days a week, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., from July 1 through Aug. 11, 2023. "Lifeguard beaches are the safest [...] Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | Full Article (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/new-lifeguard-services-added-at-rodanthe-beach-access/>)

Cape Point temporarily closed to ORVs and pedestrians

June 28, 2023 (/2023/06/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

Cape Point is now temporarily closed to ORVs and pedestrians due to newly hatched American oystercatcher chicks, as well as approximately 68 least tern eggs that are expected to hatch in the coming days, per an update from the Cape Hatteras National Seashore. Prior to Tuesday, June 27, there was a section of Cape Point open [...] Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | Full Article (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/cape-point-temporarily-closed-to-orvs-and-pedestrians/>)

Cape Hatteras National Seashore launches new webpage on beach hole ...

June 26, 2023 (/2023/06/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

The Cape Hatteras National Seashore (CHNS) has launched a new webpage about beach hole safety, which is now live at <https://www.nps.gov/caha/planyourvisit/beach-hole-safety.htm>. "It is hard to imagine going to a beach and not playing in the sand," states the CHNS. "However, recent trends in digging deep holes and abandoning them have started to negatively impact nature [...] Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | Full Article (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/cape-hatteras-national-seashore-launches-new-webpage-on-beach-hole-safety/>)

Full moon climbs at Bodie Island Lighthouse return, and more Natio ...

June 23, 2023 (/2023/06/) | Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

The Cape Hatteras National Seashore (CHNS) announced several recent updates related to recreational activities and events on Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands in their most recent edition of the Cape Chronicle Newsletter. News items and events related to the National Seashore for the week of June 23 include the following: Seashore Updates Organizers of two fireworks shows [...] Seashore News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | Full Article (<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/full-moon-climbs-at-bodie-island-lighthouse-return-and-more-national-seashore-updates-for-the-week-of-june-23/>)

SEASHORE NEWS ARCHIVE

First Leatherback Sea Turtle nest in 11 years discovered on Ocracoke Island

June 22, 2023 (/2023/06/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

Sandbar must be used to access Cape Point due to flooding of ORV corridor

June 22, 2023 (/2023/06/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

CHNS staff collect 938 balloons off the beach, and more National Seashore updates for the week of June 13

June 13, 2023 (/2023/06/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)


Expanded schedule of ranger-led educational programs begin at Cape Hatteras National Seashore

May 29, 2023 (/2023/05/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | By: Joy Crist
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joycrist/>)

Bodie Island Lighthouse opens for daily climbing beginning Wednesday

May 24, 2023 (/2023/05/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Lifeguards return to four Cape Hatteras National Seashore beaches on Saturday, May 27

May 22, 2023 (/2023/05/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | 

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/lifeguards-return-to-four-cape-hatteras-national-seashore-beaches-on-saturday-may-27/>)

More than 500 visitors celebrate the Ocracoke Light Station's 200th anniversary

May 19, 2023 (/2023/05/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | By: Joy Crist
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joycrist/>)

After 200th celebration, Ocracoke Light set for restoration

May 18, 2023 (/2023/05/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | By: Catherine Kozak
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/catherine-kozak/>) | From The: Coastal Review (<https://www.coastalreview.org/>)

Nine signs vandalized on beach near Cape Point

May 17, 2023 (/2023/05/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | By: Joy Crist
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joycrist/>)

Plan approved for new 1.6-mile-long pathway in Buxton

May 16, 2023 (/2023/05/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

Ocracoke Light Station's 200th anniversary will be celebrated at May 18 special event

May 15, 2023 (/2023/05/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)


First sea turtle nest of the 2023 season found on Ocracoke Island

May 12, 2023 (/2023/05/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | By: Joy Crist
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joycrist/>)

Educational programs at Cape Hatteras National Seashore begin May 1


May 1, 2023 (/2023/05/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | By: Joy Crist
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joycrist/>)

