

Town of Emerald Isle

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Emerald Tidings / Island Review – October 19, 2005 Print Edition

The Point Survives Hurricane Ophelia; New Bogue Inlet Channel Remains Intact But Coast Guard Channel Re-Opens

Despite overwash across the sandbags and flooding on Bogue Court, the sandbags protecting homes and infrastructure at The Point performed well and there was no significant damage at The Point. Hurricane Ophelia appears to have enhanced the naturally accreting spit in front of the sandbags, depositing additional sand and growing the spit slightly westward. US Army Corps of Engineers surveys of the new Bogue Inlet channel reveal that the new channel is still intact and continues to function as intended, however, some shoaling has occurred near Dudley Island. The Town is hopeful that the Corps of Engineers will be able to perform maintenance dredging in this area in the near future.

There is new concern about the opening of the Coast Guard channel into Bogue Inlet. The Coast Guard channel had been closed to Bogue Inlet for more than 20 years, but slowly migrated out to Bogue Inlet over the past 2 years until Hurricane Ophelia completely re-opened the Coast Guard channel. The Coast Guard channel has been open on several occasions in the past, and its historical alignment has been a due-west flow toward the middle of the inlet and the location of the new channel. This historical alignment has typically promoted the development of the sand spit that the Town's project was intended to promote, and the Town is hopeful that the Coast Guard channel will in fact assume its historical alignment. The worst-case scenario would be for the Coast Guard channel to assume a dominant role and utilize the old Bogue Inlet channel adjacent to The Point. Historical photographic analysis does not suggest that this will be the case, but there is much uncertainty about the prognosis for the Coast Guard channel.



Bogue Inlet - 1982

The Town continues to monitor the situation at The Point, and remains encouraged by the accretion of the historical spit of sand at The Point. The Town's coastal scientists predicted a 4 - 6 year timeframe for the filling of the old channel and complete accretion of the historical spit to occur, and we remain hopeful that this will occur. In the meantime, the Town is working with the US Army Corps of Engineers and the NC Division of Coastal Management to place approximately 40,000 – 50,000 cubic yards of AIWW spoils in front of the sandbags to help expedite the natural accretion. If funded by the US Congress and permitted by the NC Division of Coastal Management, both of which have very good chances, this project would be completed this winter as part of the normal AIWW maintenance dredging.

Beach Nourishment Projects Prevent Damage from Hurricane Ophelia; Some Beach Erosion Documented in Emerald Isle

Hurricane Ophelia pounded Emerald Isle for more than 24 hours, and heavy wave action continued through many high tide cycles. Despite these conditions, the Town was fortunate that there were no instances of ocean overwash reported along the beach strand, there was no wave-induced structural damage, and dune erosion was not as widespread as the Town has experienced in previous storms. This good fortune is attributed to the completion of the Town's 3 beach nourishment projects since 2003. Without having completed these nourishment projects, it is likely that the eastern end of Town would have experienced major overwash and significant structural damage, and that significant dune erosion would have occurred along the western beaches, possibly including overwash in the Deer Horn / Sea Dunes / Ocean Oaks areas. The presence of the wider beaches served as a "shock absorber" for this heavy wave action and helped to protect structures, infrastructure, and the dune ridges.

While the Town was fortunate to avoid oceanfront damage, the Town did experience beach erosion from Ophelia. The Town's coastal surveyors arrived on scene on the day after Ophelia, and documented the loss of approximately 570,000 cubic yards of sand from the beach throughout Town, with the areas experiencing the most losses in the numbered streets, the central areas of Town, and the Deer Horn / Sea Dunes / Ocean Oaks areas. The Town will be seeking FEMA assistance to replace this sand in order to restore the same level of storm protection for the next

storm that impacts Emerald Isle. The loss of 570,000 cubic yards represents approximately 22% of the total nourishment volume placed on the beach since 2003.

Town's Public Sound Access Facilities Damaged by Hurricane Ophelia

The Town of Emerald Isle suffered significant damage to 7 public sound access facilities on Bogue Sound as a result of Hurricane Ophelia. The Town's public piers at Cape Emerald (adjacent to Emerald Isle Woods), Cedar Street Park, and Bluewater Drive were all destroyed, and public walkways to the sound at Lee Street, Ridge Road, Piney Street, and 24th Street received significant damage, thereby preventing the public from accessing the water at these locations.

The total estimated cost to replace and/or repair these facilities is approximately \$140,000. These facilities were heavily used by the public in these areas, and the Town hopes to return them to public use as soon as possible. The Town will be seeking FEMA assistance for these facilities, and we are hopeful that such assistance will be granted.

Air Conditioning Units Being Installed in the Community Center Gymnasium

Contractors are in the process of installing air conditioning units in the Community Center gymnasium, and this work is expected to be complete by the end of October. The completion of this project comes after numerous requests from our residents, and an appropriation by the Board of Commissioners in the FY 05-06 Town budget this past June. The total cost of the project is approximately \$29,000, and the work is being completed by Seaside Heating and Cooling from Newport, NC. We look forward to providing a more comfortable environment for people using the Community Center gymnasium in the future.

Town of Emerald Isle and US Coast Guard Station – Emerald Isle Team Up to Help Hurricane Katrina Victims

Town of Emerald Isle employees and the officers stationed at US Coast Guard Station – Emerald Isle teamed up on September 9 to conduct a Hurricane Katrina benefit car wash. The event was held at the Emerald Isle Community Center, and raised over \$7,000 for the victims of Hurricane Katrina in only 7 hours. A big thank you goes out to everyone who participated and our residents and visitors who made donations to the cause!

Emerald Isle Bike Rally A Big Success

The Emerald Isle Bike Rally was held from September 8 – 11, and raised a total of \$6,000 for the Emerald Isle Fire Department and Emerald Isle EMS squad. Funds will be used for needed equipment for both departments, including the purchase of an electronic accountability system to assist in the location of injured or trapped firefighters in a structure fire.

Event organizers recently presented these funds to local leaders at the Emerald Isle Fire Station. Pictured below are: Wade Blackford (Bushwackers Restaurant), Joe Quigley (Emerald Isle EMS), Mayor Art Schools, Fire Chief Bill Walker, Joe Matthews (Emerald Isle Bike Rally coordinator), and Pat and Mike Haut (Emerald Club). Other event photos are located at www.emeraldislebikeweekend.com.



The Emerald Isle Fire Department and Emerald Isle EMS greatly appreciate the contributions of the Emerald Isle bikers. This is the second year in a row the event has generated significant donations for emergency services, and we welcome the bikers back in 2006.