

Emerald Tidings / Island Review – April 21, 2004 Print Edition

Post-Isabel Beach Renourishment Project Completed

The Town's Post-Isabel Beach Renourishment Project has been completed, and has been well-received by Town officials and the public. The project, funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the NC Division of Emergency Management (NCEM), replaced sand lost from the 2003 Eastern Phase Beach Nourishment Project during Hurricane Isabel. The total construction cost for the Post-Isabel renourishment project was \$1.68 million.

The Town's contract with Weeks Marine, Inc. called for the placement of approximately 128,000 cubic yards of sand on the beach between 10th and 20th Streets, and between 25th Street and Carolyn Street, a total distance of approximately 12,000 linear feet. Weeks Marine exceeded the volume requirement, and actually placed in excess of 170,000 cubic yards of new sand on the beach in these areas, at no additional cost to the Town. The quality of the new sand is excellent, and has been well-received by the Town, the regulatory agencies, and the public. The source of the new sand is the US Army Corps of Engineers' Offshore Dredged Materials Disposal Site (ODMDS), where sand dredged from the Morehead City Port channel has been deposited regularly over the past several years.

The project went smoothly, and all dredging work was completed during a one-week period from March 23 – March 30. Weeks Marine achieved very high production rates, the weather cooperated nicely, and the project avoided sea turtles that began returning to the area. The Town hired a company to trawl for and relocate sea turtles from the dredging area, and that company successfully moved 2 sea turtles from harm's way.

In addition to the work funded by FEMA and NCEM, the Town also funded a small dune construction project (1,000 linear feet) in front of Pier Pointe condominiums and the surrounding area. This area had a dune gap when the Eastern Phase Beach Nourishment Project was completed in 2003. The Town provided a total of \$60,000 for this additional work.

Coastal Science & Engineering, the Town's engineering consultants, provided excellent assistance to the Town on this project, and worked diligently to meet tight project deadlines. Weeks Marine (the dredging contractor for the 2003 Eastern Phase Beach Nourishment Project) once again did a terrific job for the Town, and exceeded the Town's expectations. Carteret County Shore Protection Officer Greg "Rudi" Rudolph provided valuable assistance, and the Town also received a great deal of cooperation from the US Army Corps of Engineers and the NC Division of Coastal Management.

Final EIS Released for Bogue Inlet Channel Erosion Response Project / Western Phase Beach Nourishment Project

Coastal Planning & Engineering, the Town's consultant, released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Bogue Inlet Channel Erosion Response Project / Western Phase Beach Nourishment Project on March 26, and the US Army Corps of Engineers began the formal review process soon thereafter. Interested parties have until May 4th to comment on the Final EIS, and can do so by contacting the Wilmington District of the US Army Corps of Engineers (www.saw.usace.army.mil/WETLANDS/authority.html).

The Final EIS identifies "Alternative F" as the Town's preferred alternative to address the channel erosion at The Point. Alternative F involves the relocation of the main channel to a position located approximately 3,500 linear feet west of its current location. The new channel would be centrally located between Emerald Isle and Bear Island (Hammocks Beach State Park), and would divert tidal flows away from The Point area. Alternative F includes the construction of a 200,000

cubic yard dike across a portion of the existing channel, and allocates the remaining 800,000 cubic yards dredged from the new channel for the Western Phase Beach Nourishment Project. The Western Phase Beach Nourishment Project involves the placement of sand along a 4.0 mile reach on the oceanfront between Pinta Drive and Land's End. The Final EIS predicts that the existing channel will fill in naturally over a 4-6 year time frame, and result in the reformation of the long spit at The Point that existed for many years in the 1980s and early 1990s.

The Final EIS does not predict any significant negative environmental impacts associated with Alternative F, and suggests that several positive environmental impacts will occur. One key component of the Final EIS is the draft Waterbird Management Plan, which has been developed as a result of a cooperative effort by the Town, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, and the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. The Waterbird Management Plan designates certain areas of the spit at The Point as protected nesting and foraging areas for important waterbird populations, and includes a monitoring and public education component. The Waterbird Management Plan also preserves adequate pedestrian and vehicular access to the spit, which is a key goal for the Town. The Town looks forward to re-opening the public accesses that lead to the spit so that our residents, property owners, and visitors can enjoy this beautiful and unique natural area.

The project remains on schedule, and the Town hopes to secure all necessary permits for the project by August 2004. The bid process is expected to occur in September / October, and construction is expected to begin in November 2004. The project is expected to take approximately 3 months to complete.

Phase I of Coast Guard Road Flood Water Project Moving Along

Moffatt & Nichol, the Town's engineering consultants, are currently completing the detailed design and plans and specifications for Phase I of this project. The Town expects to take bids for construction of Phase I in May / June, and expects to award a construction contract in June.

Phase I involves the installation of subsurface groundwater pumps at 3 locations and associated underground piping to convey pumped water to the Emerald Isle Woods park site. The 3 pumps will be installed on Fawn Drive, Deer Horn Drive, and Conch Court, and will pump groundwater from these areas to an upland area at Emerald Isle Woods. The installation of these pumps is expected to provide adequate ground storage capacity for significant rainfall events so that flooding in these areas is either prevented or persists for only a short duration. These areas have been plagued by flooding for the past several years, and Phase I of this project should provide much needed relief for these areas.

Phase I will serve as an important real-world test of the effectiveness of this system, and will be duplicated or modified for future phases (additional pump locations) of the overall project.

Inspections Tip

Homeowner's associations, management companies, and private homeowners: the Emerald Isle Planning and Inspections Department reminds you that a building permit is required for any structural work (regardless of project cost) and for any other building work (for example, new siding, replacement windows, deck repairs, and other improvements) when the project cost exceeds \$ 5,000. The NC Residential Building Code includes these requirements to insure that building projects are completed in a safe and effective manner, and are established to protect your interests. To begin the permit application process, or learn more about building code requirements, please contact the Planning and Inspections Department at 252-354-3338.