

**RECORD OF MINUTES
DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD
THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 2017
9:00 A.M.
OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
MANTEO, NC 27954**

ATTENDING: Susie Walters, Chair; Leo Holland, Vice Chair; Tonia Cohen, Secretary; Stuart Pack, Treasurer; Ervin Bateman, Assistant Treasurer; George Banks, III, Myra Ladd-Bone, Bambos Charalambous, Nancy Caviness, Mike Hogan, Wally Overman, Pat Weston, Martha Wickre, and Jay Wheless, Legal Counsel.

STAFF:

Lee Nettles, Executive Director
Diane Bognich, Director of Administration
Amy Wood, Clerk to the Board/Administrative Specialist

OTHERS: Mark Dowdle, Deputy Superintendent, Outer Banks Group, National Park Service; Alex Nota, Outer Banks Realty; Jed Dixon, Deputy Ferry Director, Chris Bock, District 1 Superintendent, and Tim Hass, Communications Director, North Carolina Department of Transportation, Ferry Division; Philip Ruckle, *The Coastland Times*; and Bill Coleman, *The Lost Colony*.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00a.m. The Board then recited the pledge of allegiance. The Chair gave a remembrance of Dwight Wheless, followed by a moment of silence.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Holland moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Ladd-Bone seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Weston moved to approve the June 15, 2017 meeting minutes. Mr. Overman seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mark Dowdle reviewed visitation numbers at NPS sites, events for Virginia Dare Day and National Aviation Day. He noted the lighthouses would be open through Columbus Day and campgrounds through Thanksgiving.

Bill Coleman invited Board members to the Wine Festival at the end of September.

PASSENGER FERRY PRESENTATION: Jed Dixon made a presentation (attachment A) regarding the Hatteras-Ocracoke passenger ferry. NCDOT plans to operate the passenger ferry in addition to the vehicle ferries Memorial Day through Labor Day. Trolleys will be available on the Ocracoke side to transport the riders around Ocracoke.

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT: The Chair reviewed the events leading up to the Board freezing the Restricted Fund in April 2017 and the thoughts behind unfreezing the fund at this time. Mr. Holland moved to unfreeze the Restricted Fund. Mr. Bateman seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT (continued): The Chair reviewed the caveat regarding the Restricted Fund added to GOSPL Guidelines and the changes made to the guidelines, which include clarification of land ownership, making ownership non-transferable, and adding an additional boundary description for the property. Mr. Bateman moved to approve the revised guidelines for the Green/Open Space (GOSPL) grant. Ms. Ladd-Bone seconded. Mr. Overman asked who should hold the title for GOSPL grants. Mr. Nettles responded that item 8 in the GOSPL guidelines clarified ownership. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The Chair noted that the caveat regarding the Restricted Fund had been added to all Restricted and General Fund grant guidelines and applications. Mr. Overman moved to approve the addition of the legal caveat to the both Restricted Fund and General Fund grant guidelines and applications. Mr. Charalambous seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The Chair reviewed the GOSPL request from Dare County in the amount of \$120,000 to purchase the Pearce Tract for preservation. Ms. Ladd-Bone moved to award a GOSPL grant totaling \$120,000 to Dare County for the Pearce Tract. Mr. Holland seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The Chair reviewed the Natural, Historic, and Cultural Grant Request from the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum in the amount of \$15,000 for construction of a new exhibition and entrance sign [as part of a matching grant from the state]. Ms. Ladd-Bone moved to award a Natural, Historic and Cultural Grant totaling \$15,000 to the Graveyard of the Atlantic. Mr. Banks seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

As these awards are Restricted Fund awards, they will go before the Dare County Board of Commissioners for consent.

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT: Mr. Pack reviewed the meals and occupancy receipts received. Receipts for fiscal year 2017-2018 are up 8.55 % over 2016-2017 actual receipts.

Lee Nettles reviewed advertising efforts due to the blackout on Hatteras Island, which fell outside the normal marketing plan, and reviewed moving funds from the Undesignated Fund Balance, which would come from the overage beyond the mandated 60%. Ms. Wickre moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Budget Amendment. Ms. Cohen seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The Board took a 5 minute break. The meeting resumed at 10:07 a.m.

OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU UPDATES: Lee Nettles reviewed:

- Marketing efforts to counter the blackout on Hatteras Island (attachment B)
- 2016 County by County Tourism Statistics. Dare County remained in 4th place
- Internet, inquiry and visitation numbers
- Group Sales marketplaces
- 2018 Travel Guide progress
- Media coverage of the Outer Banks
- Upcoming Influencer campaigns

The Chair reminded Board members to return the Executive Director evaluations.

OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business before the Board at this time.

Mr. Hogan moved to enter closed session pursuant to NCGS 143.318.11 (a)(5)(i) to establish or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price or other material terms of a contract, or proposed contract, for the acquisition of real properties located at 6806 S. Virginia Dare Trail, and 6807 and 6813 South Croatan Highway, Nags Head, NC, for the purpose of use as potential overflow parking and supplemental utility for the Soundside Event Site. Mr. Charalambous seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting entered closed session at 10:40 a.m.

The open session meeting resumed at 11:24 a.m.

Legal Counsel stated that the Executive Director, Chair, and Legal Counsel were given the guidance to the terms and conditions under which to make an offer to purchase the properties at 6806 S. Virginia Dare Trail, and 6807 and 6813 South Croatan Highway, Nags Head, NC, and that as always, final authority rested with the full Board.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business before the Board at this time.


BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: Ms. Weston spoke about the Pack It In/Pack It Out campaign. The Chair noted the public comment session held by Department of Environmental Quality and by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. She noted that all the speakers at the public hearing opposed off shore oil/gas exploration, drilling, and seismic testing.

SET DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be Thursday, September 21, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be held in Duck, at a location to be announced.


Mr. Holland moved to adjourn. Mr. Charalambous seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

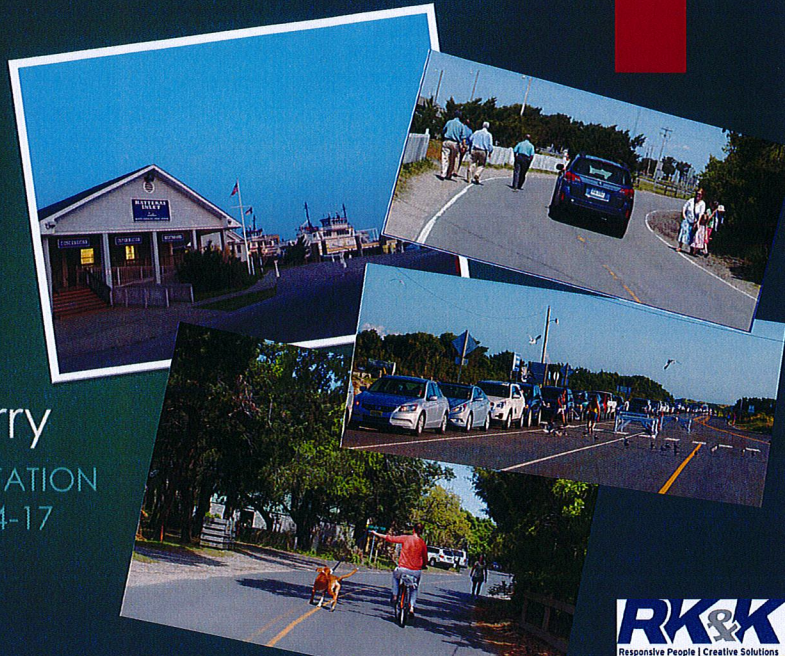
ATTESTED:




Secretary, Dare County Tourism Board



NCDOT
Division One
Passenger Ferry
BOARD OF TRANSPORTATION
PROJECT UPDATE 01-04-17



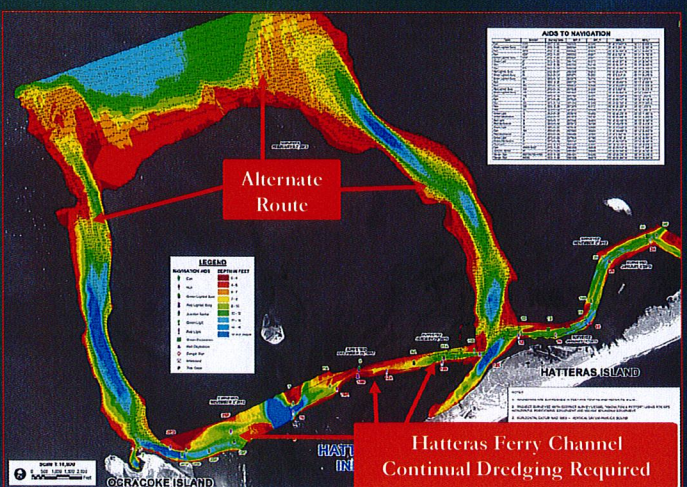


Hatteras-Ocracoke Shoaling Issue

Hatteras Ferry Channel – 4.3-miles
Emergency Area
Federally Maintained
Constant Dredging
Up to 52 departures/day

