Ferry Slip Island
Location: New Hanover County

Total Size: 2.0 ha (7.0 acres)

Site Description: Ferry Slip Island is a man-made, undiked, dredged-material island in the lower Cape Fear River south of Wilmington. The island is entirely dredged sand and is periodically renourished when suitable, beach-quality sand is available. This sand provides excellent habitat for a variety of waterbird species, as well as nesting American Oystercatchers.

Habitats: dredged sand, sparse to moderate vegetation

Land Use: wildlife conservation

Primary Threats: disturbance to birds, erosion, vegetation encroachment, lack of suitable dredged sand available for renourishment.

Protection Status: The site is protected and managed by the National Audubon Society and the NC Wildlife Resources Commission.

Conservation Issues: The availability of sand to maintain the island and early-succession nesting habitats is a concern. There is a growing trend to place all clean, beach-quality sand on area beaches, thus reducing the sand available to renourish this and other critical nesting sites for colonial wading birds and seabirds.

The island is posted and patrolled throughout the nesting season to prevent disturbance to nesting birds. Human disturbance can result in egg or chick loss, nest abandonment, and colony abandonment.

Birds: Ferry Slip supports a large colony of Royal and Sandwich terns and a small colony of Laughing Gulls. The island also supports a significant colony of Brown Pelicans. Research and monitoring projects have contributed significantly to the knowledge of terns and pelicans (Criteria NC5).

Key Bird Species

Criteria		Season	Number	Year	% '01	'97-'01	% '97-'01
2b	Royal Tern	B	1,373 prs.	2001	12.6 %	2,000 prs.	17.4 %
2b	Sandwich Tern	B	901 prs	2001	36.2 %	791 prs.	30.9 %
2a	Brown Pelican	B	384 prs.	2001	8.4 %	331 prs.	7.6 %
3a	Laughing Gull	B	450 prs.	2001	1.4 %	862 prs.	4.2 %
2b	American Oystercatcher	B	11 prs.	2003		11 prs.	--
3ei	waterbirds	B	3,108 prs.	2001			

B=Breeding   FM=Fall Migration   SM=Spring Migration   W=Winter