

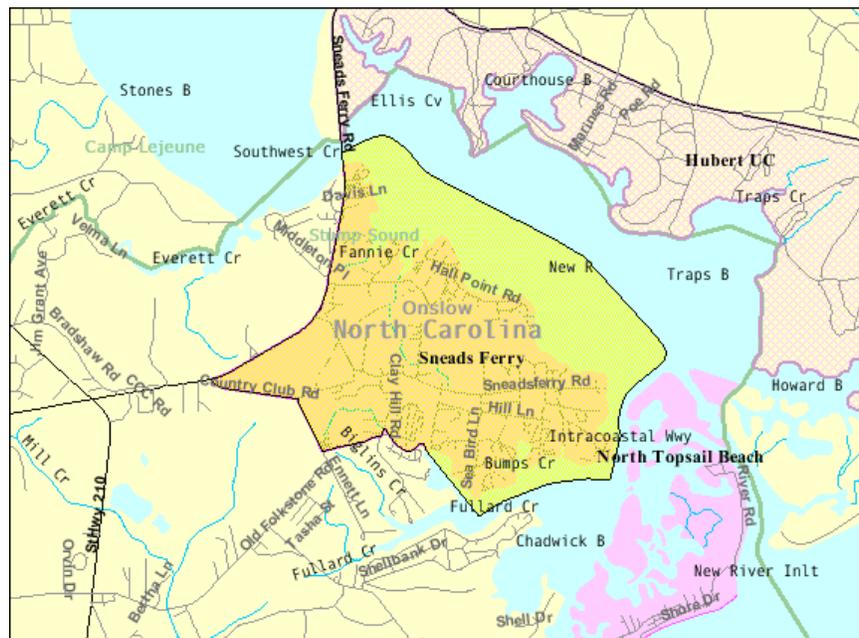
SNEADS FERRY, NC¹

Community Profile²

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Regional orientation

Sneads Ferry (34.33°N, 77.23°W) is located on the northern tip of Topsail Island on the New River in Onslow county North Carolina. Topsail Island is a barrier island 26 miles long located north of Wilmington (USGS 2008). While the map provided for Sneads Ferry corresponds to the US Census boundaries and is used in the Demographics section of this profile, community review comments indicate that much of the fishing activity and associated community occurs outside the Census boundaries.³



Map 1. Location of Sneads Ferry, NC (US Census Bureau 2000)

Historical/Background

In 1728 a ferry was established at the present day town of Sneads Ferry by Edmund Ennett. The ferry was used in the Post Road route, linking Suffolk, VA and Charleston, NC. The proprietor of the ferry was Robert Snead and soon a community developed at the sight, and was named Sneads Ferry (SFCC nd). It is believed the village of Sneads Ferry was first settled in 1775, which would make it the oldest settlement in Onslow County (Topsail Publishing 2008).

¹ These community profiles have been created to serve as port descriptions in Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for fisheries management actions. They also provide baseline information from which to begin research for Social Impact Assessments (SIAs). Further, they provide information relevant to general community impacts for National Standard 8 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and information on minorities and low income populations for Executive Order (E.O.) 12898 on Environmental Justice.

² For purposes of citation please use the following template: “Community Profile of *Town, ST*. Prepared under the auspices of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Fisheries Science Center. For further information contact Lisa.L.Colburn@noaa.gov.”

³ Community Review Comments, John Uhrick, Chairman of the Sneads Ferry Community Council, Sneads Ferry, NC, October 1, 2007

The ferry operated for more than 200 years before being replaced by a bridge in 1939. Today the bridge is a modern high-rise span bridge. Sneads Ferry was also important in the spread of news during the Revolutionary War (SFCC nd). Sneads Ferry became a significant fishing area in the early 1700s. Today, the area is a prosperous coastal area with such attractions as new homes and golf courses (Shreiner 2007). Sneads Ferry lists itself as a “seafood village” (SFCC nd).

