

## **Emerald Tidings / Island Review – January 21, 2004 Print Edition**

### **Town Receives FEMA Funding to Replace Nourishment Sand Lost in Hurricane Isabel**

Although Emerald Isle was spared the worst of Hurricane Isabel, and the beaches fared relatively well during the storm, the Town did experience some “hot-spot” erosion in the 6 miles of beach nourished in early 2003.

Overall, the Eastern Phase Beach Nourishment Project involved the placement of approximately 1.85 million cubic yards of sand along the 6 miles of beach between the Indian Beach town line and Pinta Drive. On the morning after Isabel made landfall, Town officials toured the beach and identified 8 “hot-spot” areas that appeared to suffer some erosion during the storm. Experienced beach surveyors and engineers from Coastal Science & Engineering (CSE) were called in to perform an immediate post-Isabel beach survey two days later. CSE documented the loss of approximately 128,000 cubic yards of sand, or approximately 7% of the volume placed, from the 6 mile nourishment area. Because Emerald Isle has an engineered beach and an approved beach monitoring and maintenance plan, the Town was eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance funding to replace the sand lost in Isabel.

The Town submitted a request to FEMA to replace this lost sand, and estimated the cost of replacement at approximately \$2.3 million. FEMA approved the Town's request in phases, and an initial check for approximately \$624,000 has already been received for this work. The balance of costs to replace this sand will be reimbursed to the Town after the work has begun.

The Town has submitted a permit modification request to the US Army Corps of Engineers and the NC Division of Coastal Management to perform this work, and is hopeful that the work can be completed prior to the April 2004 deadline for dredging work this winter. The Town is currently exploring the possibility of contracting with the same dredging contractor scheduled to work in Beaufort Inlet this winter in an effort to save expensive dredge mobilization and demobilization costs for FEMA. If the Town is unable to secure a permit modification in time or is unable to negotiate with the Beaufort Inlet dredging contractor, the Town will seek to complete this work during the 2005 winter dredging window, which runs from November 2004 to April 2005. The Town plans to nourish the “hot-spot” areas only, and these areas are primarily located between 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 19<sup>th</sup> Street and between 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Alex Court.

### **UPDATE – Bogue Inlet Channel Project / Western Phase Beach Nourishment**

The Bogue Inlet Channel Erosion Response Project, which is also the source of sand for the Western Phase Beach Nourishment Project, is progressing according to schedule. This project involves the relocation of the main channel in Bogue Inlet approximately 3,000 linear feet west of its current position, the construction of a sand dike to divert channel flows into the new main channel, and the placement of approximately 800,000 cubic yards of beach quality sand on the oceanfront between Pinta Drive and Lands End.

The Town's consultants, Coastal Planning & Engineering (CPE), have completed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and the DEIS has been distributed for official public comment. The official US Army Corps of Engineers public hearing on the DEIS was held on December 8, and all verbal comments were positive for the Town's plans. December 26 was the deadline for official written comments on the DEIS, and these comments will be reviewed and any pertinent concerns will be addressed in the Final EIS, which is scheduled for release in late March 2004. The Town is still on its planned schedule to receive necessary permits by August 2004, with work commencing in November 2004.

**Establish Stable Vegetation on Oceanfront Dunes NOW!**

Oceanfront dune vegetation is the key factor in determining where an oceanfront property owner can build or re-build on an oceanfront lot. The NC Division of Coastal Management relies on the "first line of stable vegetation" from the ocean to determine the required setback for oceanfront structures. The more vegetation closer to the ocean, the more room to build and the greater chance that an oceanfront property owner will be allowed to rebuild in the event of a catastrophe.

The Town's Western Phase Beach Nourishment project is scheduled for construction in November 2004. The NC Division of Coastal Management requires that the "first line of stable vegetation" be surveyed just prior to the construction of a nourishment project, and this surveyed line will be fixed at its most seaward position in perpetuity. The "first line of stable vegetation" will be adjusted landward in the future if erosion removes this vegetation, however, according to the NC Division of Coastal Management's rules, beach nourishment projects can not result in a seaward shift of the permanent "first line of stable vegetation" used to determine setbacks, even if such vegetation occurs naturally.

As a result, it is in the best interest of all oceanfront property owners located between Pinta Drive and Lands End to insure that a good, solid "first line of stable vegetation" is in place when the permanent line is surveyed just prior to the November 2004 start of the Western Phase Beach Nourishment project. Oceanfront property owners should note that this vegetation must be well-rooted, dense, and consistent across the property in order to be considered as the "first line of stable vegetation". Oceanfront property owners in this area are encouraged to plant additional vegetation now and in the next couple of months to provide maximum growth time for new plants prior to the November 2004 date.

### **Recycle! Recycle! Recycle!**

The Town of Emerald Isle has an established curbside recycling program, and all residents, property owners, and visitors are encouraged to participate. Recyclables are collected from the eastern part of town (Black Skimmer Drive to points east) each Thursday, and from the western part of town each Friday (Black Skimmer Drive to points west) all year long.

The Town requires recyclables to be stored in either a standard 40-gallon roll-out container or a standard 18-gallon box container. (Rental units may only utilize the standard 40-gallon roll-out containers.) The 40-gallon roll-out recycling containers are available for sale at Sound Ace Hardware in Emerald Plantation Shopping Center, and the 18-gallon box containers can be purchased at Town Hall. Please note that only standard containers are permitted.

Recyclables collected by the Town include glass (green, brown, and clear), paper (newspapers, magazines, phone books), cans (aluminum, steel, tin), corrugated cardboard, plastic containers, and PET bottles. Recyclable items can be co-mingled in the recycling container. Waste Industries, the Town's solid waste contractor, collects recyclables in a standard garbage truck and transports the recyclables to their Newport facility for manual separation prior to marketing.

On average, the Town of Emerald Isle disposes of approximately 3,200 tons of residential solid waste annually that is disposed of in a sanitary landfill. The Town recycles approximately an additional 500 tons of materials annually, which is a very respectable recycling ratio.