



Solving Access for N.C. 12 in Dare County (SAND Plan)

Project Location, Description & History

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- How might this project affect you?
- Are there any other resources that should be considered while evaluating design alternatives?

WAYS TO COMMENT:

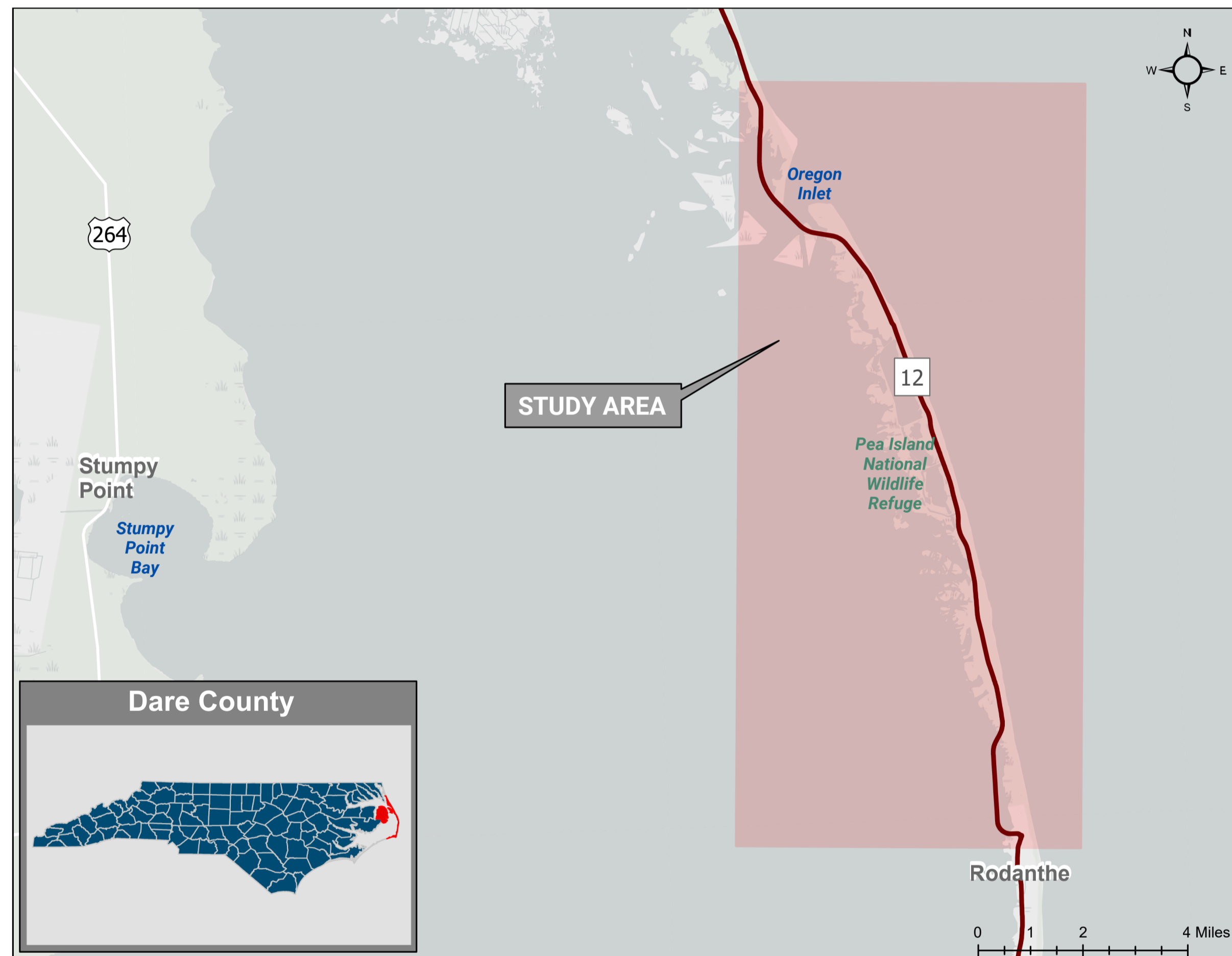
MAIL:
Emily Richards
NCDOT Public Involvement
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598

EMAIL:
nc-12-access@publicinput.com

PHONE:
(984) 205-6615
Project Code 2463

ONLINE:
<https://www.ncdot.gov/projects/nc-12-access/Pages/sand-plan-survey.aspx>

Scan the QR Code with your smart phone to access the **Project Website**.