Demographics⁴

According to Census 2000 data⁵, Sneads Ferry had a total population of 2,248, up 9.2% from the reported population of 2,042 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this 2000 total, 51.2% were males and 48.8% were females. The median age was 37.2 years and 75.0% of the population was 21 years or older while 18/.9% was 62 or older.

The population structure of Sneads Ferry (Figure 1) shows the proportions of people in age groups from 0-69 are relatively equal, and tapers off for 70+ age groups. There was a spike in population for males in the 20-29 age group which may be attributed to job opportunities in the area (most likely Camp Lejeune Military Reservation).

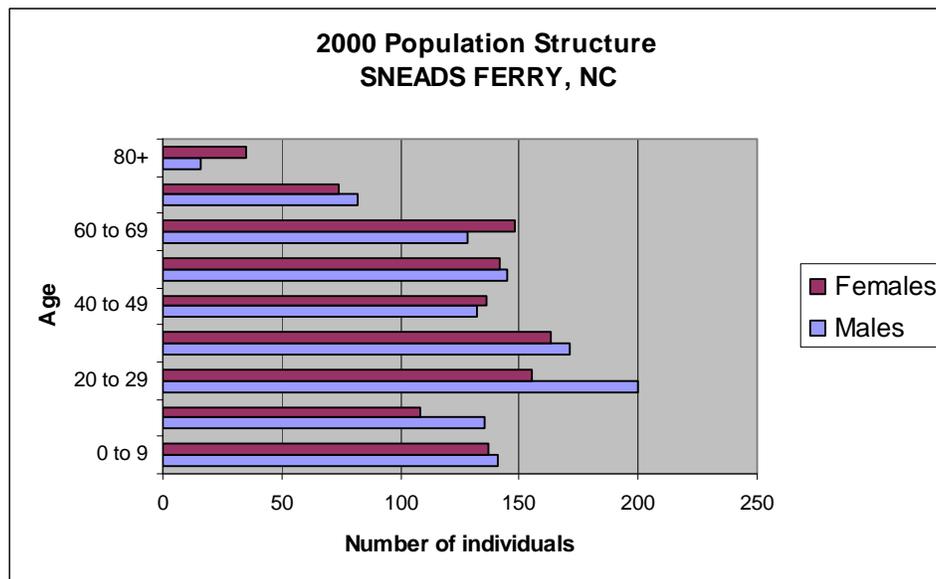


Figure 1. Sneads Ferry’s population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

The majority of the population was white (92.5%), with 5.2% of residents black or African American, 0.9% Asian, 0.5% Native American, and 0.1% Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (Figure 2). Only 1.7% of the population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (Figure 3). Residents linked their backgrounds to a number of different ancestries including: English (15.4%), Irish (11.2%), and German (10.6%). With regard to region of birth, 58.8% were born in North Carolina, 37.7% were born in a different state and 2.7% were born outside of the U.S. (including 0.6% who were not United States citizens).

⁴ While mid-term estimates are available for some larger communities, data from the 2000 Census are the only data universally available for the communities being profiled in the Northeast. Thus for cross-comparability we have used 2000 data even though these data may have changed significantly since 2000 for at least some communities.

⁵ These and all census data, unless otherwise referenced, can be found at U.S. Census: American Factfinder 2000 <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html>; census data used are for Sneads Ferry CDP (cited July 2007)