Alternate Route – 9.5 miles
Natural Deep Water Chanel
Cost Up to \$250,000 more per month in labor/fuel
Up to 42 departures/day

Depth In Feet	
	0 - 4
	4 - 6
	6 - 7
	7 - 8
	8 - 10
	10 - 12
	12 - 14
	14 - 15
	15 and deeper



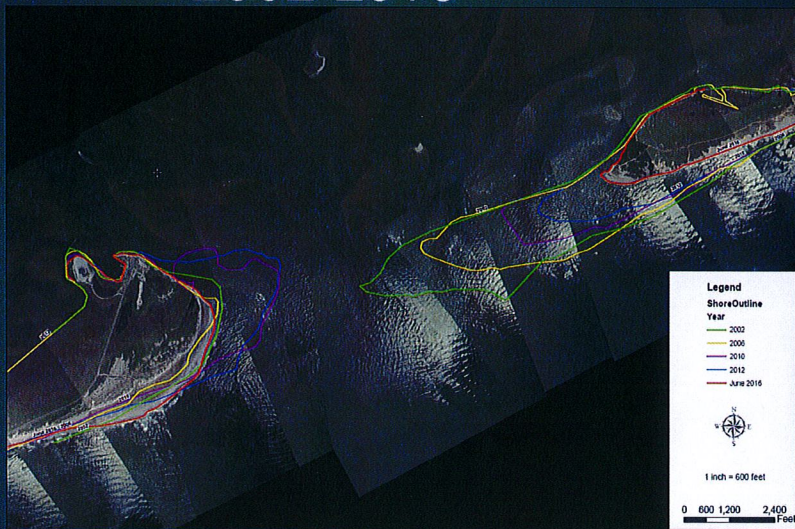
Alternate Route

Hatteras Ferry Channel
Continual Dredging Required

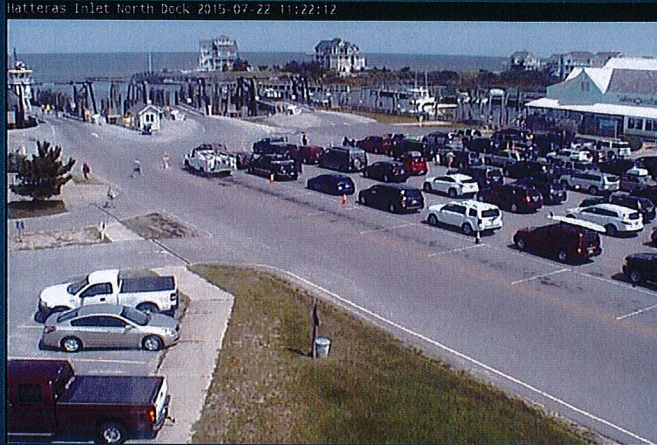
Hatteras Inlet time lapse 1984-2016



Hatteras Inlet shoreline erosion 2002-2016



Hatteras Congestion



Feasibility Study

- Ferry route to Ocracoke changed due to shoaling
- Longer route caused reduction in number of crossings
- Longer wait times at terminals
- Unmet travel demand (vehicles leaving queue)
- Increase in labor, fuel, and maintenance costs

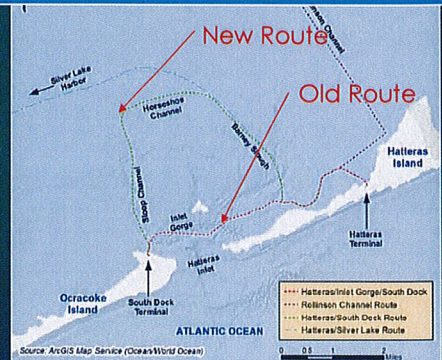


Vehicles queued to board ferry at Hatteras

Report of the Ocracoke-Hatteras Passenger Ferry Feasibility Study

Passenger Ferry Feasibility Study

VOLKERT ATKINS ITRE



Transportation

Preliminary Findings

- ▶ Surveys of ferry riders, estimates predict 20% of total ridership (**61,600**) would use the passenger only ferry.
- ▶ Based off of these numbers, a single 150 passenger vessel making 4 round trips daily is recommended.
- ▶ A \$15 round trip fare would generate **\$924,000** in annual revenues.

7

3 Main Project Components



Terminal Improvements

- Floating docks
- Parking
- Passenger Shelter
- Additional Bathrooms
- Ticket facilities



Passenger Ferry

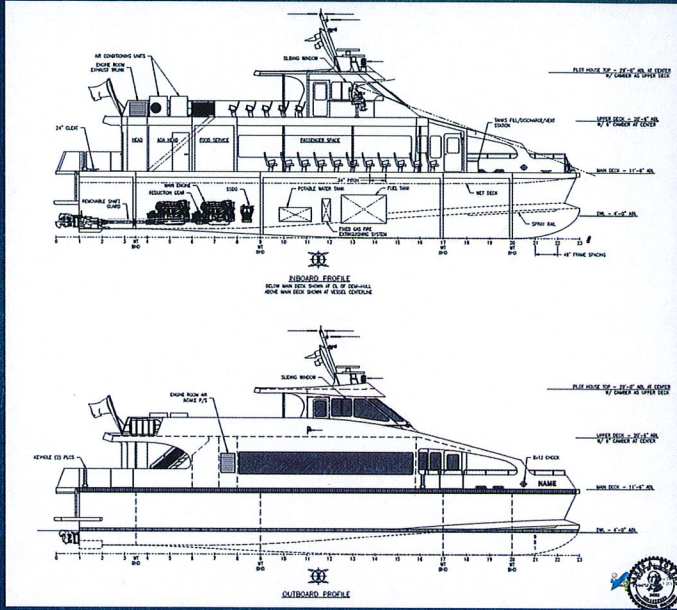
- Aluminum Catamaran Fast Ferry
- 98 passenger each
- Luggage and bicycle storage
- Snack Bar
- 28 knot Cruising Speed



Ocracoke Transit System

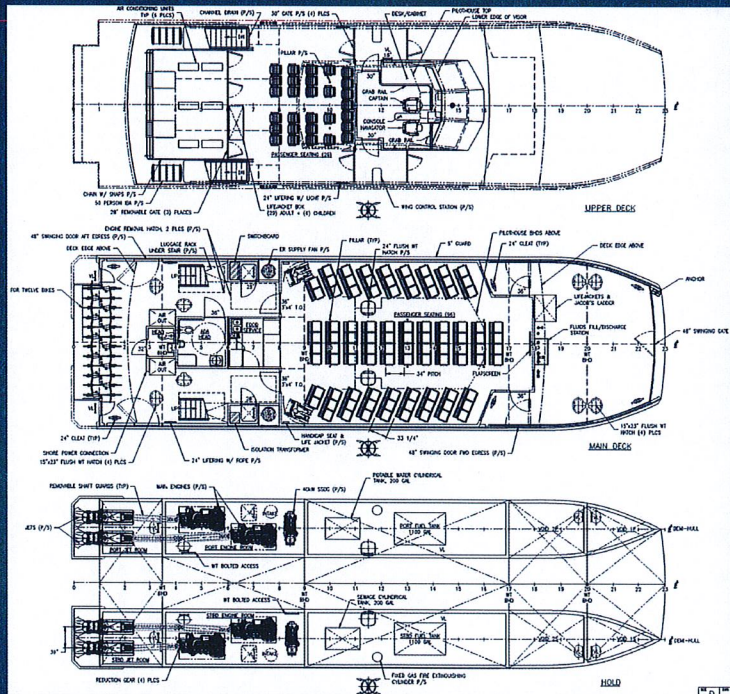
- 4 Open-Air Electric Shuttles
- Wheelchair accessible
- 15 mph
- 8 Stop Transit Loop

