



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

WWW.NCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG

April 10, 2013

TO LEA Superintendents

FROM June St. Clair Atkinson *JSA*

PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND TRANSPORTATION RESPONSE TO MAJOR HURRICANES

June 1 marks the beginning of hurricane season and I am writing to ask the cooperation of the public schools in participating in the response, should our state be faced with a major category 4 or category 5 hurricane. Specifically, coastal North Carolina counties will need assistance in evacuating medically fragile citizens as well as the general population. Attached is a memorandum from Emergency Management Director Mike Sprayberry that should address many questions that you might have.

Specifically, I am asking that your LEA develop a list of Emergency Bus Drivers (EBDs). We understand that during a coastal evacuation, your LEA may still have school in session. Therefore, the number of emergency bus drivers that could be provided by your county will be only a subset of those licensed to drive school or activity buses. As a target, we are suggesting that your list of EBD's consist of at least 10-15% of the number of school buses operated on a daily basis. This list might include substitutes, regular drivers (for whom subs would be used on their regular routes), activity bus drivers or transportation staff.

In addition, I would ask that you consider the number of LEA activity buses that could be made available in a state of emergency. Again, realizing that school might be in session, this should be a realistic number considering that these buses would only be requested under extreme circumstances.

Only three category 5 hurricanes have hit the U.S., dating back to 1935. Hurricane Charley (2004) hit Florida as a category 4 hurricane. Certainly we hope that the evacuation plans would not need to be implemented, but I know you agree that such planning is essential to protecting the citizens of our state.

Transportation Services Section Chief Derek Graham and other staff are participating as our representatives with the Division of Emergency Management. They will be in contact with your transportation staff to flesh out details of your participation, focusing mainly on counties east of and including Interstate 77.

Thank you in advance for your support in this important partnership.

DG/JSA

Attachments

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT

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6301 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6301 | (919) 807-3430 | Fax (919) 807-3445
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER



North Carolina Department of Public Safety

Emergency Management

Pat McCrory, Governor
Kieran J. Shanahan, Secretary

Michael A. Sprayberry, Director

March 27, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Public School Superintendents

FROM: Michael A. Sprayberry, Director *MAS 3-27-13*
N.C. Division of Emergency Management

SUBJECT: Emergency Bus Driver Support

As we near the beginning of the 2013 hurricane season, I respectfully request your assistance in further strengthening our resources here in the State of North Carolina.

We have identified a potential requirement to provide bus transportation to our citizens in coastal North Carolina who do not have their own means to evacuate in the event of a strong hurricane, and school buses from unaffected counties are the most quickly available source to satisfy the requirement. A request from the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management for your support of this requirement would only happen if North Carolina is threatened by a very severe hurricane and no other resources are available.

Hurricanes Katrina and Irene demonstrated to the world what can happen if there is not a plan in place for the use of school buses during a disaster. North Carolina General Statute § 115C-242(6) authorizes the use of school buses during an emergency condition such as an evacuation. The issue is ensuring that the State has enough buses and qualified personnel (CDL PS) to drive the buses. We know that school bus drivers in evacuating counties will likely leave with their families. If it appears that there are not sufficient school bus drivers locally to conduct the evacuation, it will be important to identify resources from other parts of the state.

North Carolina General Statute § 166A requires the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management (NCEM) to plan for all contingencies with the resources that are available. Therefore, as the Director of the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management, I submit to you that we partner together to solve the problem in the following manner:

- Notify all qualified school bus drivers in your school district that, in the event of a regional evacuation operation, the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management, through the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), will request qualified "volunteer" school bus drivers.
- Volunteer Emergency Bus Drivers (EBDs) will then report to a pre-designated rally point established by the school Superintendent. They should report with enough toiletries and clothing to be self-sufficient for 72 hours;

MAILING ADDRESS:
4236 Mail Service Center
Raleigh NC 27699-4236
www.ncem.org



OFFICE LOCATION:
1636 Gold Star Drive
Raleigh, NC 27607-3371
Telephone: (919) 825-2500
Fax: (919) 825-2685

- The EBDs will board a school bus from their home district and report to the requesting county that is evacuating. EBDs will then board evacuating county's buses and evacuate to a shelter with citizens requiring transportation. At this point, the EBDs may remain at the shelter and assist with re-entry operations after the hurricane passes or return to their home district.