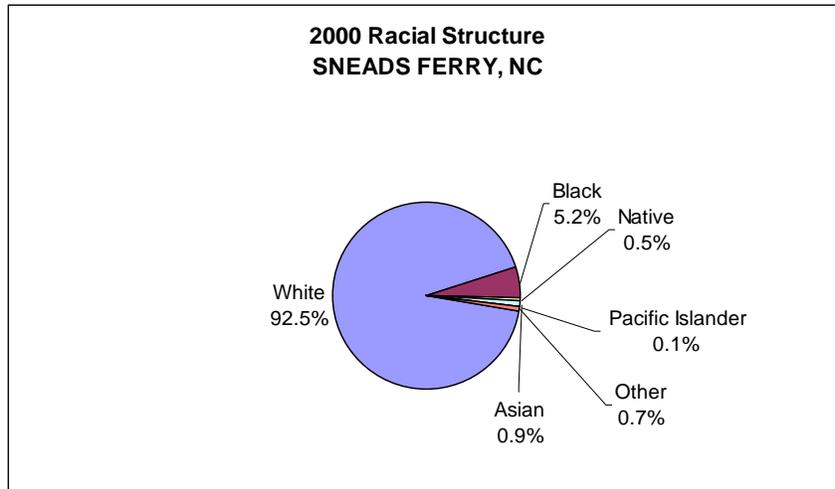


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

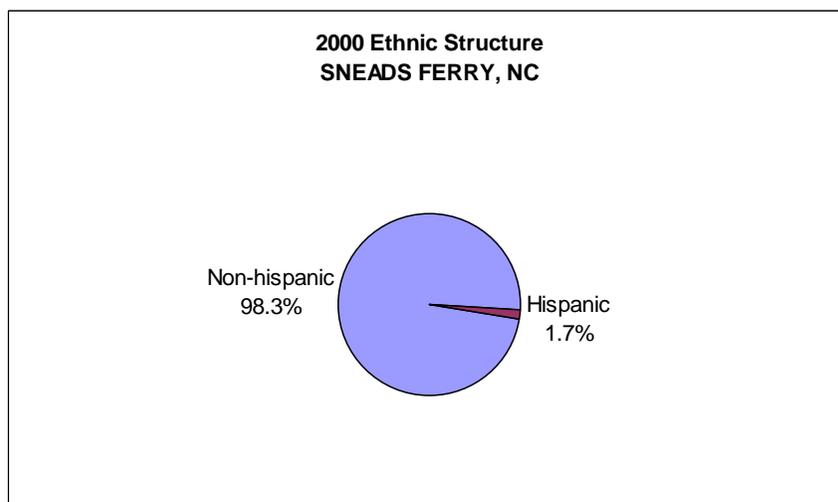


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 95.9% of the population, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 4.1% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, and including 1.2% of the population who spoke English less than “very well” according to the 2000 Census.

Of the population 25 years and over, 81.5% were high school graduates or higher and 12.8% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 7.4% did not reach ninth grade, 11.1% attended some high school but did not graduate, 41.4% completed high school, 23.2% had some college with no degree, 4.1% received an associate’s degree, 7.3% earned a bachelor’s degree, and 5.4% received either a graduate or professional degree.

Although religion percentages are not available through U.S. Census data, according to the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) in 2000, the religion with the highest number of congregations in Onslow County was Southern Baptist Convention with 27 congregations and 16,358 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were Catholic (2 with 6,457 adherents), and The Church of Jesus Christ for Latter-day Saints (3 with 1,189 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was up 6.6% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

There are four churches listed for Sneads Ferry: Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Catholic (SFCC nd).

Issues/Processes

There has been significant discussion recently on whether Sneads Ferry should become incorporated. There has been research on the population, tax rate, and government. There are both supporters and those who oppose the possible change. Supporters report that the change will help to regulate the growth of the area, while the opposition has formed a group calling themselves “No Incorporation Please”, insisting that the change will not benefit the people of the area and only add more taxes (Schreiner 2007).

Shrimp fishermen along the North Carolina coast have suffered because of decreasing prices of shrimp, resulting from an increase of foreign farmed shrimp on the market. North Carolina shrimp fishermen are working to promote their wild-caught shrimp to create a niche market and higher prices for their product (NCSG 2005). The North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries was discussing minimum size limits for the shrimp that could be taken by trawlers, noting that foreign imports have cornered the market on small shrimp (Smith 2005). The Sneads Ferry community website has a large banner encouraging community residents to buy wild caught American shrimp instead of imported, farmed shrimp to support local fishermen (SFCC) nd.

