

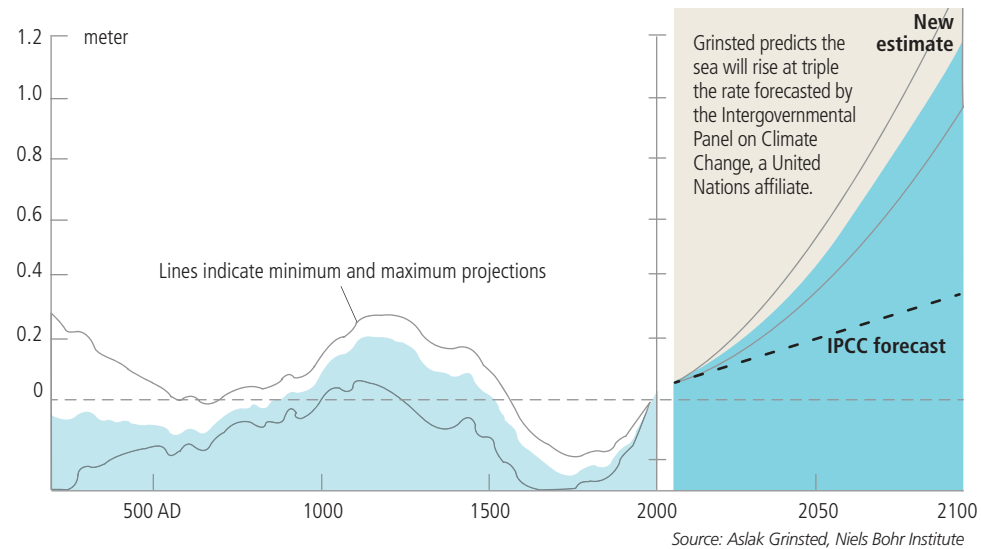
# High water marks

Coastal North Carolina, where population has exploded over the past 40 years, faces a long-term challenge from rising sea level. Blue areas signify land that would be underwater if the sea rises about 39 inches over the next 80 years. The northeastern coast is most vulnerable.



## Sea level since the year 200

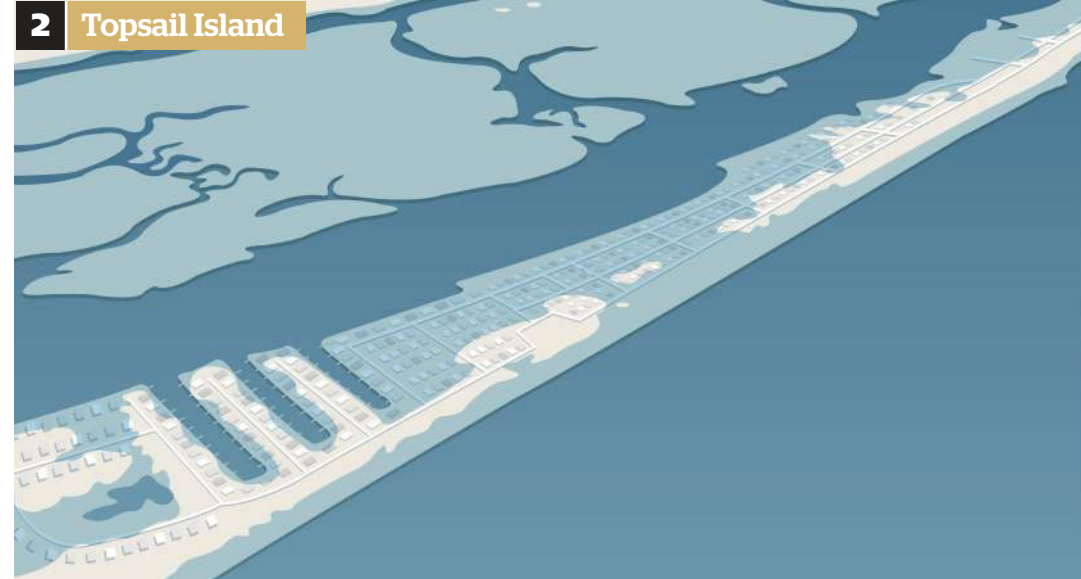
Sea level reached its historical peak around 1150, according to researchers at the University of Copenhagen, then began rising again in 1730. Danish scientist Aslak Grinsted projects an increase of about 1 meter this century.



## 1 Nags Head



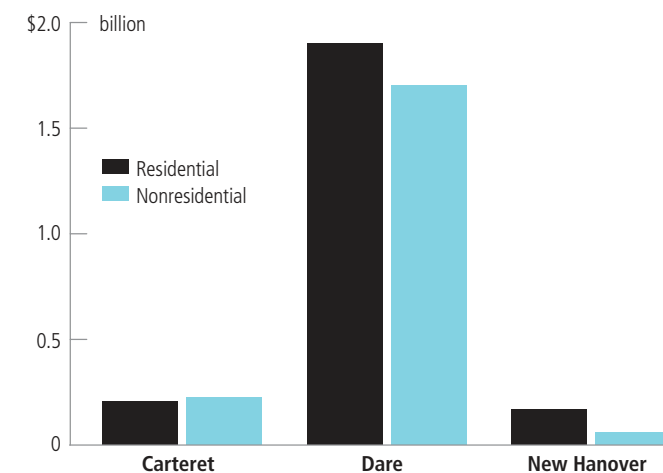
## 2 Topsail Island



These maps show the possible impact of rising sea level at two popular beaches, according to Architecture 2030 Inc., a Santa Fe, N.M.-based nonprofit that promotes reduced greenhouse-gas emissions. The maps are based on remote-sensing technology and U.S. Geological Survey data. Light-blue areas show land expected to be underwater if the sea rises 1 meter.

## Eye of the storm

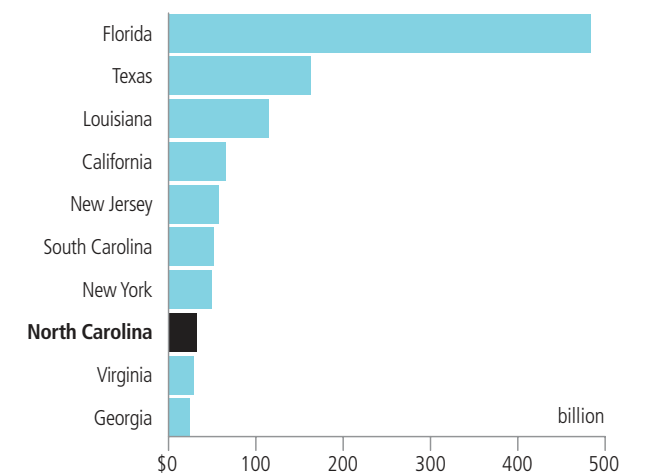
More than \$4 billion of property is at risk of flooding in these three coastal counties, based on a sea-level rise of 31.9 inches by 2080.



Sources: Researchers at UNC Wilmington, Duke, East Carolina and Appalachian State universities

## Safety net

North Carolina ranks eighth in property covered by the National Flood Insurance Program, which has accumulated \$24 billion of debt.



Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency