

Next Steps in Climate Adaptation in Nags Head, NC

White, Holly

Town of Nags Head, NC

Coastal hazards like hurricanes, nor'easters and erosion currently affect the Town of Nags Head, and the Town is taking actions to reduce the negative impacts of these hazards on the people who live, work, and play here. Over the past 10 years, the State of North Carolina also has begun to study how sea level rise and climate change may impact our coast in the future. Will the current actions from the Town of Nags Head and its residents to reduce damage from coastal hazards like storm surge be enough to cope with the range of future sea level scenarios? If not, what additional actions can the Town and residents take to be more prepared?

To begin identifying how proactive actions could increase resilience, the Town of Nags Head has partnered with North Carolina Sea Grant to conduct a project that explores how sea level rise and other hazards might impact the Town, its infrastructure, economy, and ability to provide services. In order to consider a broad range of possible options, the Vulnerability, Consequences, and Adaptation Planning Scenarios (VCAPS) process focused on local community knowledge and perspectives on adaptations to potential hazards— including sea level rise through community input opportunities. The actions and outcomes of this VCAPS process will be incorporated in the Town's Comprehensive Planning effort, FOCUS Nags Head, currently being drafted.

A resilient Nags Head means that the Town and its residents:

- Withstands, responds to, and recovers rapidly from disruptions without long-term damage to the economy or environment;
- Requires less government funding to recover, rebuild and redevelop its communities; and
- Sustains the way that natural systems provide ecosystem services that directly or indirectly support human survival and quality of life.