Crab fishermen along North Carolina's eastern coast have also seen an increase in competition from the global market, with an influx of imported crab meat from around the world. Many local Crab processors are unable to compete and are losing profit (NCSG 2002).

Sneads Ferry is becoming a resort town, and locals are feeling pressured to sell their homes to developers as the costs of land increases. The tax value of land has more than doubled here in the last six years. The increasing cost of land will likely take a toll on working waterfront property, although one benefit for fishermen is that the demand for fresh caught seafood will increase along with the population. However, a number of Sneads Ferry's fish houses are currently for sale (Smith 2006).

Cultural attributes

Sneads Ferry celebrated its 37th annual [Shrimp Festival](#) in August 2007. The festival includes activities such as arts and crafts, parades, beauty contests, live music, shrimp peeling and cooking contests, and a beer and wine garden. The main function of the Sneads Ferry Shrimp Festival is a fund raiser for the Community Center. The proceeds go towards the improvement and maintenance of community buildings and parkland (SFCC nd). There also appears to be a Blessing of the Fleet held annually in Sneads Ferry (SFCC nd).

In addition to the Shrimp Festival, several fishing tournaments are sponsored by community groups. In July the Lion's club sponsors the Pin Fishing Tournament (SFCC nd). In August, [Sneads Ferry's Rotary Club](#) sponsors a King Mackerel fishing tournament.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Current Economy

Outside of nearby Jacksonville, and about 15 miles from Sneads Ferry (across the river), are the New River Marine Air Corps Station and Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune. “The base and surrounding community is home to an active duty, family member, retiree and civilian employee population of nearly 150,000 people. The base generates almost \$3 billion in commerce each year” (US Marine Corps nd).

According to the U.S. Census 2000⁶, 59.0% (1,037 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (Figure 4), of which 1.2% were unemployed, 5.6% were in the Armed Forces, and 52.2% were employed.

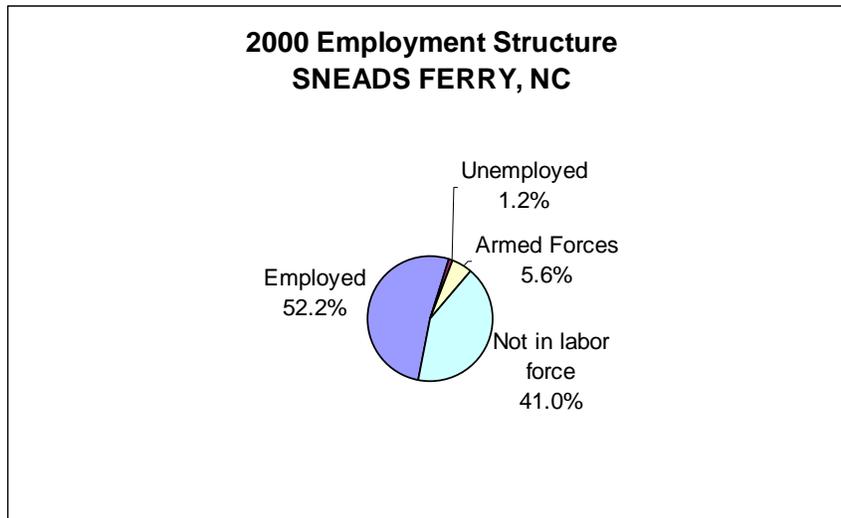


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 77 positions or 8.4% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 139 positions or 15.1% of jobs. Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (14.1%), construction (13.1%), education, health, and social services (12.4%), and retail trade (11.1%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Sneads Ferry was \$37,765 (up 38.7% from \$23,147 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and per capita income was \$16,355. For full-time year round workers, males made approximately 6.8% more per year than females.

