



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Wilmington District

Coastal Harbors and Waterways, NC (Shallow Draft Navigation) (O&M)

- **Shallow draft coastal harbors include a subsistence harbor at Silver Lake**



CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: NC 3 and 7

DATE: 23 February 2015

1. AUTHORIZATION:

Rollinson Channel, NC: River and Harbor Acts of 1935, 1945, 1954, and 1962, as amended.

Silver Lake Harbor, NC: River and Harbor Acts of 1930, 1940, 1967 (Section 107) and 1960, as amended.

Waterway Connecting Pamlico Sound to Beaufort Harbor NC: River and Harbor Acts of 1935, 1937, 1945, 1950, 1963, 1960, 1967, 1969 and 1975 (Section 107), as amended.

Shallotte River, NC: River and Harbor Acts of 1913 and 1927, as amended.

Beaufort Harbor, NC: River and Harbor Acts of 1881, 1907, 1925, 1930, 1945, 1950, and Section 107 of the River and Harbor Act of 1960, as amended.

Channel from Pamlico Sound to Rodanthe, NC: River and Harbor Act of 1945, as amended.

Channel from Back Sound to Lookout Bight, NC: River and Harbor Acts of 1937 and 1945, as amended.

2. LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION: The Corps of Engineers has several dozen Federally-authorized shallow draft harbor projects within North Carolina, several of which are maintained on a multi-year dredging frequency. The following projects are those that have significant project user interest:

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Rollinson Channel is utilized by the North Carolina State Ferry Division for subsistence harbor ferry transportation to Ocracoke Island, which is not connected to the mainland by any roads. The project is located just inside Hatteras Inlet, NC. The project consists of a 12-foot deep and 100-foot wide channel from Pamlico Sound to Hatteras Island, a 10-foot deep and 100-foot wide channel from Hatteras Island to Hatteras Inlet, and a 12-foot deep basin varying in width.

Silver Lake Harbor is utilized by the North Carolina State Ferry Division for subsistence harbor ferry transportation to Ocracoke Island. The project is located just inside of Ocracoke Inlet, NC and consists of a 12-foot channel from deep water in Pamlico Sound to, and including an anchorage basin of the same depth in Silver Lake Harbor at Ocracoke, with widths of 150 feet across Big Foot Slough bar and 60 feet in the entrance channel. Silver Lake Harbor on Ocracoke Island, is classified as a subsistence harbor, where supplies and personnel can only access the island via ferry (i.e. no vehicle access).

Waterway Connecting Pamlico Sound to Beaufort Harbor is located in the vicinity of Cedar Island, Cape Lookout and Pamlico Sound. This project consists of a through channel and several shallow draft harbors, which branch off the main through channel. The through channel portion of the project provides a 7-foot deep by 75-foot wide channel which extends from Pamlico Sound, through Core Sound, and terminates at Beaufort Harbor, North Carolina. The harbor portions of the project provide for 6- to 7-foot deep channels with varying widths, which extend from the main through channel to Cedar Island Harbor of Refuge, Atlantic Harbor of Refuge, Sea Level Harbor, Marshallberg Harbor, and Harkers Island Harbor of Refuge.

Shalotte River, NC provides for a 4-foot deep project from the Shalotte Inlet gorge and extends approximately 9 miles within the banks of the Shalotte River. The project terminates at the NC 103 bridge at Shalotte, NC.