The N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is studying corridor improvements on N.C. 12 between the Marc Basnight Bridge and the Rodanthe "Jug Handle" Bridge. This 11-mile stretch of barrier island has experienced repeated storm damage and periodic closures.

NCDOT is using FHWA's Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) process to streamline transportation planning decisions. Building on previous efforts, such as the N.C. 12 Task Force and past environmental reviews, Solving Access for N.C. 12 in Dare County, or the SAND Plan, will evaluate practical solutions based on environmental and community considerations, cost, and feasibility. The goal is to identify improvements that will reduce travel disruptions and provide both long and short-term transportation solutions that are financially and practically viable.

Project Goals and Objectives

- System Connectivity – providing essential connections to transportation networks critical to evacuation routes and emergency systems.
- Mobility – facilitating movements of people and goods with minimal interruption of traffic service.
- Resiliency – resolving overwash and shoreline erosion challenges to maintain threatened segments of N.C. 12 and mitigate future disturbances.
- Economic Viability – reducing disruptions to access for visitors, tourists, and local communities at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, and throughout the Outer Banks.

Project Area History





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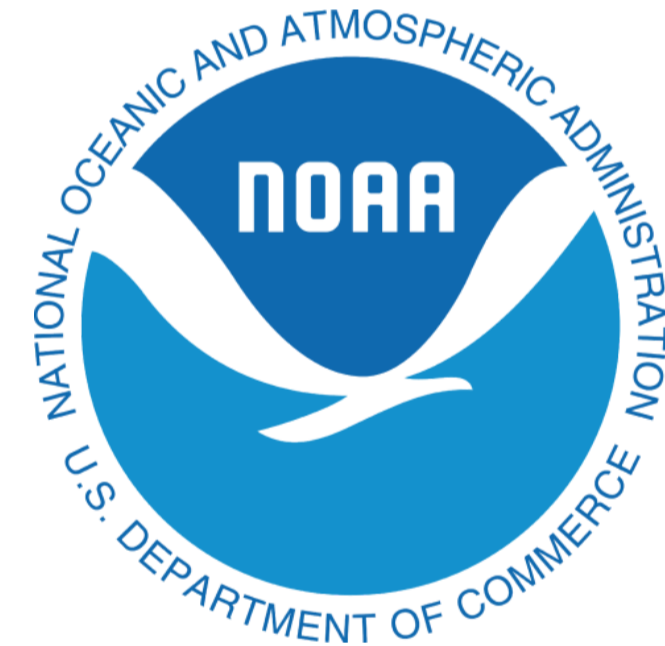
Welcome to the Public Information Meeting



Why Are We Here?

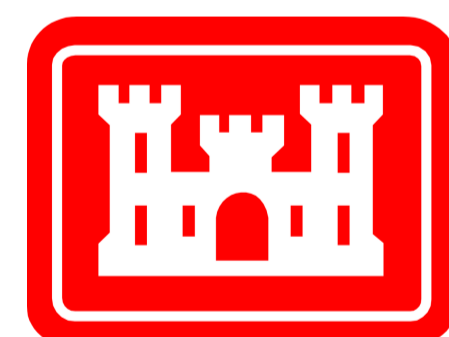
- Learn about the SAND Plan and its goals
- Understand what a PEL Study is and how it is different from previous documents
- Review existing project area conditions
- Share your thoughts, questions, and local knowledge
- Help inform the next steps in the planning process

Project Partners and Stakeholders



The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

State Historic Preservation Office
NC NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES



US Army Corps of Engineers®



U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration



Tideland EMC
Real People. Real Power.



