

**This is Radio Hatteras. Hello, I'm Grace with the Weekly New Summary for Sunday, May 5, 2024.**

Buxton Civic Association says in a Facebook post, "After 8 months of very little updates and feedback from the Army Corps of Engineers we had two press releases this week. The second was made after a long awaited in-person visit from the Corps of Engineers to the site.

"This upcoming week we will attend the Dare County Commissioners monthly meeting along with a trip to Emerald Isle to attend the NC Beach Inlet and Waterway Association for its spring conference. The association is the state and federal advocate for all NC beach issues and is attended by every North Carolina Coastal town.

"The association thanked former North Carolina House representative Mike McIntyre for the suggestion and information on the group, NPS for their continued push and the Dare County Board of Commissioners for a great week.

"Things look to be moving much quicker than anticipated and finally in the right direction."

**Contract to remove potential source of petroleum awarded ahead of schedule**

This is the second media release referenced by Buxton Civic Association.

Leadership from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, South Atlantic Division and the Savannah District conducted a site visit to Buxton, May 1, 2024, to meet with representatives from the National Park Service and Dare County to evaluate current conditions at the Formerly Used Defense Site Buxton Naval Facility and discuss agency and public concerns regarding the reported petroleum contamination. Since the visit, a contract to remove a pipe to determine if it's the source of the reported petroleum was awarded ahead of schedule.

The leadership team was unanimous in voicing their support and acknowledged the slow progress has caused understandable frustration among the community, the National Park Service, and the Dare County officials, and they said they will do more to communicate with the community, reports the media release from the Army Corps.

The federal agencies are obligated by law to follow processes and protocols. In addition, to removing the pipe the Corps will test the surrounding soil.

A research team from the Environmental and Munitions Center of Expertise is currently doing a deep dive into the site, researching archived facility and real estate records, prior removal and remediation actions undertaken at the site, maps and other information provided to the Army Corps of Engineers that are associated with the site.

After visiting with the National Park Service for almost two hours, the Army Corps of Engineers team met with representatives from the Dare County Board of Commissioners and Department of Health and Human Services.

The Army Corps of Engineers has a plan to address the potential petroleum contamination, the concern about infrastructure exposed by recent storm erosion is a challenge that cannot be addressed under the FUDS program.

The Army Corps of Engineers team voiced its willingness to do whatever they could within their authorities. Future meetings with the community are in the works and dates, times and locations will be shared once the details are confirmed.

In the week's first media release, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, promised to take further action on the former U.S. Navy facility at Buxton, North Carolina, under the Formerly Used Defense Sites Program, removing a pipe and sampling the surrounding soil to determine if it is the potential source of the reported petroleum.

That release stated awarding a contract by September. The second release said a contractor had been hired and is expected to show up this week.

The Army Corps of Engineers has also promised to set up a Restoration Advisory Board as part of the pipe removal contract. This board serves as a forum for discussion and exchange of information between agencies and affected communities.

This release also gives the rationale for the program not dealing with the remnant infrastructure. States this release, the remnant infrastructures, exposed on the beach after storm erosion, are not eligible for removal under the FUDS Program, as those structures were not in an unsafe condition at the time the site was transferred out of DoD control.

A Summary Report was attached.

### **Legislation passed to take back state's \$35 million for housing and municipality section**

The North Carolina General Assembly has passed the short session's technical corrections legislation. That legislation takes back the \$35 million to build affordable housing in Dare County and repeals the offending section that strips Dare County's incorporated municipalities of power to regulate development. Dare's municipalities filed a lawsuit.

Dare County's Housing Task Force, which is now led by retired County Planner Donna Creef, asked NC Senator Bobby Hanig to withdraw the municipality section. At a meeting, April 22, Hanig said he had already drawn up the legislation to write out the offending section.

Meeting on April 30, 2024, the task force asked the Dare County Board of Commissioners to put on hold sending the \$35 million for building housing back to the legislature so the new task force could have the opportunity to provide a plan for using the money. The motion was unanimously adopted.

### **Updates from Cape Hatteras National Seashore**

--The Bodie Island Lighthouse is open for climbing through Columbus Day. Tickets can be purchased at [recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov). Climbing opportunities at the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse will likely not be possible until 2026, due to the lighthouse's restoration project.

--Night driving restrictions on Cape Hatteras National Seashore ocean-side beaches begin started May 1 and run through July 31. Priority off-road vehicle ramps close at 9 o'clock and reopen the following morning at 6. All other designated ocean-side ORV ramps close at the same time but reopen at 7 in the morning.

Priority ramps are 2, 4, 25, 27, 43, 44, 48, 49, 70 and 72.

While night driving restrictions are in place, visitors may still park their vehicles in parking areas and walk on the beach at night.

Sound-side ramps, Inside Road and Pole Road do not have night driving restrictions.

For current beach access information, visit [go dot nps dot gov slash beachaccess](https://go.dot.nps.gov/beachaccess).

All sea turtle and shorebird nesting numbers are listed under field summary.

Currently, 22 American oystercatcher nests are active on the seashore beaches. Three nests are on Bodie Island, two nests at Cape Point, 6 nests on Hatteras Island and 11 nests on Ocracoke.

