



## You Are Invited to Participate

The National Park Service (NPS) is requesting your input in developing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for sediment management activities at Cape Hatteras National Seashore (the Seashore). Your participation is important to our planning process.

Publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register will initiate the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and begin a 30-day public scoping period. As part of the public scoping process, the NPS will host four virtual meetings via webinar. You are invited to attend these meetings to learn more about the project scope, issues, and alternatives; ask NPS representatives questions; and provide comments. For additional project scope information on the EIS process, the public meetings, and how to provide comments please visit <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/CAHASediment>.



### Public Meeting Dates

To register for a virtual meeting, please follow directions at the below links:

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**VIRTUAL MEETING 1 - MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2020**

**11:30 AM - 12:30 PM ET**

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7548762357282348557>

Webinar ID: 449-480-987

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**VIRTUAL MEETING 2 - TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2020**

**7:00 - 8:00 PM ET**

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8685229670379605517>

Webinar ID: 788-190-091

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**VIRTUAL MEETING 3 - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2020**

**6:00 - 7:00 PM ET**

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3125413884600066573>

Webinar ID: 627-583-883

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**VIRTUAL MEETING 4 - THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2020**

**5:30 - 6:30 PM ET**

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1589959090394535435>

Webinar ID: 546-626-443

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# Background

Authorized in 1937 along the Outer Banks of North Carolina, Cape Hatteras National Seashore is the nation's first national seashore. Consisting of more than 30,000 acres distributed along approximately 67 miles of ocean-facing shoreline, the Seashore is part of a dynamic barrier island system. Nine villages, including Nags Head, Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo, Avon, Buxton, Frisco, Hatteras, and Ocracoke, are located adjacent to or within the Seashore. Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, which is jointly managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), is also located within the administrative boundary of the Seashore, south of Oregon Inlet. The Seashore and villages are accessible by North Carolina Highway 12 (NC 12); private boat; and the Hatteras-Ocracoke, Swanquarter, and Cedar Island ferries.

Natural accretion and erosion processes have been impacted at the Seashore for decades due to anthropogenic activities (e.g., dune building, dune planting, inlet dredging, and maintenance of dunes) and other changes (e.g., sea level rise). Erosion rates are as high as ten feet per year in some areas. Over the next 30 years, sea level rise is expected to be five to ten inches at the Seashore.

From the 1930s through the 1960s, active dune building and revegetation efforts occurred along the Seashore. Since the 1970s, occasional use of localized beach nourishment has been used to combat severe erosion in some locations. In some places, segments of beach are relatively stable and erosion has not affected transportation or visitor access. In other places, eroded beaches result in ocean encroachment on the dunes and in the ocean washing over onto NC 12 and within adjacent communities.

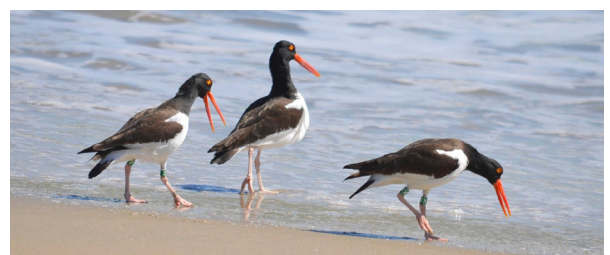
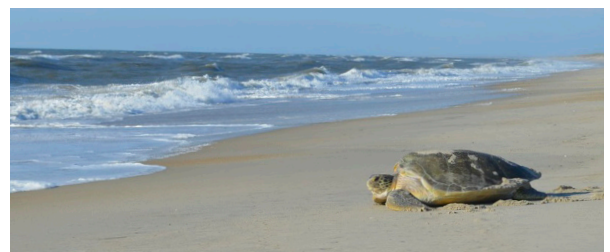
## Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to develop a streamlined framework for permitting sediment management at the Seashore, including the method, locations, and frequency for sediment management actions that may be permitted over the next 20 years. The Seashore has received various requests and anticipates future requests to issue special use permits for protecting roads, bridges, electrical transmission facilities, and other public transportation facilities; repairing island damages, including breaches that also affect transportation; and restoring habitat through the placement of dredged materials along eroded sections of barrier islands. A sediment management framework is needed to assist the Seashore in addressing these requests, while avoiding and minimizing impacts that may be associated with such actions. The framework is needed to provide timely response (1) for localized beach nourishment requests in the face of increased storm events and projected sea level rise, and (2) for opportunities to restore coastal habitats.