Community Organizations and Members of the Public



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What is a Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) Study?

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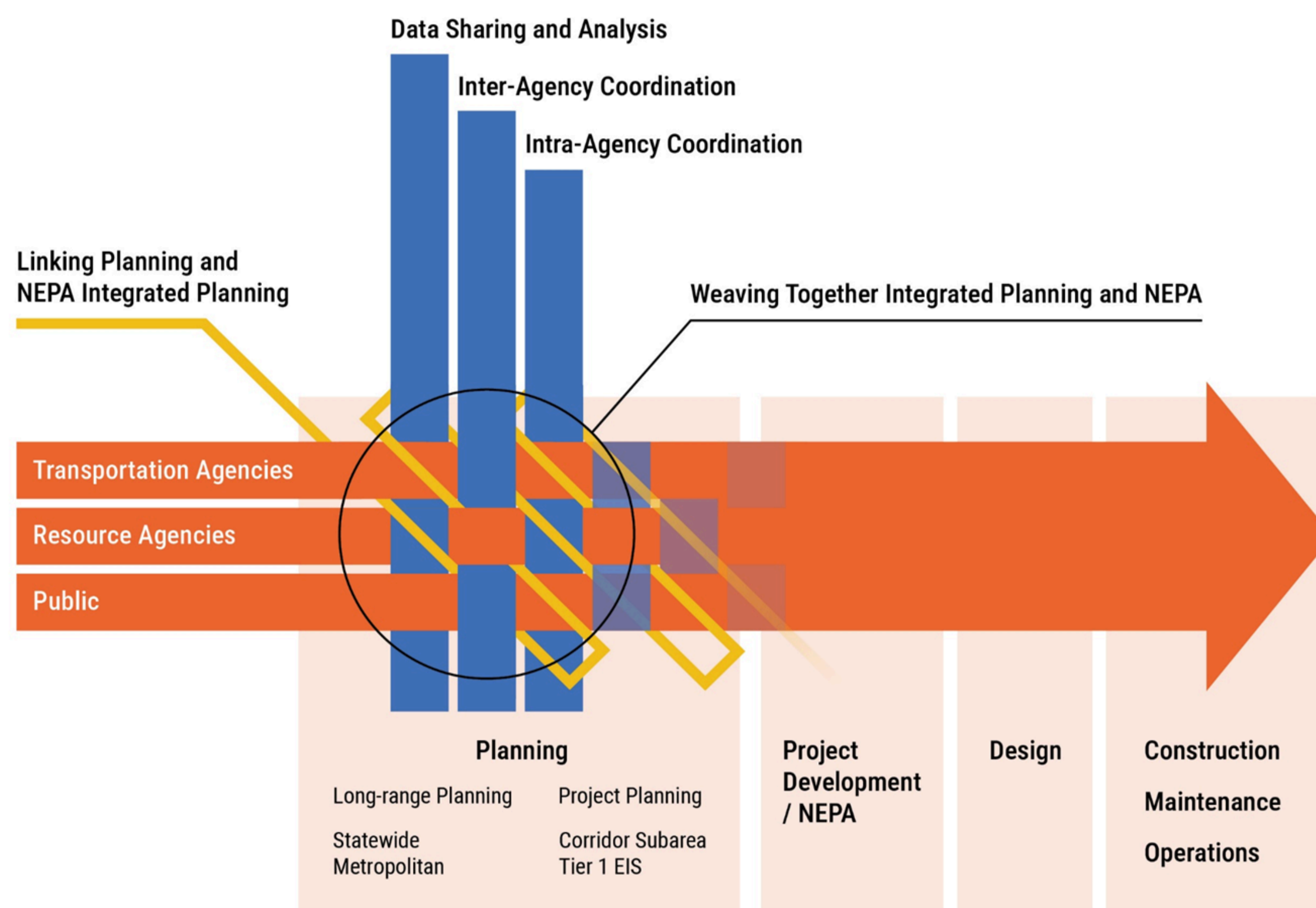
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DEFINED: A PEL Study helps communities and agencies work together **early** to explore transportation solutions while considering environmental and community needs. It includes establishing a project purpose and need statement, alternatives development, impact screening, and robust agency and public engagement.