Beaufort Harbor, NC is located in the vicinity of Beaufort, NC and connects with three Federal navigation projects: Morehead City Harbor, NC to the south, the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, NC to the north and Waterway Connecting Pamlico Sound and Beaufort Harbor, NC to the east. The project consists of approximately 7.5 miles of the following navigation channels, harbor entrance channels and turning basins: Bulkhead Channel 15-foot deep by 100-feet wide and approximately 1.5 miles in length connecting the Morehead City Harbor, NC project to the Beaufort Docks, located in downtown Beaufort; Gallant's Channel 12-foot deep by 100-feet wide and approximately 1.5 miles in length connecting the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and Bulkhead Channel; Taylor's Creek 12-foot deep by 100-feet wide and approximately 3.2 miles in length connecting Bulkhead and Gallant's Channels to the Waterway Connecting Pamlico Sound and Beaufort Harbor, NC project; Beaufort Docks Turning Basin 12-foot deep by 600-feet long adjacent to the docks at downtown Beaufort, NC; Town Creek Harbor: 15-foot deep by 100-foot wide entrance channel and an associated 12-foot deep and 400-feet by 900-feet wide turning basin; and Morgan Creek Harbor 14-foot deep by 70-foot wide entrance channel and an associated 14-foot deep and 150-feet by 300-feet wide turning basin.

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Channel from Pamlico Sound to Rodanthe, NC is utilized by the North Carolina State Ferry Division for subsistence harbor ferry transportation. The project consists of a channel 6-foot deep by 100-feet wide from Pamlico Sound to a basin 6-foot deep and 80-feet by 100 feet wide at Rodanthe, NC.

Channel from Back Sound to Lookout Bight, NC includes a channel 7-foot deep by 100-feet wide from Back Sound (vicinity of Harker’s Island) through Barden’s Inlet to Lookout Bight.

3. **FY 2014 AND FY 2015 ALLOCATIONS:**

<u>Project Name</u>	FY 2014 Allocations (\$000)	FY 2015 Allocations (\$000)
Rollinson Channel	\$ 697	\$545
Silver Lake Harbor	1,077	297
WW Connecting Pamlico Sound and Beaufort Harbor	359	0
Shalotte River	1	0
Beaufort Harbor	1	0
Channel from Pamlico Sound to Rodanthe	300	0
Channel from Back Sound to Lookout Bight	0	0
Total	\$2,435	\$842

In FY 2015, funds for Rollinson Channel and Silver Lake Harbor are being used to perform hydrographic surveys and minimal maintenance dredging at both projects. For the remaining projects, the state of North Carolina and the Corps executed a five-year multi-project memorandum of agreement in FY 2014 to use state and local funds to perform additional maintenance dredging of many of these coastal harbors and waterways, as needed. This will likely be the primary source of funding to perform maintenance dredging at many of these projects in FY 2015.

4. **FY 2016 BUDGET AMOUNT:**

Rollinson Channel: \$300,000.

Silver Lake Harbor: \$300,000.

Waterway Connecting Pamlico Sound to Beaufort Harbor: \$0.

Shalotte River, NC: \$0.

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Beaufort Harbor, NC: \$0.

Channel from Pamlico Sound to Rodanthe, NC: \$0.

Channel from Back Sound to Lookout Bight, NC: \$0.

5. **ISSUE AND/OR STATUS:** The project users which are adversely impacted by lack of harbor maintenance include:

- North Carolina Ferry System, the second largest ferry system in the nation
- Commercial fishing vessels and recreational vessels
- U.S. Coast Guard search & rescue and Homeland Security operations

Currently the Ferry Division is utilizing a portion of Rollinson Channel and an alternate natural channel which has never been maintained by dredging. The Corps of Engineers can not utilize Federal funds to maintain the alternate channel which the Ferrys are using because it is not Federally authorized channel.

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A regulatory permit would be required if the State Ferry Division determines that they would like to maintain the alternate channel. The permit application process is expected to be complex and to take longer than the ordinary processing time due to the extensive environmental coordination involved. To maintain the channel, the following types of permits would be required: Regulatory Section 404, Regulatory Section 10, NC Division of Water Resources Section 401 -Water Quality Certification, and a NC Division of Coastal Management CAMA Major permit. The methods of dredging and the suitable disposal areas are unclear and could become a substantial obstacle. The Corps of Engineers will continue to work with the Ferry Division, Department of Transportation, and the Department of Natural Resources to explore any viable alternatives.