



Dare County Waterways Commission

Minutes

December 8, 2025

Call to Order

Roll Call: Steve Coulter, KP Scott, Natalie Kavanagh, Ernie Foster, Mary Ellon Balance, John Berquist

Acceptance of Minutes: November 10, 2025

- Natalie Kavanagh made the motion to approve the minutes. Mary Ellon Ballance seconded the motion. All in favor.

New Business

USCG Report

- Patrick Tallant reported the Coast Guard moved 6A, 7A, 8, and 14 at the entrance to the Connector.
- Patrick also indicated a steel top buoy near Oliver Reef were bent up pretty bad from a vessel colliding with it. He wanted to make mariners aware of the buoy and also to report any damage to them, so the Coast Guard can make needed repairs quickly.

Corps Report

- No Corps personnel present.
- Ken Willson mentioned that Hyde County and the Ferry Division have been in contact with Bob Keistler and the Corps on a dredge event within the 100ft wide federal Sloop Channel. The Merritt will be dredging Bigfoot Slough. The Ferry Division is having issues in Sloop and Bigfoot that cannot wait for the pipeline dredger to arrive. The Corps anticipates Cottrell arriving in Bigfoot the first week of January. Cottrell would arrive in Hatteras Inlet in

February to dredge Rollinson and to dredge Sloop an additional 100ft to make a 200ft wide channel.

- Ken further stated the Corps has two options in Sloop. To dredge the 100ft wide federal channel in the center and to dredge the additional 100ft that is part of Dare County's permit. They would allow the Miss Katie to dredge the federal portion and cancel the federal option. Steve Coulter clarified that if the Miss Katie dredges the 100ft wide federal channel, the State Shallow Draft Fund will pay for the dredging instead of federal dollars. The 100ft widener will be paid for by the Shallow Draft Fund because that is not a federal channel. Steve stated he would prefer federal dollars be used to dredge and several members of the Waterways Commission agreed.

NCDOT Ferry Division Report

- No Ferry Division personnel present.

Public Comment

- No Public Comment

Old Business

- Ken Willson stated they are in the process of permitting the Rodanthe Emergency Ferry Channel and have held a scoping meeting with the agencies. Subcontractors will be mobilizing to obtain vibracores and survey. The agencies stated dredging can only occur to the depths of connecting waters. With water depths as shallow as 6ft outside the federal channel, additional surveying will need to be performed to find water depths closer to 12ft. CPE staff have been working on the environmental documentation necessary for the permit application. Another note is that if material is placed in the upland disposal area then moved to another location, a mining permit would be necessary. The Waterways Commission expressed the need for the permit as shown by recent weather conditions and road closures.
- Ken further commented that their subcontractors are still waiting for weather windows to perform cultural resource surveys of the Ocean Bar and expand the Connector Channel. As for the Shallowbag Bay dredging that was brought up at last months meeting, Ken will provide a proposal for the permitting costs to relay to the State. Barton Grover commented this was in reference to the State's need to have the Elizabeth II undergo maintenance. The State covered the cost for permitting and dredging during the last event, approximately \$1.9 million. Costs and efforts will depend on what type of dredge and where disposal occurs. Michael Flynn commented the National Park Service established an EA for the Fort Raleigh shoreline stabilization that identified beach compatible material as an alternative. Ken

Willson responded that none of the material dredged during the last event was beach compatible. Another placement area the National Park Service and CPE had identified was filling the historical ditching along the west side of Bodie Island, but that option would need to be looked at carefully due to stormwater drainage from South Nags Head and how efficient it would be due to distance from dredging.

Administrative Business

- Barton Grover commented the Miss Katie dredged the Connector Channel between November 20th and November 25th. Approximately 26,647 cubic yards.
- Barton presented the 2026 calendar. Only note was whether the meeting should be moved to Tuesday in October for the federal holiday on Monday or for it to remain on Monday. Dare County offices are open. Waterways Commission came to a consensus to have every meeting on the second Monday.

Adjournment

- Steve Coulter motioned to adjourn. John Berquist seconded.