Debris observed washing up on Outer Banks beaches from Nags Head to Salvo

April 30, 2023 (/2023/04/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | 

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/debris-observed-washing-up-on-outer-banks-beaches-from-nags-head-to-salvo/>)

Outer Banks Forever celebrates National Park Week with donation-matching program

April 26, 2023 (/2023/04/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | 

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/outer-banks-forever-celebrates-national-park-week-with-donation-matching-program/>)

ORV Night driving restrictions on Hatteras and Ocracoke Island beaches begin May 1

April 25, 2023 (/2023/04/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

Cape Hatteras National Seashore reports nearly 300,000 visitors during the first three months of 2023

April 24, 2023 (/2023/04/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

Bodie Island Lighthouse opens for climbing April 26

April 21, 2023 (/2023/04/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

Outer Banks Forever, Dare Arts, NPS announce artist selections for 'Artist in Community' Earth Day event

April 12, 2023 (/2023/04/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>)

Seasonal ORV routes in front of villages close on April 15

April 11, 2023 (/2023/04/) | Seashore News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-driving-on-the-beach/>) | By: Joy Crist
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joycrist/>)

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N.C. 12 remains open, ferry service suspended as multiple weather events impact the Outer Banks

November 9, 2022 (/2022/11/) | Local News (<https://islandfreepress.org/./outer-banks-news/>) | By: Joy Crist
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joy-crist/>)



Mirlo Beach at 7:15 a.m. on Wednesday. This area is not part of N.C. Highway 12, and is bypassed by the Jug Handle Bridge. NCDOT image.

N.C. Highway 12 remained open and passable as of 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday morning, November 9, with some blowing sand and sea foam reported on northern Hatteras Island. The Mirlo Beach area north of Rodanthe, which is now bypassed by the Jug Handle Bridge, did experience some moderate flooding, and visitors are advised to avoid this area.

North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) crews will continue to be on the road today to conduct clean-up efforts as needed, and the public is advised to use caution if travel is necessary.

Ferry operations on Ocracoke and Hatteras Islands remained suspended as of Wednesday morning for all three routes: the Hatteras-Ocracoke ferry, the Ocracoke-Swan Quarter ferry, and the Ocracoke-Cedar Island ferry. The public can see updates on all Hatteras and Ocracoke ferry operations via the Ferry Division's Twitter accounts at <https://twitter.com/NCFerryHatteras/> (<https://twitter.com/NCFerryHatteras/>) and <https://twitter.com/ncferrypamsound/>, (https://twitter.com/NCFerryPamSound) or by calling 252-996-6000 for more information.

Multiple weather events will continue to impact the Outer Banks this week, and a High Surf Advisory, Coastal Flood Advisory, and Wind Advisory remain in effect.

The strong northeast winds of 25-35 mph will diminish through today, however, large waves and wave runup may continue to produce areas of coastal flooding and ocean overwash/erosion through Thursday.

Portions of N.C. Highway 12 may be impacted by ocean overwash over multiple days, and through multiple high tide cycles. The last high tide was at approximately 7:45 a.m. on Wednesday, and the next high tide is approximately 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday night.

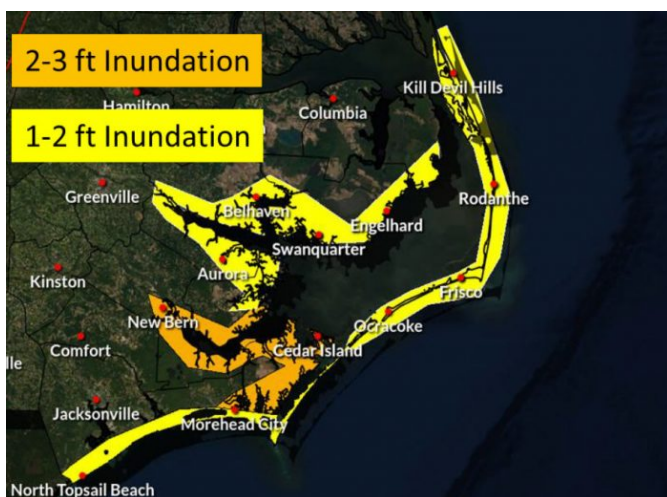
There is the potential for 1 to 2 feet of inundation above ground level along the oceanside from Duck to Ocracoke, and additional water level rises will be possible Friday into Saturday as the winds increase and shift to the south. When this occurs later in the week, the threat of flooding will likely shift towards the soundside Outer Banks.