Some important points should be made to ensure full understanding:

- All eligible costs (i.e. per diem, salary, overtime, fuel, etc.) are reimbursable as the State of North Carolina is mobilizing EBDs and buses under a state-wide Mutual Aid Agreement;
- Districts should not send so many EBDs (and buses, if required) that it disrupts their operation;
- It is recommended to send as many EBDs with maintenance experience as possible;
- In order to minimize district disruption, try to use Activity Buses whenever possible to fill requests for buses; and
- No EBDs would be sent into an evacuating county during a time of danger; the "window of opportunity" will be small and evacuating counties must evacuate early.

I believe this plan will work; I have found North Carolinians eager to help each other in times of need. We hope that we never have to execute a plan like this, but it is better to be prepared in the event that we do. Your support is critical.

There are some "Storm Surge" maps attached to this memorandum to illustrate what would happen to our coastal counties should they experience a severe hurricane – much of them would be underwater!

I am requesting that you begin planning by reviewing your roster of school bus drivers and buses, and determining (if requested by DPI) how many of each you could provide for emergency operations to the state. Additionally, when reviewing your resources, please annotate any special needs capabilities you are aware of such as buses with wheelchair lift capabilities. Please notify your drivers that they could be given an opportunity to volunteer for this most important mission. Thank you for your assistance with this important mission.

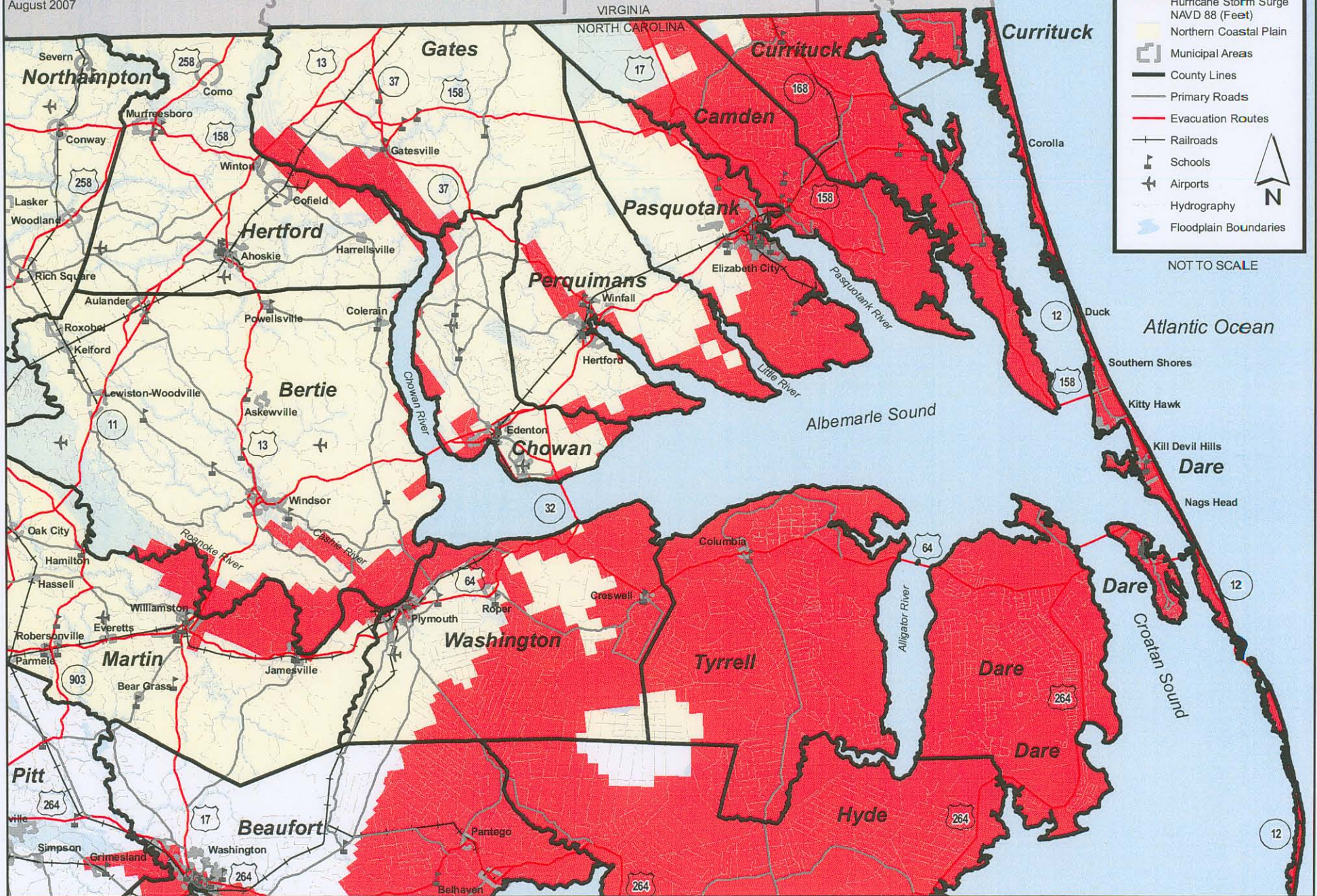
Please address any questions or comments in this matter to Derek Graham, DPI Transportation Services, 919-807-3571, dgraham@dpi.state.nc.us.