Desired Outcomes



Feasible, resilient design solutions that:

- Address maintenance challenges and accessibility disruptions
- Enhance resilience and ecological health
- Benefit communities
- Support hazard mitigation goals



Consensus with stakeholders on project purpose, direction, and recommended alternatives



Technical documentation that:

- Supports future environmental review, permitting, and funding processes
- Reduces duplication
- Streamlines project delivery

Source: FHWA.

Benefits of a PEL Study

1

Align project stakeholders and receive public feedback for early decision making

2

Minimize rework and accelerate project delivery

3

Position for streamlined environmental decision-making to provide a pathway for project delivery





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Existing Conditions: Human Environment

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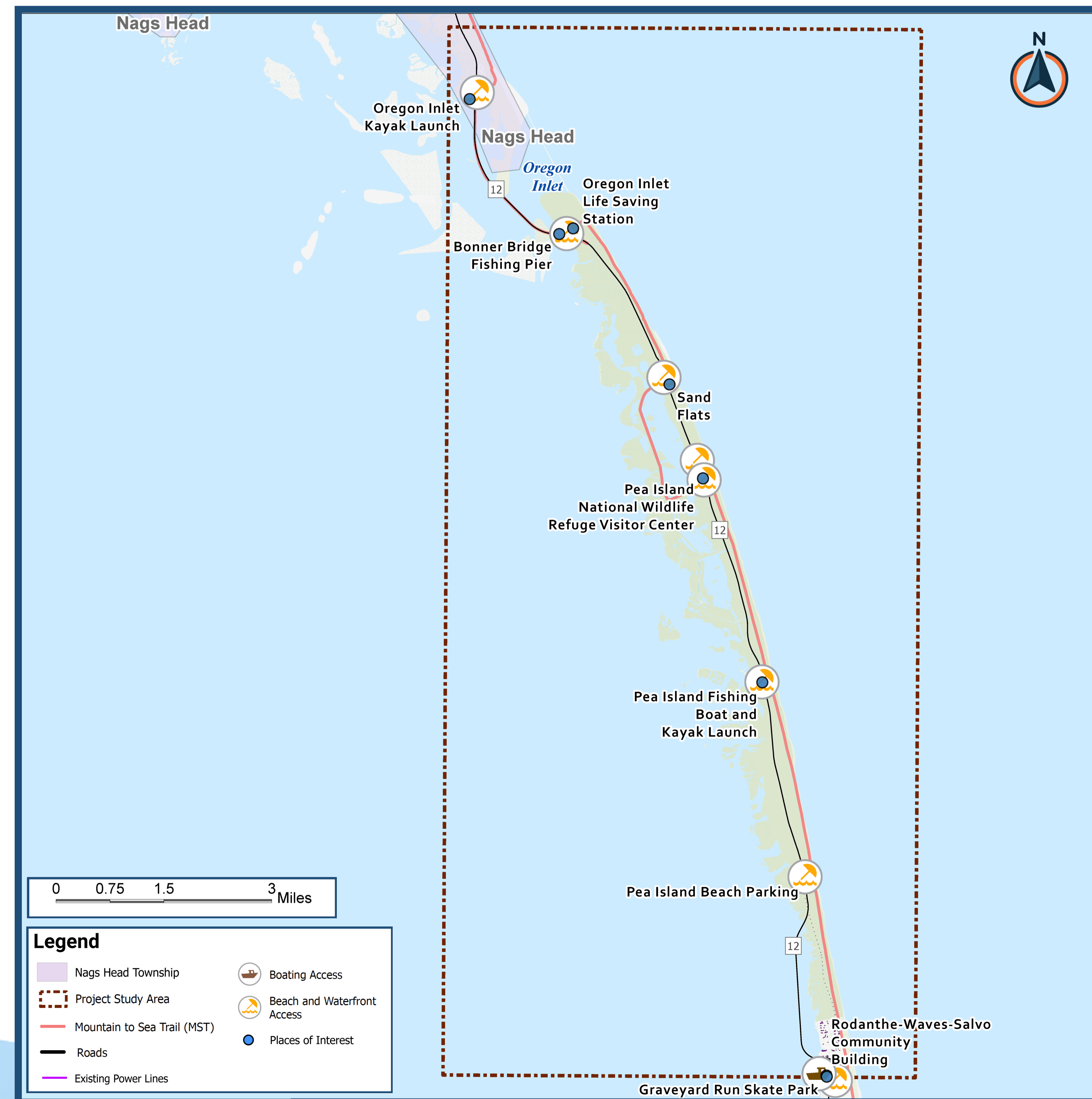
Notable Community Features