Meanwhile, now-Tropical Storm Nicole will continue to move westward and through Florida until Thursday. Nicole is forecast to lift through the Southeast U.S. and weaken as it moves up the East Coast. Rainfall, gusty winds, and isolated tornadoes are possible as Nicole passes by to the west of the Outer Banks area.

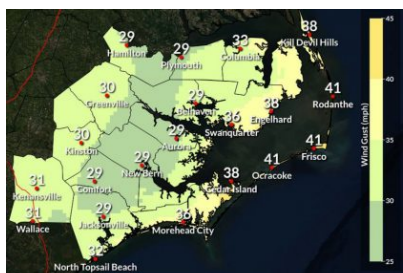
For more information on the local forecast, visit www.weather.gov/mhx (<http://www.weather.gov/mhx>) for weather information, or the National Weather Service office in Newport / Morehead City's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/NWSMoreheadCity/> (<https://www.facebook.com/NWSMoreheadCity/>).



The "Canal Zone" on Pea Island as of 730 a.m. on Wednesday. NCDOT image.

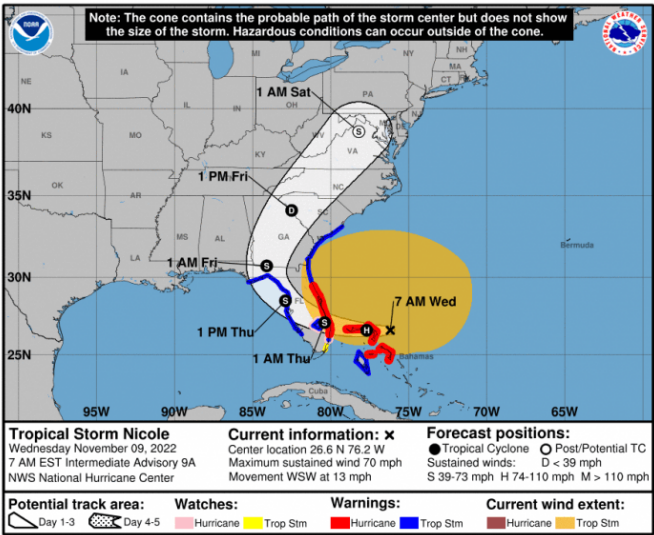


NWS image



NWS image

- Northeast winds today will diminish to 25 to 35 mph though some elevated water levels will persist.
- A lull in gusty winds expected on Thursday.
- Winds turn south on Friday and increase to 35 to 45 mph once again, highest near the coast.



NHC image

(<https://www.facebook.com/sharer.php?u=https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/n-c-12-remains-open-ferry-service-suspended-as-multiple-weather-events-impact-the-outer-banks/&t=N.C.%2012%20remains%20open%2C%20ferry%20service%20suspended%20as%20multiple%20weather%20events%20impact%20the%20Outer-Banks-News/n-c-12-remains-open-ferry-service-suspended-as-multiple-weather-events-impact-the-outer-banks/>)

(mailto:?)

subject=N.C.%2012%20remains%20open%2C%20ferry%20service%20suspended%20as%20multiple%20weather%20events%20impact%20the%20Outer-Banks-News/n-c-12-remains-open-ferry-service-suspended-as-multiple-weather-events-impact-the-outer-banks/



([https://www.keesouterbanks.com/?](https://www.keesouterbanks.com/?utm_source=ifp&utm_medium=referral%20partner&utm_campaign=ifparticle)

utm_source=ifp&utm_medium=referral%20partner&utm_campaign=ifparticle)