cc: Derek Graham, Section Chief, DPI Transportation Services
Public School Transportation Directors
Glenn Wisbey, Logistics Support Manager, NCEM



Prepared by the North Carolina Floodplain Mapping Program
August 2007

Category 5 Hurricane Storm Surge Northern Coastal Plain



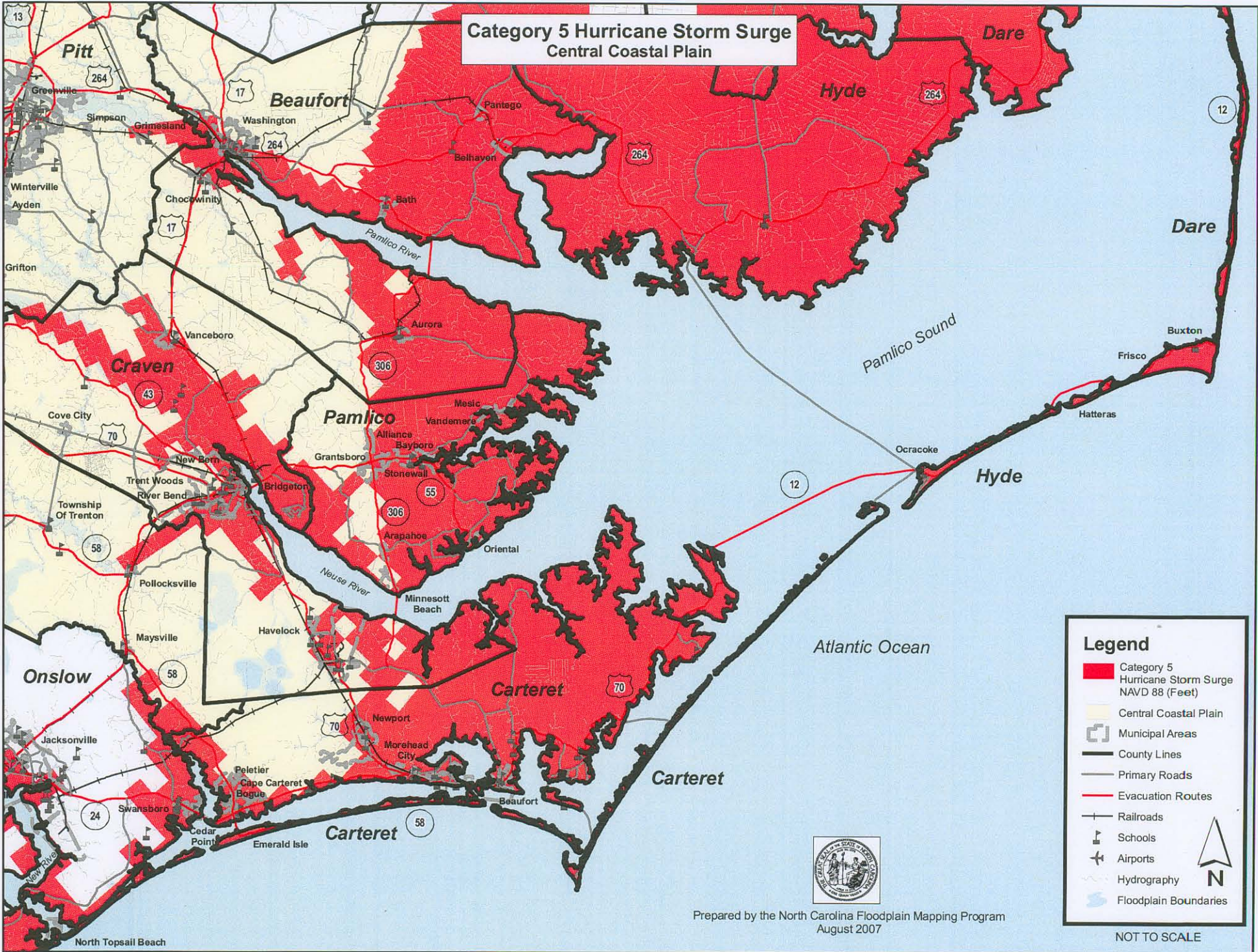
Legend

- Category 5 Hurricane Storm Surge NAVD 88 (Feet)
- Northern Coastal Plain
- Municipal Areas
- County Lines
- Primary Roads
- Evacuation Routes
- Railroads
- Schools
- Airports
- Hydrography
- Floodplain Boundaries

