

# **ANCHOR:** Adaptation for North Carolina's Critical Hatteras-Ocracoke Route

Ocracoke Island is one of the nation's most isolated and vulnerable communities, and the vast majority of people and goods move to and from the Island via public ferry service. Increasingly frequent and severe coastal storms and high tide events are causing erosion, flooding, overwash, and shoaling in Hatteras Inlet. These hazards threaten three interconnected components of the Island's transportation system: the Federal channel between Ocracoke and Hatteras Islands, the South Dock Ferry Terminal, and a vulnerable two-mile hotspot on NC 12, which is the only transportation link to Ocracoke Village. A recent adaptation study shows that NCDOT will be unable to maintain the entire stretch of NC 12 between South Dock and Ocracoke Village in as little as 26 to 50 years, and the vehicle stacking lanes and septic drain field at South Dock have already been lost to encroaching sea waters.

ANCHOR will address these urgent challenges by accelerating the delivery of a preferred access and transportation solution by completing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review, a critical project development milestone required to advance to detailed design, obtain the necessary permits, and obligate future construction funding.

## Project Partners:

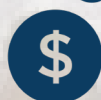


## Project Location



### Estimated Completion Date:

Quarter 4, Calendar Year 2030



### Project Budget:

\$6,713,227 (Preferred Scenario)

\$7,722,431 (Contingency Scenario)

## Project Benefits



### Program Alignments

Accelerates implementation of resilient transportation solution for Ocracoke Island by streamlining preliminary design and interagency decision-making to transform years of planning into an actionable implementation pathway for resilient long-term transportation access.



### Planning Activity Approach

Applies a comprehensive, data-driven approach that integrates transportation studies, resilience assessments, operational data and community input to identify and advance a preferred long-term access strategy for Ocracoke Island.



### Innovation

Integrates nature-based solutions, transferable coastal resilience practices, and NCDOT's nationally recognized Merger Process to advance resilient, long-term transportation access.

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### Application Materials:

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/PROTECT2026-ANCHOR/Pages/default.aspx>



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The Hatteras-Ocracoke ferry route is a critical pillar of the Island's tourism-based economy, generating more than **\$218 million** in direct economic output between 2017 and 2020.

## DOT Selection Priorities

### Economic Prosperity



Advances investments needed to sustain a rural Island community's economic vitality by addressing vulnerabilities of the ferry and roadway infrastructure that sustains Ocracoke Island's residents, businesses, and tourists.

### Condition & Safety of Existing Infrastructure



Advances improvements to the condition, safety, and long-term reliability of ferry facilities and NC 12 whose failure would cause significant economic disruption and cut off access to essential services.

### Readiness



Able to meet all PROTECT program obligation deadlines.

*"For Ocracoke residents, businesses, and the hundreds of thousands of visitors who rely on the island's transportation system each year, safe and reliable access is a necessity, not a convenience. When transportation connections to the island are disrupted by flooding and coastal storms, the impacts ripple through every aspect of the community, affecting emergency response, healthcare access, and commerce.*

*ANCHOR will bring together agencies, stakeholders, and the public to complete a critical milestone toward implementation, advancing the environmental review needed to move resilient transportation solutions closer to reality and deliver lasting benefits for residents and visitors alike."*

-Catherine D. Peele,  
NCDOT Ferry Division



## Project Readiness

### Technical Capacity



Project partners have the resources and expertise to satisfy Federal requirements and deliver the project in a timely manner.

### Financial Completeness



Budget includes reasonable and necessary costs to complete the Project based on a well-defined scope of work.

### Permitting Risk



Completes NEPA review and builds consensus with permitting agencies and the public throughout the project.



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