--The parking lot at ORV ramp 55 is closed for about three weeks for a project to remove a portion of the boardwalk and improve travel conditions on the ramp. Permitted ORV drivers can use Pole Road as an alternate route to the beach during intermittent closures of the ramp.

### **Fishing Piers open**

Cape Hatteras National Seashore's Avon Fishing Pier opened for the season this past week.

It's open from 6 in the morning to 8 at night. Starting Memorial Day the hours extend to 10 at night.

The Avon Pier will also once again host Hatteras Island's Independence Day fireworks, which will be launched from the end of the pier July 4.

Hatteras Island currently has two fishing piers: The Avon Pier and the Rodanthe Pier are both open throughout the summer and fall months.

The Rodanthe Pier is open now. Hours are for May 7 in the morning to dark; June through mid-September, 6 in the morning to Midnight; and then 7 in the morning to Midnight. Generally close after Thanksgiving weekend.

### **And interesting items about the lighthouse scaffolding**

The scaffolding project is now complete. The contractor is Scaffold Resource.

It took 60 days to build the scaffold bottom to top with 10 people.

Over 10,000 pieces of material were used to complete the job.

Anything over 25 mile per hour winds or medium rain, the workers don't work on the outside scaffolding.

It takes the average worker 12 minutes to go from bottom to top!

### **Vaccinate horses, mules and donkeys.**

The annual warning from the state's Agriculture Department has been issued to equine owners. Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler is encouraging equine owners to have their animals vaccinated against Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis and West Nile Virus.

EEE is fatal 90 percent of the time in horses and West Nile Virus has a fatality rate of 30 percent. Both diseases are preventable by vaccination.

So far this year, North Carolina has had no cases of EEE or West Nile Virus, but last year seven cases of EEE were found.

The combination vaccination initially requires multiple injections for horses, mules and donkeys that have no prior vaccination history.

Equine care also includes keeping up to date on equine infectious anemia testing, commonly referred to as the Coggins test. Since January, three cases of infectious anemia have been found in North Carolina. There is no vaccine and no cure for this disease so testing annually is important

### **Living Shoreline coming for Pea Island**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service shared this week its plans for a \$27.25 million allocation for restoration work in the Albemarle-Pamlico region.

Funded through the Inflation Reduction Act, nature-based solutions projects are sustainable practices that use natural features or processes to reduce carbon emissions and improve climate adaptation and resilience. The proposed projects are for nine units of the national wildlife refuge system and on state-owned game lands in northeastern North Carolina.

Living shorelines are planned national refuges for Swan Quarter in Hyde County, Cedar Island in Carteret County, Currituck and Mackay Island in Currituck County, and Pea Island in Dare County

### **Sea level rise report out for comment**

The N.C. Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Coastal Management is now accepting public comments on the Coastal Resources Commission Science Panel's draft Sea Level Rise update. Public comments on the 10-page document will be accepted until July 3, 2024, at 5 o'clock.

The draft Sea Level Rise Update is available for review at [deq dot nc dot gov slash draft hyphen sea hyphen level hyphen rise hyphen report hyphen update slash open](https://deq.nc.gov/draft-hyphen-sea-hyphen-level-hyphen-rise-hyphen-report-hyphen-update-slash-open)

The report is the required annual review of new and significant scientific studies addressing sea level rise.

Comments will be accepted by email at [DCM comments at deq dot nc dot gov](mailto:DCM_comments@deq.nc.gov) with "Draft Sea Level Rise Update" in the subject line or by USPS mail to NCDEQ Division of Coastal Management, Attn: Tancred Miller, Division Director, 400 Commerce Avenue, Morehead City, NC 28557.

### **Three felonies reported on Hatteras Island in April**

Dare County sheriff Doug Doughtie released the felony crimes committed in unincorporated Dare County. Hatteras Island had three crimes as follows:

April 14: Arson. 23000 block of NC 12, Rodanthe. A portable restroom was set on fire and destroyed. Upon further investigation a suspect was identified and arrested. The cameras installed by the community building board were helpful.

April 15: Obtaining Property by False Pretense. 40000 block of NC 12, Avon. Phone scam. Scammer pretending to be an FBI Agent tricked a business clerk into sending them money with Green Dot cards.

April 29: Breaking and Entering and Larceny. 50000 block of Brooks Court, Frisco. Subject reported a drone and tablet stolen from a rental house.

### **"Jed" Dixon selected to lead North Carolina Ferry Division**

John E. "Jed" Dixon, a 21-year veteran of the North Carolina Ferry Division, is the division's new director.

Dixon has served as the division's deputy director since 2012 and its interim director since August 2023.

He will oversee an organization that operates seven year-round ferry routes across the Currituck Sound, Pamlico Sound, Cape Fear River, Neuse River, Pamlico River and Hatteras Inlet, as well as a seasonal passenger ferry route between Hatteras and Ocracoke. The division operates 23 ferries and employs about 400 full-time and 100 seasonal workers. It is the second largest ferry system in the nation.

The 48-year-old Manteo native said his top priorities will be to improve the system's efficiency, maintain ferry routes, and provide dependable service for the commuters, tourists and others who rely upon the ferries. He said he's also a strong believer in advocating for his staff.

Dixon replaces Harold Thomas, who retired last July.

### **Congratulations to Fessenden Center Volunteers**

The Fessenden Center 2023 Youth Volunteer of the Year is Leah Kenner. Leah served as an assistant coach for the soccer season and basketball season for two teams in each season. She coached alongside her father Rich Kenner who was the adult Volunteer of the Year for 2022. Leah has two sisters and a brother who have all participated in programs for several years here at

the Fessenden Center. Leah has served several hours of her time here teaching teams skills and providing positive encouragement to her teams.

The Fessenden Center 2023 Adult Volunteers of the Year are the husband and wife team of Dustin and Lauren James. They coached T-Ball, soccer, and basketball, in two age groups, and have done so for several years. They have two daughters who participate in multiple programs. Dustin and Lauren are supportive and nurturing as coaches and their teams have a positive experience.

### **National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Day; flags at half-staff Monday**

Governor Roy Cooper ordered all U.S. and North Carolina flags at state facilities to half-staff from sunrise to sunset on Monday, May 6 in honor of National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Day.

In accordance to Public Law, flags are to be lowered annually in recognition of the many firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Day is Sunday, May 5. Since this holiday falls on a Sunday, flags at state facilities will be lowered to half-staff the following Monday.

### **Ferry crew honored with rescue**

The N.C. Board of Transportation honored the crew of a state ferry plying Hatteras Inlet for a rescue that likely saved the lives of two men and their dog on Jan. 12.

The dramatic rescue occurred when crew members on the Motor Vessel *Hatteras*, while tying up the ferry at the Ocracoke-South Dock Terminal, noticed two men hanging onto an overturned boat swiftly floating out of Hatteras Inlet toward the Atlantic Ocean. Ferry Captain Bill Davis then sounded the ferry's general alarm and notified the U.S. Coast Guard of the emergency. Crew members Gerald Huneycutt and David Butler then launched the ferry's rescue boat and traveled a half mile to the overturned boat's location. The men clinging to the boat alerted the rescuers that their dog was trapped underneath the overturned vessel.

The crew members pulled the two men and the canine out of the water and into the rescue boat, eventually bringing them on board the Motor Vessel *Hatteras*. Other ferry crew members involved in the rescue were Chief Engineer Robbie Meekins, Oiler Amanda Przygodzinski and crew member Calob Fulford.

The hunters, Mike Herulan of Salisbury and Doug Illing of Myrtle Beach, S.C., and their dog Fin, were wet and cold but otherwise in good health. The ferry resumed its regular schedule after the rescue was over.

### **Adopt a Sea Turtle nest program is underway**

Outer Banks Forever, the official nonprofit partner of the Outer Banks national parks, has opened its annual Adopt a Sea Turtle Nest program for the 2024 sea turtle nesting season at in Cape Hatteras National Seashore. The nesting season runs from May to September each year. Through Outer Banks Forever's Adopt A Sea Turtle Nest program, participants symbolically adopt an active sea turtle nest on the Seashore and receive an official adoption certificate and information about your specific nest when it hatches later this summer or fall.

The Adopt A Sea Turtle Nest program launched in 2020 to support projects and programs that protect and enhance the Seashore now and for future generations. Since then, the program has raised \$73,313 to support the Seashore.

Go to Island Free Press to get details about how the program works.

### **Lots of events going on this week**

Dare County Board of Commissioners meets Tuesday, that's correct, Tuesday, May 7 at 9 in the morning until the agenda is finished. The meeting takes place in the Commissioner's Meeting Room, Dare County Administrative Building, 954 Marshall C. Collins Drive, Manteo. Hatteras Island residents can comment by going to the Fessenden Center Annex off Buxton Back Road. The Manager's 2025 budget will be presented.

Dare County Public Works hosts a three-day household hazardous waste collection event from Thursday, May 9 through Saturday, May 11 in Kitty Hawk, Buxton and Manteo. During this event, Dare County residents and property owners can drop off hazardous waste for safe disposal in Buxton on Friday afternoon, May 10, from 2 to 4 at the Buxton Transfer Station, 47015 Buxton Back Road.

Two markets are happening next weekend

In Hatteras Village, a Yard Sale and Really Free Market will take place Saturday, May 11 from 10 to 2 at the village's Civic Center. Sell it or give it away.

In Buxton at the Buxton United Methodist Church, a yard sale will be held Friday, May 10 from 4 to 7 and on Saturday, May 11, from 8 to noon. Proceeds support mission to the community.

The Cape Hatteras Drama Club will present an encore performance of The Little Mermaid at First Flight High School Auditorium on Saturday, May 18 at 3 o'clock.

Tickets are available at Cape Hatteras Secondary and First Flight High offices, United Bank in Buxton, First Bank in Kill Devil Hills and The Froggy Dog in Avon.

Don't wait to get tickets at \$15 for adults and \$10 for students. The four shows on Hatteras Island were sold out.

**Now, be safe out there. Thanks for listening. This Radio Hatteras.**