The Vessel



Inboard Profile

Outboard Profile



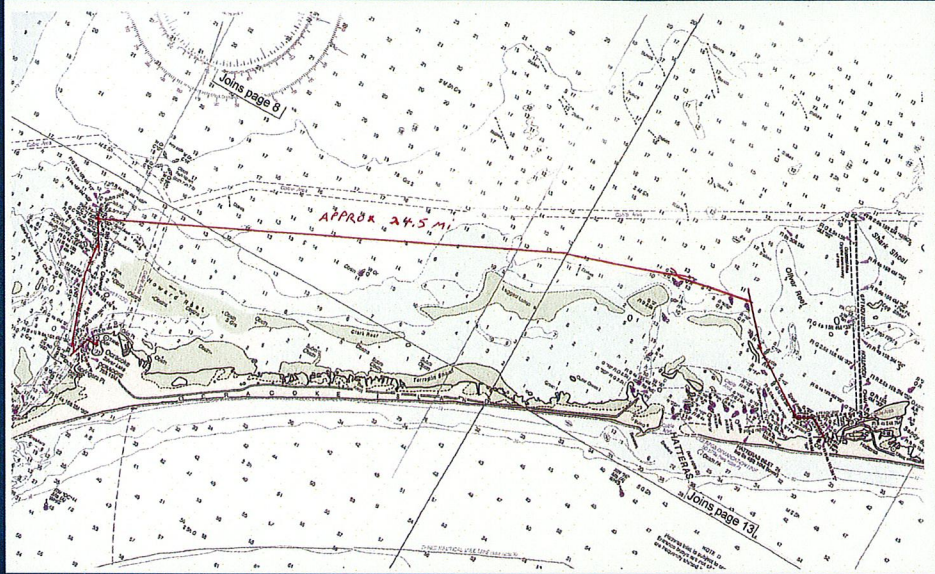
Upper Deck

Main Deck

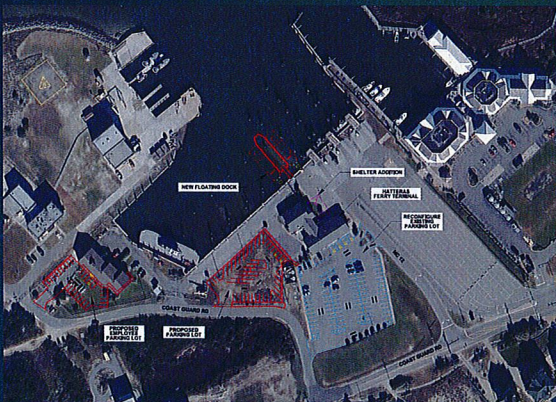
Hold

- 96 Passenger (+ 2 Wheelchair spaces)
- Aluminum Catamaran
- Bicycle storage
- Snack Bar
- 28 knot Cruising Speed