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/ocracoke-school-sets-grand-reopening/>)

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/ocracoke-school-sets-grand-reopening/>)

Ocracoke School sets grand reopening

August 7, 2023 (2023/08/7) | Local News

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Hot and Humid Monday

Newport/Morehead City, NC

Issued Aug 07, 2023 8:22 AM EDT

Location	Heat Index (°F)
Hamilton	105°
Greenville	105°
Kinston	106°
Kenansville	106°
Wallace	106°
Confort	106°
Jacksonville	107°
New Bern	107°
Aurora	107°
Belhaven	105°
Columbia	105°
Plymouth	105°
Swanquarter	105°
Engelhard	100°
Rodanthe	102°
Prisco	102°
Ocracoke	102°
Cedar Island	102°
Edisto Beach	102°
Hill Devil Hills	103°

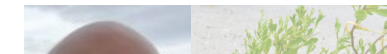
Severe thunderstorms and dangerous heat possible on Monday, August 7

August 7, 2023 (2023/08/7) | Local News

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/nc-coastal-federation-to-recognize-conservation-efforts/>)

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/nc-coastal-federation-to-recognize-conservation-efforts/>)



NC Coastal Federation to recognize conservation efforts

August 5, 2023 (/2023/08/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

MORE OUTER BANKS NEWS

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/nc-coastal-federation-to-recognize-conservation-efforts/>)
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NC Coastal Federation to recognize conservation efforts

August 5, 2023 (/2023/08/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)



Ocracoke Passenger Ferry will resume operations on Saturday, August 5

August 4, 2023 (/2023/08/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)



Builders and Shapers: Hatteras Island Community Emergency Response ...

August 4, 2023 (/2023/08/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)



Dare County tax bills mailed to property owners on August 2

August 3, 2023 (/2023/08/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)



Ocracoke Passenger Ferry expected to be out of service for several ...

August 2, 2023 (/2023/08/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)



Murphy assures Dare board: Corps will do study if funded

August 2, 2023 (/2023/08/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

LOCAL NEWS ARCHIVE

NASA rocket launch puts on a show over Hatteras Island

August 2, 2023 (/2023/08/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>) | By: Joy Crist
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joycrist/>)

Travel+Leisure readers rank Outer Banks 15th best continental U.S. "island" for 2023

July 31, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>) | By: Sam Walker
(<https://islandfreepress.org/author/sam-walker/>) | From The: WOBY (<https://woby.com/>)

NCDOT Seeks Public Input for Next 10-Year Transportation Plan

July 31, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>) | 

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/ncdot-seeks-public-input-for-next-10-year-transportation-plan/>)

Applications now open for the Community Conservation Assistance Program

July 31, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Heat Advisory continues on Saturday; High risk of rip currents for southern Hatteras Island, Ocracoke

July 29, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

New "Welcome" sign returns to Avon

July 28, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Head Advisory issued for Friday; Excessive heat will continue into the weekend

July 28, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Ocracoke passenger ferry season extended through Labor Day

July 27, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Cape Hatteras National Seashore reports nearly 1,200,000 visitors during the first six months of 2023

July 27, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>) | 

(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/cape-hatteras-national-seashore-reports-nearly-1200000-visitors-during-the-first-six-months-of-2023/>)

Excessive heat expected through the weekend

July 27, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Coast Guard rescues 11 after boat capsizes west of Oregon Inlet

July 26, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Dare County releases video on Flood Inundation Mapping and Alert Network flood gauges

July 24, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Dare County Board of Commissioners issues statement on passing of Jack Shea

July 24, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Passenger ferry to Ocracoke resumes but will end July 31

July 23, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>) | By: Connie Leinbach (<https://islandfreepress.org/author/connie-leinbach/>) | From The: Ocracoke Observer (<https://ocracokeobserver.com/>)

Old Manns Harbor Bridge speed limits lowered at dusk and dawn for purple martins

July 21, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

State announces \$223M for drinking water and wastewater project funding statewide, including Ocracoke village