The average family in Sneads Ferry consisted of 2.78 persons. With respect to poverty, 11.7% of families (down from 15.4% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 13.5% of individuals earn below the official U.S. Census poverty threshold. This threshold is \$8,794 for individuals and ranges from \$11,239 through \$35,060 for families, depending on number of persons (2-9) (US Census Bureau 2000b). In 2000, 39.7% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Sneads Ferry had a total of 1,335 housing units of which 69.6% were occupied and 51.8% were detached one unit homes. Almost none of the houses (0.4%) were built before 1940. Mobile homes, boats, vans, RVs, etc. accounted for 39.1% of housing units; 94.5% of detached units had between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$110,000. Of vacant housing units, 17.9% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units 28.0% were renter occupied.

⁶ Again, Census data from 2000 are used because they are universally available and offer cross-comparability among communities. Some statistics, particularly median home price, are likely to have changed significantly since 2000.

Government

Sneads Ferry is unincorporated, but discussion resumes on whether to incorporate in the future.⁷

Fishery involvement in government

Information on fishery involvement in government in Sneads Ferry is unavailable through secondary data collection.

Institutional

Fishing associations

The [North Carolina Fisheries Association](#) (NCFA) has been supporting fishing families since 1952, with the goal “to celebrate and preserve commercial fishing families, heritage, and seafood” in North Carolina. This is achieved through lobbying federal, state, and local legislators and through public awareness projects (NCFA nd).

Fishing assistance centers

The Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers (TAA) program has provided business education to shrimpers in the state to assist them in recent changes in the market of shrimp, and also provided some training to shrimpers to exit the business if they chose (NCSG 2005).

Other fishing related organizations

Information on other fishing related organizations in Sneads Ferry is unavailable through secondary data collection.

Physical

Sneads Ferry is located on the New River and Atlantic Ocean at the top of Topsail Island. Rout 172 runs into Sneads Ferry and to the bridge and Route 210 runs along the western side of the town (MapQuest nd). Sneads Ferry is 20 miles from Jacksonville, NC, a town of 72,000 residents (GlobalSecurity.org nd), 48 miles from Wilmington, and 133 miles from Raleigh (MapQuest nd). There are six airports located within 50 miles of Sneads Ferry: The Albert J. Ellis in Jacksonville, Wilmington International in Wilmington, Craven County Regional in New Bern, Holly Ridge/Topsail Island in Holly Ridge, Sky Manor in Wilmington, and Flying Win Porters (USGS 2008). There are two bridges connecting Topsail Island with the mainland; one is a swing bridge located in Surf City, and the other is a high rise bridge connecting Sneads Ferry with North Topsail Beach (SFCC nd).

There are a total of seven fish houses listed for Sneads Ferry: Bowman’s Seafood, Davis Seafood, Everett’s Seafood, Grant’s Oyster House, Larry’s Crab Shack, Millis Seafood, and Sneads Ferry Seafood. These fish houses buy crabs, shrimp, oysters, clams, and fish and sell them to wholesale markets (SFCC nd). Sneads Ferry also has two fishing supply stores: [J&D Crab Pot Co.](#), and [New River Nets](#). Carolina Fisherman’s Supply has gone out of business.⁸ [New River Nets](#) has been in business since 1980 and sells nets and trawls along with shellfishing equipment. There are three marinas listed in Sneads Ferry: New River Marina, Swan Point

⁷ Community Review Comments, John Uhrick, Chairman of the Sneads Ferry Community Council, Sneads Ferry, NC, October 1, 2007

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Marina, and Pirate Cove Marina and Store (SFCC nd). The New River joins the Intracoastal Waterway at Sneads Ferry, providing the community with easy access to ocean fishing.

INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES⁹

Commercial

Sneads Ferry has the most landings in Onslow County as well as a long history of fishing. The mix of both the New River and Atlantic Ocean supports a wide range of species including, shrimp, oysters, fish, and scallops are common catches (Topsail Publishing 2008). The community website lists that Sneads Ferry “annually catches over 385 tons of shrimp, 25 tons of flounder, and approximately 493 tons of other delicious seafood like clams, scallops, oysters, mullet, spots, grouper, soft shell and hard shell crabs, sea bass, etc.” This information is based on statistics from North Carolina Marine Fisheries (SFCC nd).