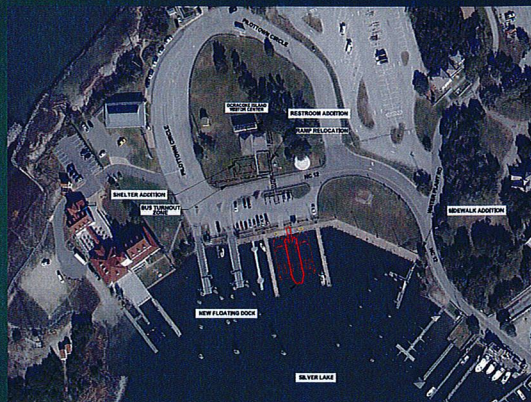
Passenger ferry route



Terminal Improvements

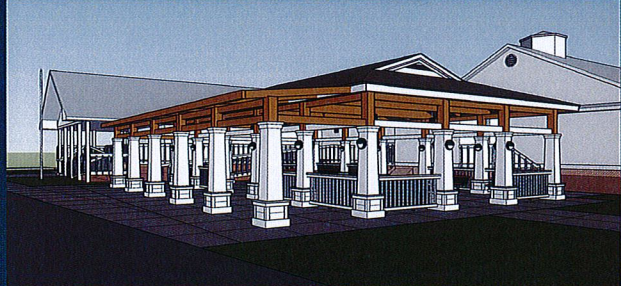


Hatteras Terminal



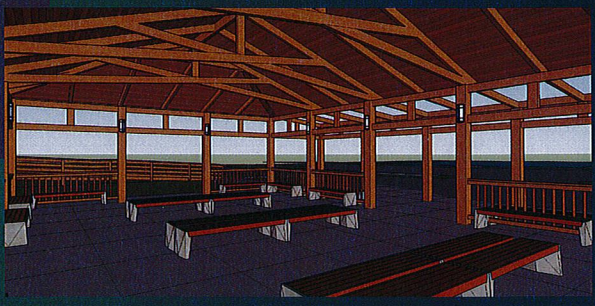
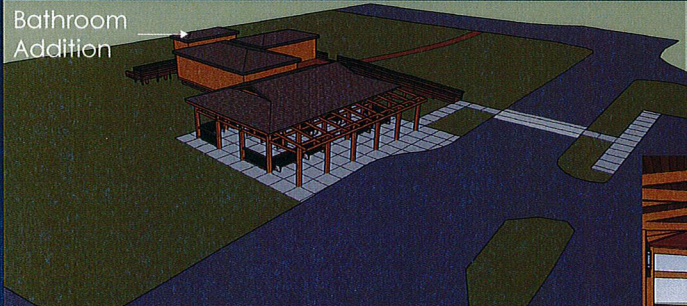
Ocracoke – Silver Lake Terminal

Hatteras Terminal



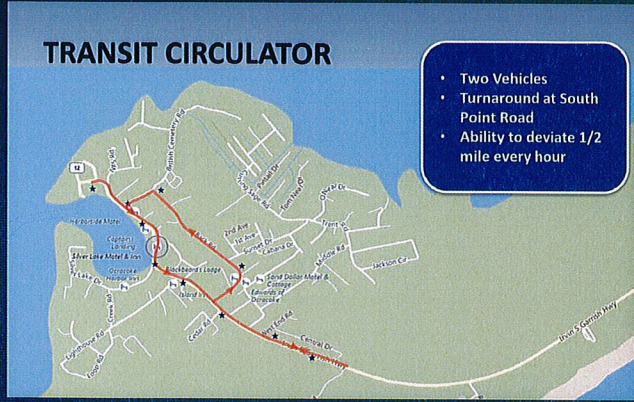
Passenger Shelter

Ocracoke Terminal



Passenger Shelter

Ocracoke Transit



Shuttle Vehicle Examples



- NCDOT to provide 4 Passenger Shuttle to Hyde County
- Hyde County responsible for transit operations
- 3 Mile Transit Loop
- 8 Point-of-Interest Stops

Power Outage

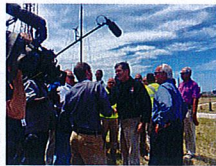
The Outer Banks[®] VISITORS BUREAU

Dear Travel Partners,

Over the last several years, our community has faced hurricanes, road closures, bridge closures, wildfires, sharks, HB-2, and now, a large-scale power outage. We've overcome previous challenges and I know we'll overcome this one as well. Hatteras Island residents and business owners, we've got your back.

From the time of the initial outage, the Visitors Bureau has worked closely with Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative, Dare County's public information and emergency management offices, and with several of our travel partners to ensure visitors are receiving the most accurate and up-to-date information possible. The Visitors Bureau phone room and social media channels have been busy and have served as key points of contact.

Our office has fielded numerous interviews with local, regional and national news. In each interview, we've been careful to describe the areas affected, and the areas not affected. Nonetheless, several outlets have characterized the situation as an Outer Banks power outage, implying that the entire area is without power. The Visitors Bureau has been contacting the media sources responsible for these misrepresentations and pushing for corrections. We've also been promoting a list



- CHEC, Dare EOC
- Interviews
- Media Outreach
- Social Media (& Visit NC)
- National Press Release
- Additional Television
- Newspaper
- Magazines
- Online Ads & Influencers

Travel Partner Response...

"Thank you so much for this update – amazing job!"

"This is great!"

"Thank you!!!"

"Keep up the good work. Thanks for all you do for so many."

"We thank you and your team for all that you have done and are still doing."

"Hatteras Island and its businesses are appreciative of the efforts of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau on their behalf."

"Good thinking. Hope it works!"

Richmond,
VA Pilot
Newspaper



Welcome Back!

The recent power outage might have temporarily paused summer, but it didn't dim our spirits. The businesses and residents of Hatteras Island are once again welcoming guests.

We hope to see you soon. Give us a call or stop by HatterasIsOn.com for free travel planning assistance, vacancy information, and trip ideas and inspiration.