July 21, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Dare County releases video on trash collection services and guidelines

July 20, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Tornado Watch issued for the Outer Banks until 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday

July 19, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>) | By: Joy Crist (<https://islandfreepress.org/author/joycrist/>)

Suspect who fled the scene of Saturday night crash in Frisco arrested

July 19, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
(<https://islandfreepress.org/outer-banks-news/>)

Ocracoke Passenger Ferry resumes service on Wednesday, July 19

July 19, 2023 (/2023/07/) | Local News
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North Carolina's coastal highway is disappearing – so I took a road trip to capture it

The islands no longer resemble what I knew as a child, as high tides and

storms gnaw constantly at
the road. Around here,
change is non-negotiable

by [Megan Mayhew Bergman](#), with photographs by Travis Dove

Driving North Carolina's Highway 12. Photograph: Travis Dove/The Guardian

Tue 1 Feb 2022 06.00 EST

A few months ago, I decided I wanted to drive the entirety of Highway 12 – a slim highway that snakes along North Carolina's barrier islands – before the climate crisis alters it further.

Though I spent much of my childhood on the southern part of North Carolina's coast, these overdeveloped, humid islands have piqued my imagination for decades. I wanted to witness what remains, and what is likely to disappear.

You can see the precarity of those islands (also known as the Outer Banks) on a map. The nearly 200-mile stretch of barrier islands runs the length of most of North Carolina's coastline.

Around here, change is non-negotiable: the highway lies atop a series of barrier islands – dynamic mounds of sand designed by nature to shift. Plus, the Outer Banks are the most regular hurricane target north of Florida.

I knew I had to brace myself for the fact that the islands would no longer resemble what I knew as a child: roadside produce stands, small miniature golf courses, the occasional surf shop. Those flecks of Americana are still there, but the holiday homes are larger and more numerous; the restaurants and surf shops are grander and more corporate; the churning sea has carved up the coastline a little more.



An excavator rests in the sand along Highway 12.

I stopped by my sister's house in Wilmington, North Carolina, in early November, where I planned to start my trip up Highway 12. Northern Buxton, Hatteras Village and Northern Rodanthe had just reported ocean overwash from a nor'easter, and the road was closed.

North Carolina's Highway 12 runs 148 miles, a system of two-lane highways, ferries and bridges connecting islands and peninsulas. It's a lifeline for the nearly 20 communities, 57,000 residents, small businesses and tourists - but high tides and storms gnaw constantly at the road.

Dr Stanley Riggs, a geologist who runs an [organization](#) devoted to sustainable practices along North Carolina's coast, tells me there are "numerous portions of this highway with serious problems that require severe ongoing maintenance. Some segments require total rebuilding multiple times a year. The yellow bulldozers work all year long now.

"Before the major economic development boom of the 20th century," Riggs said, "these islands were allowed to respond naturally to storm dynamics ... The barriers are

both the ocean's speed bumps and the land's safety valves, and must be able to move in response to the storms' energy.”

However, the fixed structures of ocean front development and Highway 12 now lock the barrier islands in place.

Nature's strength and will is undeniable, despite human intentions. In recent years, Hurricanes Irene and Isabel carved Hatteras Island in half, causing locals to use emergency ferries for weeks until the highway was restored. In September 2019, Hurricane Dorian destroyed 1,000ft of Highway 12 in Ocracoke. The road reopened months later, in early December.



A house off Highway 12 in Rodanthe stands precariously on the beach.



Left: sand dunes tumbling into the road. Right: a tractor seen through sand dunes on the road.

“We must learn to live with storm dynamics,” Riggs says. “The beach will move, villages will flood, and storm surges will open new inlets to let storm surge water both into and out of the estuaries.” However, the government has allowed further development and built higher dune dykes to protect the highway and homes, which essentially traps storm surge during weather events, making flooding much worse over time.

“Before World War II,” Riggs explains, “all the old villages were built on the backside of the islands. Now the oceanfront is totally built out and has locked the system into a guaranteed natural disaster zone.”