- Rodanthe community
- Oregon Inlet Campground
- Bonner Bridge Fishing Pier
- Oregon Inlet Life Saving Station
- Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Registered Heritage Area
- Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center
- New Inlet Bridge
- Pea Island Fishing Boat and Kayak Launch
- Pea Island Beach
- Mountains to Sea Trail
- Cape Hatteras National Seashore

Nearby Features on Hatteras Island

- Waves, Salvo, Avon, Buxton, Frisco and Hatteras communities
- Cape Hatteras Lighthouse
- Buxton Woods Coastal Reserve
- Billy Mitchell Airport
- Ferry access to Ocracoke Island

Do you see any important community features that are missing from this board?





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Existing Conditions: Natural Environment

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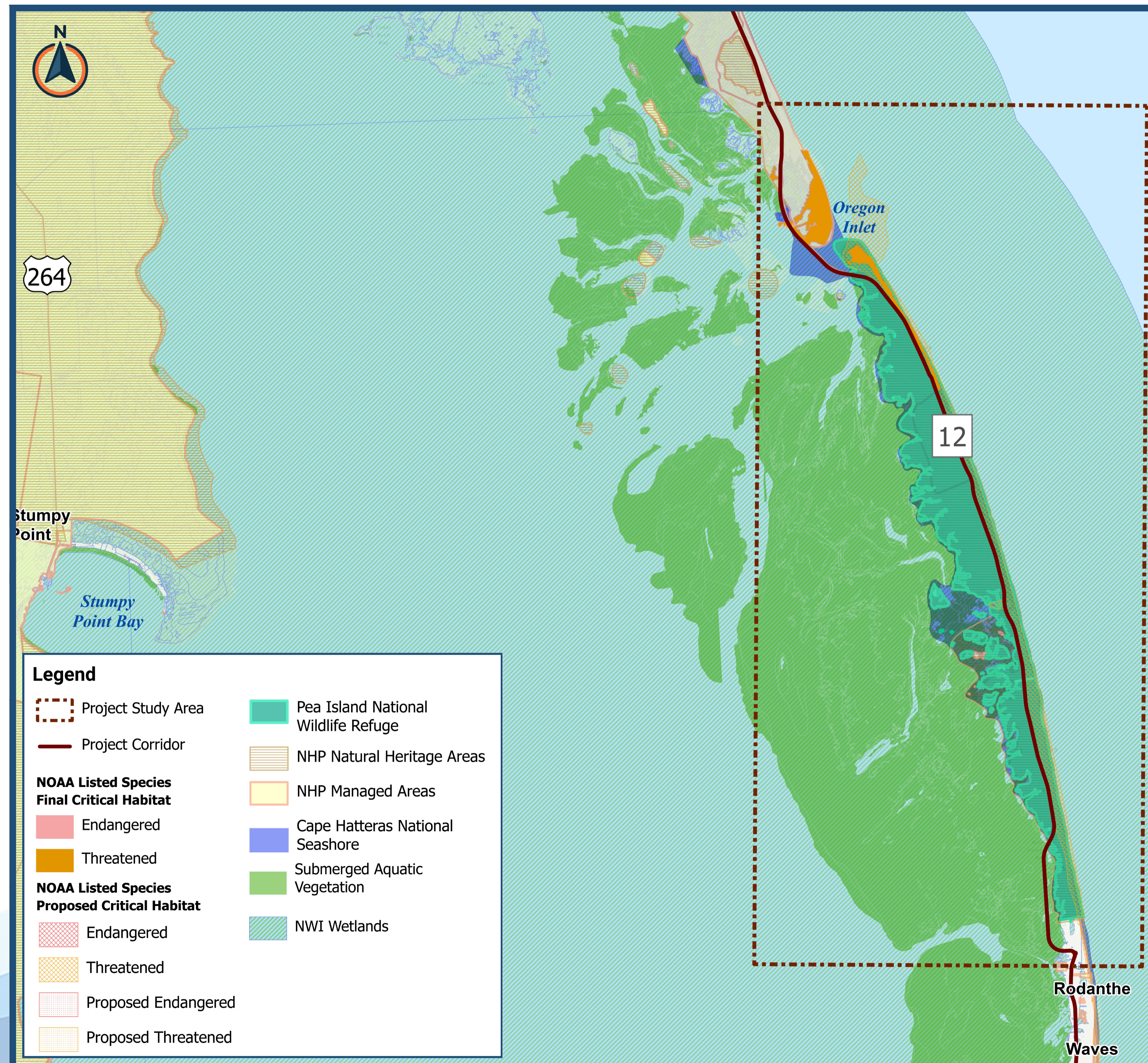
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Biodiversity & Wildlife