The Outer Banks
OF NORTH CAROLINA

877-629-4386 HatterasIsOn.com



Hatteras Is On Stats



Visit The Outer Banks
August 4 at 5:00pm · 🌐

The power has been fully restored to Hatteras and the Island is open and ready to welcome you back. Come say "hi!" ... Hatteras is on!

791,313 people reached [Boost Post](#)

383K Views

Like Comment Share

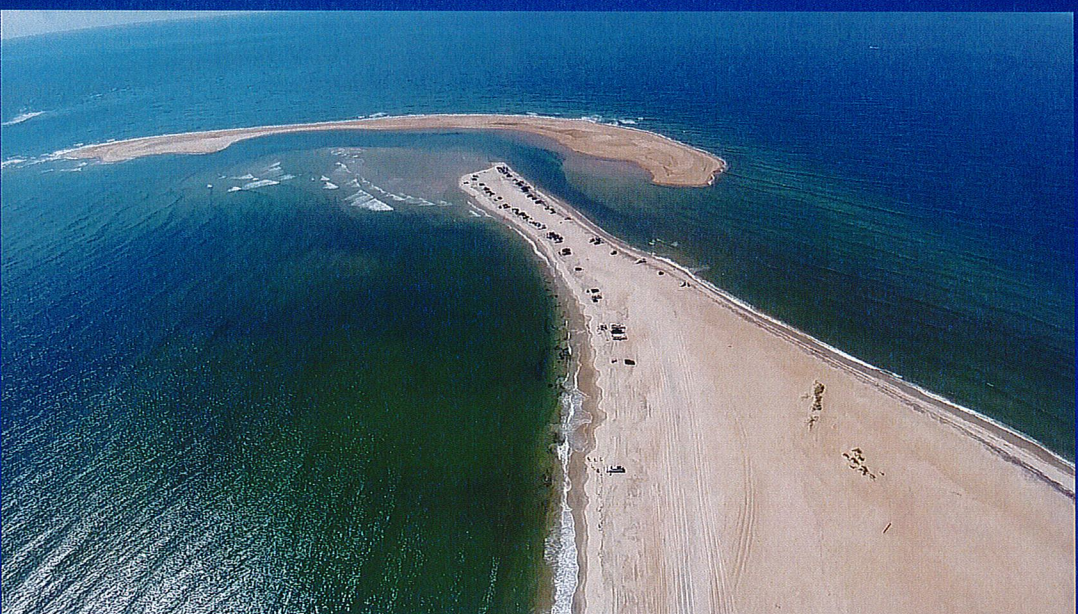
👤👤👤 Kathy Couch, Rebecca Mattingly and 12K others [Top Comments](#)

3,877 shares

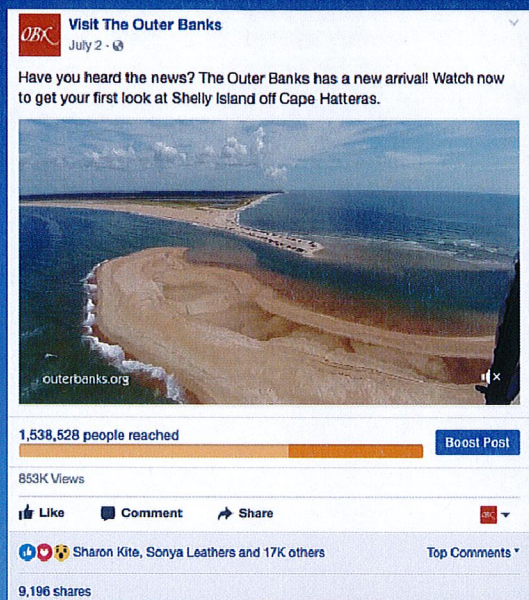
Travel Partner Response...

“Damn ya’ll! I have been good through out this event but this bought tears. WELL done!!!!
Bless you! Thank you!”

Shelly Island...
The Newest
Arrival



Shelly Island Stats



2016 Tourism Numbers - County by County

- \$1.1 Billion Economic Impact
- Still #4...Barely
- 4.5% Increase YOY (State Avg 4.4%)
- 13,160 Jobs
- \$102.31 Million State & Local Taxes
- \$2,845 Tax Savings Per Resident