## Impact Topics

Based on discussions among the planning team and subject matter experts, a preliminary list of impact topics has been developed that will be analyzed in detail in the EIS:

- Littoral Processes and Barrier Island Morphology
- Benthic Organisms and Essential Fish Habitat
- Sea Turtles
- Listed Shorebird Species
- Structures and Infrastructure





Please provide us with your thoughts about this range of alternatives and offer any ideas you might have for additional preliminary alternatives.

## Preliminary Alternatives

The NPS has developed preliminary alternatives relative to requests to issue special use permits from agencies including including the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), Dare and Hyde counties, and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for the purposes of: 1) protecting roads, highways, bridges, ferry terminals, electrical transmission facilities, and other public transportation facilities; 2) repairing island damages, including breaches, that affect transportation or infrastructure; and 3) restoring habitat through the placement of dredge materials along eroded sections of barrier islands.

### ALTERNATIVE A: NO-ACTION

Under Alternative A, the no-action alternative, the NPS would not permit sediment management activities at the Seashore over the next two decades. Park partners, such as the NCDOT, currently maintain an easement through the Seashore for NC 12, and the no-action alternative would preclude NCDOT from implementing sediment management to protect NC 12 outside of its existing easement. Other partners, such as Dare County, would not be permitted to perform beach nourishment projects along the Seashore. Other partners that may wish to work with the Seashore to implement sediment management-based habitat restoration projects through the placement of sediment would not be permitted to implement those projects.



### ALTERNATIVE B: PROPOSED ACTION

Under Alternative B, the proposed action, the NPS could permit other agencies and municipalities to conduct, with conditions, sediment management in the form of sound-side and ocean-side beach nourishment, dune restoration, and filling island breaches. Under this alternative, the NPS maintains the discretion to approve or deny any future permit requests. The NPS would require any proposed actions taking place within beach nesting habitats to occur outside of the nesting season. However, work could occur outside of this timeframe with appropriate mitigations if seasonal conditions threaten project feasibility and/or human safety. The proposed action includes the following elements:

- Beach nourishment may be used to mitigate coastal erosion at various sites along the Seashore, including ocean- and sound-side environments. Beach nourishment may occur at up to two locations per year, with an anticipated 50-250 cubic yards of sediment per foot, placed via dredge or sand trucking along approximately three miles of shoreline. Sediment management permitted under the proposed action is expected to fall within the general parameters of past beach nourishment projects.
- The restoration of habitat may occur in locations such as the southern end of Hatteras Island and the historic Green Island in Oregon Inlet. Restored habitat would be intended for use by nesting shorebirds and sea turtles. Habitat restoration projects would include the application of dredge material and moving/manipulating sand at the site with heavy machinery. Dredge material may come from the pipeline dredging operations or other sources, provided the sediment is a close match to the sand grain size found at the proposed action site.
- Dune reconstruction and enhancement, as well as moving or regrading sand to protect existing access and public facilities, may occur. Actions that promote natural dune building processes, such as beach grass planting and sand fencing, are included in the proposed action and may be carried out.
- Emergency breach fill may occur under the proposed action. When inlets, overwash areas, or damaged roadways are caused by wave, water, and wind action during storm events, they may be closed due to roadway reconstruction activities. These projects may include trucking, staging, and pumping sand in from other locations. Based on research, the volume associated with breach fills may range from 109,000 cubic yards to over 1,000,000 cubic yards.

# Cooperating Agencies

This EIS is being prepared in cooperation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, US Army Corps of Engineers (Regulatory and Planning Divisions), North Carolina Department of Transportation (Ferry and Highway Divisions), North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, Dare County, and Hyde County.



## The EIS Process

- 1 Spring 2020:** Public Scoping (**We are here**)
- 2 Summer 2020:** NPS develops a Draft EIS
- 3 Fall 2020:** Draft EIS released to the public for a 45-day review and public comment period, including public meetings
- 4 Winter 2020:** NPS develops a Final EIS
- 5 Winter 2021:** Final EIS released for public review
- 6 Spring 2021:** NPS Record of Decision signed by the Regional Director

## How to Comment

- 1** Submit comments electronically at:  
<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/CAHASediment> (preferred method)
- 2** Mail or hand-deliver written comments to Seashore headquarters:  
**Cape Hatteras Sediment Management EIS**  
Superintendent  
Cape Hatteras National Seashore  
1401 National Park Drive  
Manteo, NC 27954

All written comments must be postmarked and all electronic comments must be submitted no later than 30 days from the date the Notice of Intent is published in the Federal Register. The deadline for submitting comments will be posted on the project website.

*Comments will not be accepted by fax, e-mail, or any other way than those specified above. Bulk comments in any format (hard copy or electronic) submitted on behalf of others will not be accepted. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.*