- Habitat for 15 Threatened & Endangered Species
- Critical Habitat for Piping Plover, Rufa Red Knot, and Loggerhead Sea Turtle
- Study area is listed as an “Exceptional” natural area with a high level of biodiversity and wildlife habitat
- Oregon Inlet/Roanoke Sound Bird Nesting Islands



Natural Resources

- Pasquotank River Basin
- High Quality Waters on Pamlico Sound side
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation present on Pamlico Sound side
- All wetland categories present
- Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge
- Cape Hatteras National Seashore
- Buxton Woods Coastal Reserve



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Existing Conditions: Transportation Infrastructure

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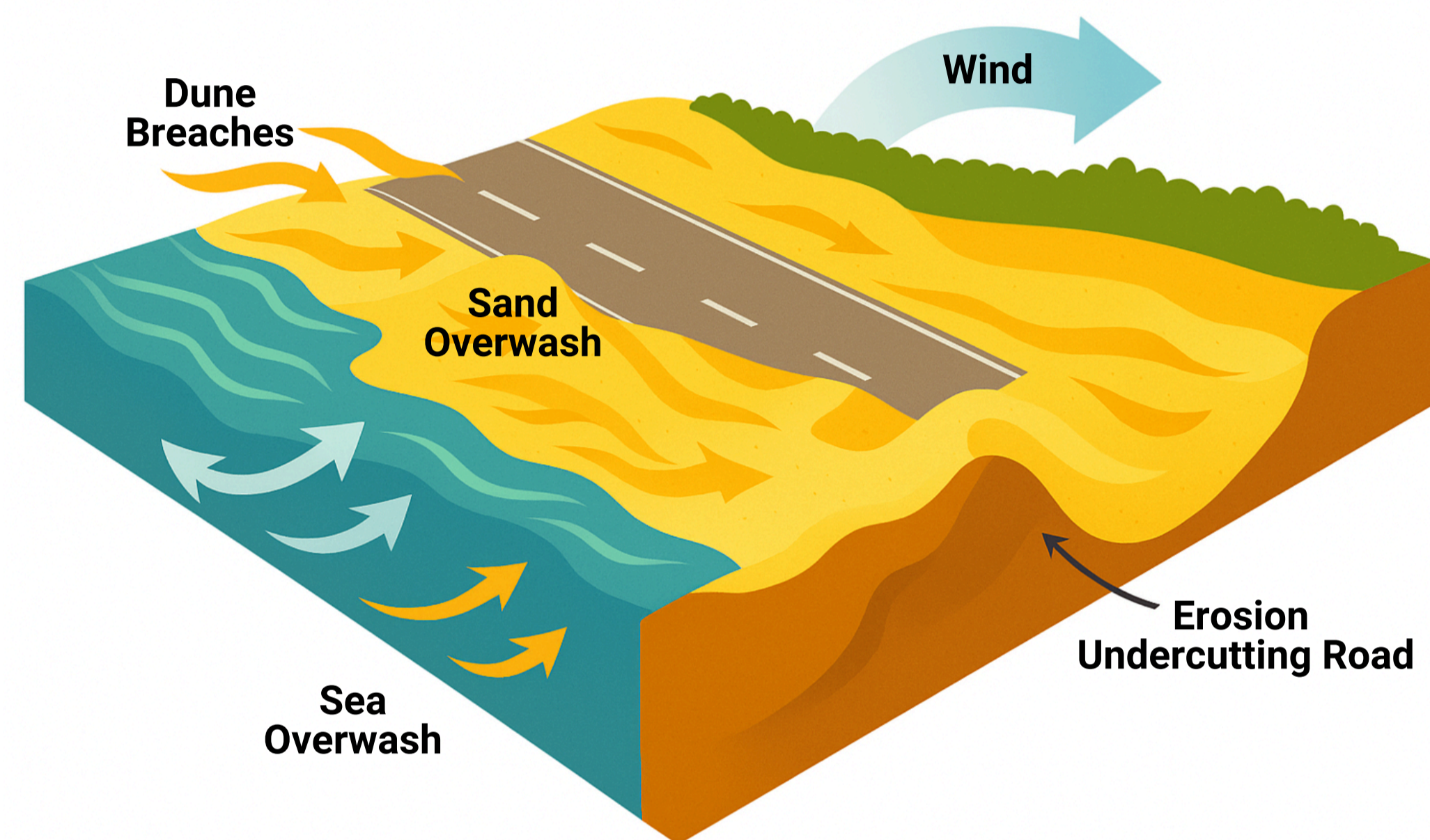
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N.C. 12 lies on barrier islands, which are constantly and dynamically being reshaped by wave and wind action. Sea level elevation change, coupled with the increasing severity and frequency of coastal storms, are accelerating the impacts of these forces. **At least 16 major storms have impacted NC 12 in the last 25 years.**

Since 2010, NCDOT has spent more than \$72 million to keep NC 12 passable.



N.C. 12 (invisible under several feet of sand) looking toward Rodanthe after several months without maintenance following construction of the Jug Handle bridge. 2022.

Coastal Community Connectivity via N.C. 12



An engineered shoreline stabilization effort implemented to protect dunes and infrastructure. The sand-filled barriers are used as a temporary measure to slow coastal erosion caused by waves, storms, and rising water levels.