NOT TO SCALE



**Category 5 Hurricane Storm Surge
Central Coastal Plain**



Legend

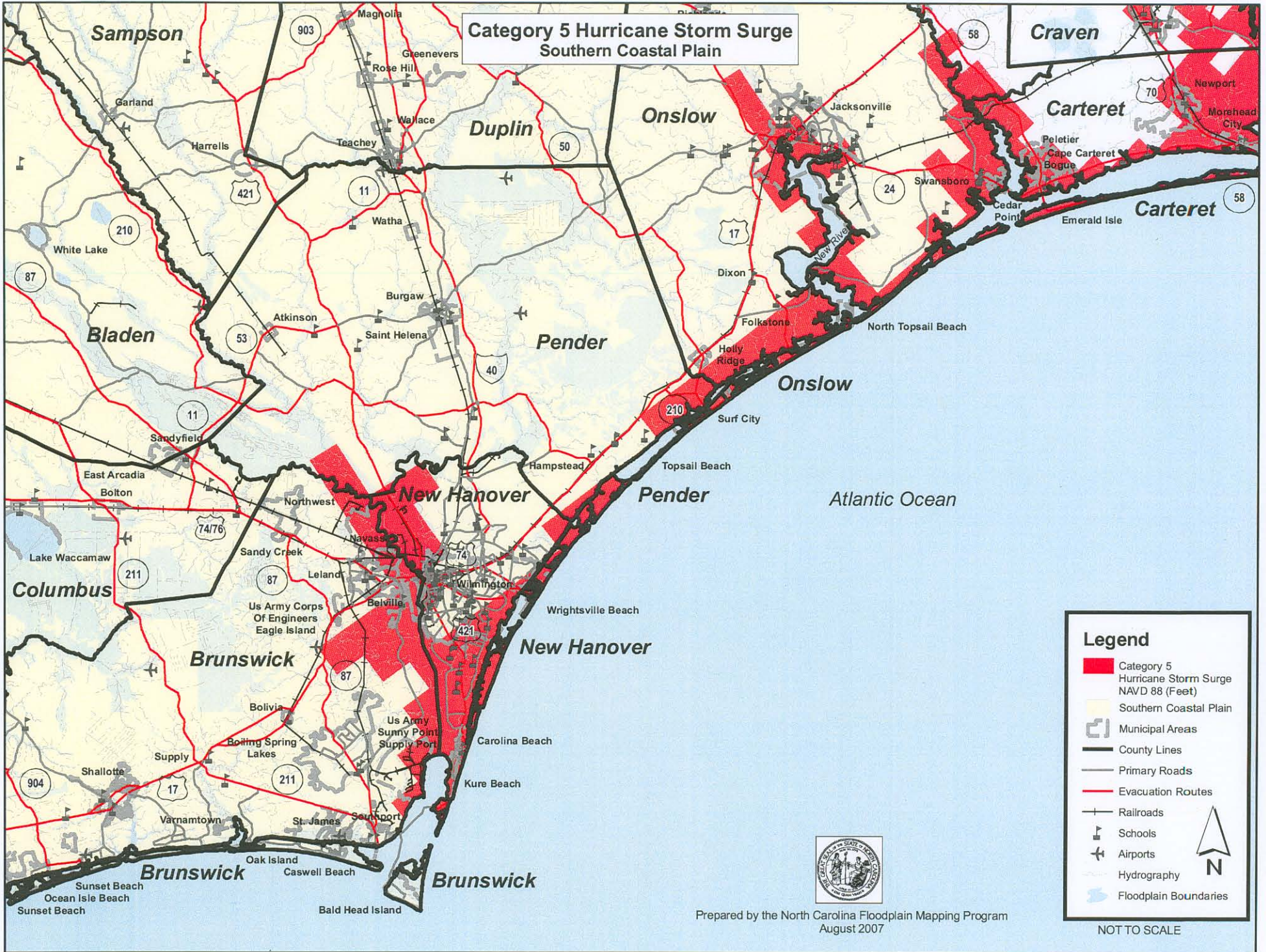
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NOT TO SCALE

**Category 5 Hurricane Storm Surge
Southern Coastal Plain**



Legend

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