



# Town of Southern Shores

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Resolution # 2007-08-01

**Resolution urging the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Division, U.S. Department of the Interior, to replace the aging Herbert C. Bonner Bridge over Oregon Inlet with a parallel bridge immediately**

WHEREAS, the Herbert C. Bonner Bridge spanning Oregon Inlet is a critical transportation link to and from Hatteras Island; and,

WHEREAS, the bridge is of vital importance to the quality of life of the residents of Hatteras Island and Dare County; and

WHEREAS, the related issues of public safety, business and commerce, and tourism must be included when considering the importance of a safe and secure structure across Oregon Inlet; and

WHEREAS, one of the primary reasons visitors come to the Outer Banks are our natural, cultural, and historic resources; and

WHEREAS, south of Oregon Inlet is located the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge which is a popular migratory pathway for more than 400 species of birds; the majority of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore – our nation's first national seashore; the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse; the Chicamacomico Lifesaving Station; the Bodie Island Lighthouse; and miles and miles of America's greatest public beaches; and

WHEREAS, more than five million people visit Dare County's Outer Banks each year, annually generating in excess of \$620 million in direct tourism expenditures; and

WHEREAS, 26% of Dare County's tourism related revenues are generated by Hatteras Island visitors, including a majority of the Northern Dare Beaches visitors who, during their stay on the Outer Banks, make a day trip to Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands, via the bridge over Oregon Inlet; and

WHEREAS, the Herbert C. Bonner Bridge has been recently inspected by the North Carolina Department of Transportation and given a Structural Sufficiency Rating of two out of 100 points; and

WHEREAS, the Herbert C. Bonner Bridge has reached the end of its reasonable service life and the North Carolina Department of Transportation has presented two alternative plans to replace the bridge; and

WHEREAS, the Southern Shores Town Council deplors the loss of life caused by the recent collapse of the Interstate 35W Bridge in Minneapolis, Minnesota and has the greatest sympathy for all affected by this tragic event; and

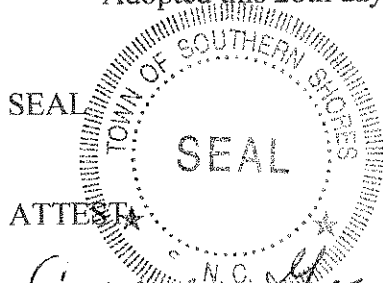
WHEREAS, it is incumbent on all levels of government to protect human safety; and

WHEREAS, continuing to delay construction of the replacement to the Bonner Bridge places public safety, business and commerce, and tourism in our area at potential risk; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Southern Shores has gone on record in support of construction of a bridge parallel to the existing Herbert C. Bonner Bridge and the preservation of the terminal rock groin on the southside of Oregon Inlet and continued fortification of the groin as the chief stabilizing defense of the northernmost end of Hatteras Island;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southern Shores Town Council urges the North Carolina Department of Transportation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and all other involved entities to immediately begin construction on a bridge parallel to the existing Herbert C. Bonner Bridge, maintain the navigational channel through Oregon Inlet, and provide no less than equal access to the entirety of Hatteras Island also known as Pea Island.

Adopted this 28th day of August 2007.



Carrie Gordin  
Carrie Gordin, Town Clerk

Donel C. Smith  
Donel C. Smith  
Mayor