Solving Access for N.C. 12 in Dare County

(SAND Plan)

Schedule & Next Steps



**Future dates subject to change

At the conclusion of the SAND Plan, NCDOT and partners will have

- A planning foundation that can be formally adopted into future environmental review
- A clear vision for the near term and long term improvements
- A documented screening of alternatives
- Early environmental coordination completed
- A record of stakeholder and public input to inform decision-making
- Planning-level cost ranges and feasibility insights that will inform programming and funding decisions

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We Want to Hear from YOU!

Take the Survey!



- General concerns
- Forward-looking opportunities and challenges
- Ideas/specific design solutions to meet vision
- Items not captured in previous reports/studies
- Other potential alternatives for evaluation
- Input on project goals



Other Ways to Comment



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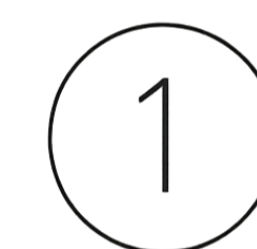
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WEBSITE:
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Future Public Involvement Opportunities



Sign up for Project updates



Take future Project surveys



Participate in future meetings



Request small group Project meetings with the NCDOT team



Your input is welcomed throughout the process. Comments for this first public meeting will be accepted through May 14, 2026. Opportunities to comment on specific topics will be provided at future public meetings.