There were no commercial landings listed for federally managed species in Sneads Ferry from 1997-2006; however, secondary data indicates that landings of state-managed species are significant. Most years in Sneads Ferry apparently had very little fishing; only the years 1998 and 2004-2006 had any landings values listed for home ported vessels, and those were very low in 1998 and 2004. In 2005 however, landings for home ported vessels were worth over \$1 million. There were only between one and three vessels listed as home ported in Sneads Ferry between the years 1997-2002, but by 2005 there were thirteen vessels home ported in Sneads Ferry. The number of vessels with owners living in Sneads Ferry displayed a similar pattern (Table 1). It should be noted that according to community review comments, the data in Table 1 appears to be inaccurate.¹⁰

⁹ In reviewing the commercial landings data several factors need to be kept in mind. 1) While both federal and state landings are included, some states provide more detailed data to NMFS than others. For example, shellfish may not be included or data may be reported only by county and not by port. 2) Some communities did not have individual port codes until more recently. Before individual port codes were assigned, landings from those ports were coded at the county level or as an aggregate of two geographically close small ports. Where landings were coded at the county level they cannot be sorted to individual ports for those earlier years, e.g., prior to 2000. 3) Where aggregated codes were used, those aggregate codes may still exist and be in use alongside the new individual codes. Here the landings which are still assigned to the aggregate port code cannot be sorted into the individual ports, so port level data are only those which used the individual port code. 4) Even when individual port codes exist, especially for small ports, landings may be coded at the county level. Here again it is impossible to disaggregate these to a port level, making the port level landings incomplete. 5) In all these cases, the per port data in this profile may under report the total level of landings to the port, though all landings are accounted for in the overall NMFS database.

¹⁰ Community Review Comments, John Uhrick, Chairman of the Sneads Ferry Community Council, Sneads Ferry, NC, October 1, 2007

Vessels by Year¹¹

Table 1. All columns represent vessel permits or landings value combined between 1997-2006

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# Vessels (owner's city)	Level of fishing home port (\$)	Level of fishing landed port (\$)
1997	1	1	0	0
1998	2	2	CONFIDENTIAL	0
1999	1	1	0	0
2000	2	2	0	0
2001	3	3	0	0
2002	3	3	0	0
2003	4	3	0	0
2004	6	5	8,578	0
2005	13	11	1,091,359	0
2006	12	10	693,159	0

Vessels home ported = No. of permitted vessels with location as homeport

Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence¹²

Level of fishing home port (\$) = Landed value of fisheries associated with home ported vessels

Level of fishing landed port (\$) = Landed value of fisheries landed in location

Data is confidential for ports with fewer than three home ported vessels

Recreational

Recreational fishing is very popular in Sneads Ferry. There are a variety of water sports and types of fishing available including, fishing, sailing, fly fishing, boating, fresh & salt water, deep water and flats fishing (SFCC nd). Charter boats as well as head boats are also available (NC Coast Communications nd). There are three marinas in Sneads Ferry: New River Marina, Swan Point Marina, and Pirates Cove Marina (SFCC nd). There are also two large fishing tournaments held here: the Pin Fishing Tournament (SFCC nd) and the [King Mackerel Tournament](#). There are several recreational fishing piers available to use for a fee located along Topsail Island (SFCC nd). Bait and tackle are available at Steve's Bait and Tackle and Outrigger's Marine, both located in Sneads Ferry (SFCC nd).

Subsistence

Information on subsistence fishing in Sneads Ferry is either unavailable through secondary data collection or the practice does not exist.

FUTURE

Information on the future in Sneads Ferry is unavailable through secondary data collection.

¹¹ Numbers of vessels by owner's city and homeport are as reported by the permit holder on permit application forms. These may not correspond to the port where a vessel lands or even spends the majority of its time when docked.

¹² The Owner-City from the permit files is technically the address at which the owner receives mail concerning their permitted vessels, which could reflect the actual location of residence, the mailing address as distinct from residence, owner business location, or the address at which a subsidiary receives mail about the permits.

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