Development and climate change are straining the islands. Up until the 1990s, about 15 miles of North Carolina’s ocean beaches required re-nourishment sand on an irregular basis in order to have what Riggs calls “a wide and healthy beach for a successful economic year”. Now he says there are over a 100 miles of beaches that need re-nourishment every couple of years, at the cost of \$3m to \$6m a mile.

Static landscapes remind us of who we were; shifting landscapes remind us that we have changed, or perhaps that we have not cared for what matters to us enough.

he day before my trip, the North Carolina department of transportation indicated that Highway 12 would reopen earlier than expected, but drivers would need to beware of

Tstanding salt water and evening high tides. I set out the next morning at 6am, knowing I had at least a 10-hour driving day ahead of me, and two ferries to catch.

First I drove to Beaufort, a small town located on an inlet, where I spent much of my childhood summers. Once quiet and historic, the town is now beloved by developers for its charm and association with the pirate Blackbeard. I drove through the heart of town and past the docks, where I first fell in love with maritime culture. Then, I turned toward Cedar Island to catch the ferry to Ocracoke.

The closer I got to the ferry terminal, the more development slowed. I drove past a monument to a seafood processing family, a solitary shrimp boat, houses haphazardly raised on stilts – some looking like a Hail Mary DIY-job. Signs advertising church services rose from the salt marsh.



A police car passes by along the moving coastline on Highway 12.

I drove my car on to the hulking ferry, cormorants shooting low over the water next to the boat.

A ferry employee asked me what I was doing. I shared that I was an environmental journalist. He pulled me inside the ferry to show me a picture of an island that had disappeared under the rising seas. “I believe in climate change,” he told me, quietly, as if he was afraid someone might overhear him. “But I’m an ugly American. I don’t like to be told what to do. *Ask me nicely to wear a mask or recycle. Then I’ll do just about anything for you.*”

His tone reminded me of the fraught political moment. The Outer Banks locals vote conservatively, and often view environmental policy as liberal overreach.

North Carolina's Highway 12 spans the Outer Banks

Virginia

North Carolina

Highway 12

Albemarle Sound

Kitty Hawk

Rodanthe

Pamlico Sound

Ocracoke

50 mi

50 km

Atlantic
Ocean

Guardian graphic. Source: North Carolina Department of Transportation

The boat docked slowly at Ocracoke. The town’s recent population hovers near 700, declining roughly 25% in the last decade – though nearly 10,000 tourists inhabit the island during the peak summer season. The Hatterask Indians, known as Croatoan people, once hunted and fished here prior to colonial intrusion. Blackbeard favored the treacherous shoals and was killed near the island in 1718. Now island pastimes include sport fishing and kiteboarding.

I stopped at one of the only open restaurants for lunch. Country music blared from a speaker. No one was wearing a mask. I decided to eat a granola bar instead and drove Highway 12 through bits of maritime forest – salt-pruned oaks and low cedars – and high dunes. I pulled over and walked out onto the mostly deserted beach. A few people fished from the open beds of pickup trucks.

Sand blew across the road as I moved toward my final ferry, from Ocracoke to Hatteras. A long line formed to board; I was 20 cars back from the cutoff. Those of us in line accepted our fate, turned off our cars, stretched on the road and socialized. Time slowed; I watched an old dachshund stick its head out of the moonroof in the car in front of me.

I made the next ferry – the W Stanford White. My car shook as it pulled away from the dock. A faint moon hung over the sea and a spit of land covered in pelicans and cormorants.

The sun was beginning to set as I drove slowly through Hatteras. Standing water pooled in front of new construction. At some points, I could see water on either side of the road.



Left: a ragged American and Confederate flag flowing on a fence. Right: a Trump cut-out with a sign that says 'keep America safe'.



A buoy flashes red over the water to guide a ferry that connects two parts of Highway 12 between Hatteras and Ocracoke.

I stopped for gas and dinner at a bait shop. “A lot of places are closed,” I said as I paid for a beer.

“The workers need rest,” the woman said. She looked tired. I sensed it had been a long year for her, too.

As the sun went down I came to the part of Highway 12 I most wanted to see. My headlights illuminated bright yellow signs that warned of “high water”. Moonlight fell upon the bulldozers parked in the dunes.

The strip of highway that moves through Rodanthe felt impossibly slim, as if the black water on either side of the road might close in. High tide was coming, and pools of water on the road sprayed upward with oncoming traffic. I could see the dark shape of the new bridge being built alongside the road.

In 2017, after a decade of costly work on the so-called S-Curve section of the highway in Rodanthe - including a \$3m emergency repair after Irene, and a \$20m beach nourishment project in 2012 - North Carolina’s department of transportation **commissioned** a \$145m project to raise 2.4 miles of Highway 12. The raised roadway

takes the form of an offshore bridge, known as the “jug handle” as it arcs from the land into the waters of Pamlico Sound. Certain portions of the oceanfront along the S-Curve were losing 11-12ft a year, and forecasts predicted similar scenarios along the corridor.



Passengers exit their cars on a ferry ride that connects two parts of Highway 12 between Hatteras and Ocracoke.

As with many projects in environmentally and culturally sensitive areas, legal actions went in tandem. Among litigants was a group of private landowners **contesting** the re-routing and elevation of the highway, part of a multi-bridge scheme called the Bonner Bridge replacement project, on grounds that it was rushed without a full exploration of alternatives to appease environmentalists seeking to protect sensitive nesting areas for birds. The Trump administration called it an example of “excessive environmental planning”.

Conservation groups, led by the Southern Environmental Law Center, **sued** to ensure the Rodanthe “jug handle” bridge project moved forward in a climate and wildlife-smart way, ultimately returning 19 acres to the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, a critical **area** for migrating and threatened birds like the American Oystercatcher and Least Tern.

The bridge is due to open this year, possibly as early as spring.

I drove through Nags Head and turned into town, marveling at the golden sunset and the wild, artificial glow of a Wings Surf Shop. In the Outer Banks, the natural coexists with the artificial, like the grace of a heron as it flies over a miniature golf course.

Still, I appreciated the off-season quiet of the drive, locals wishing each other happy birthday on business signs, retired couples making a slow visit to a small post office. Beneath every tourist economy is a town's old self – what's left of its traditions and elders, its hospitality workers, the people who are left to pick up the pieces after a hurricane, or care for each other in the winter of a pandemic.



A driveway of sand in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, leads to a beach house next to Highway 12.

As I pulled into my lodging for the night, a tiny cottage underneath a live oak on the outskirts of Kitty Hawk, I thought about the layers of change and loss on islands like these, especially in a time of compound disasters, where both a pandemic and a changing climate press down on small communities.

“An economic-system based on unlimited development on mobile piles of sand doesn’t have a very bright future as we know it,” Riggs tells me. “At the present rate of change,

North Carolina's coastal system is looking at a possible one meter rise in sea level by 2100." This increase is already well underway.

"We've built ourselves into a situation we can't engineer our way out of," he says with a sadness in his voice.

When I was younger, I played a part in a play about the Lost Colony, the doomed English settlement on Roanoke Island (every kid who grew up in eastern North Carolina probably did.) At the time, we marveled at how an entire village could just disappear.

These days, I am beginning to understand. The Outer Banks have seen waves of Indigenous inhabitants, violent colonization, fishing villages, tourism and intense development - all a struggle for power and resources in a mercurial natural environment.

This article was amended on 2, 3 and 4 February 2022 to correct a misspelling of Ocracoke in an embedded locator map and to add details about the Rodanthe "jug handle" bridge within the Bonner Bridge replacement project; a line stating that the "bridge is opening this fall, ahead of schedule" has also been corrected.

I hope you appreciated this article. Before you move on, I was hoping you would consider taking the step of supporting the Guardian's journalism.

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