

2024 Accomplishments

State Goals with Accomplishments

- A. Advocate for funding for both the Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund and the Shallow Draft Inlet Dredging Fund to benefit local community projects.
 - a. These funds continue to support Topsail Island projects as well as other coastal communities. Topsail Beach (Shallow Draft), Surf City (Shallow Draft) and N. Topsail Beach (Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation) were awarded funds for beach nourishment in 2024.
 - b. New rule proposed by DWR removed USACE rule exemption from the Shallow Draft Fund
- B. Advocate for 3-5 years of funding for Vitex removal in dunes and beach grass replanting
 - a. The island towns were awarded a grant from the Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund for island-wide removal of *Vitex* in the dune system.
- C. Protect reserve for Surf City Federal 50-Year Project
 - a. The current state match will continue to be held in reserve until final costs have been determined for the Surf City project so that additional local costs can be covered.
- D. Advocate for Shellfish lease management controls that provides public access to state waters
 - a. All three island towns and both counties passed resolutions for or letters to request a legislative moratorium on new shellfish leases in Onslow and Pender Counties.
- E. Work to keep home insurance rates at an affordable cost
 - a. A presentation was made at a TISPC meeting by an insurance advocate to support reasonable rates resulting in towns writing letters in support to the Insurance Commissioner.
- F. Work to pass state legislation to ban and to remove derelict vessels as well as use of non-encapsulated polystyrene in piers and docks throughout our waterways
 - a. Effort in progress to gain state funding for removal of abandon vessels
 - b. A state law (H600) now prohibits the use of non-encapsulated polystyrene effective 1/1/25.
- G. Continue to advocate for funding addressing island-wide resiliency projects
 - a. Both Surf City and N. Topsail Beach received resiliency grants for stormwater mitigation.
- H. Work to change state funding and local financing guidelines for terminal groins
 - a. The legislature approved increasing the number of experimental terminal groins from six to seven but funding continues to be unsupported
- I. Request state support for the non-Federal Owners obligation under the USACE Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies Fund (PL 84-99) following storm damage
 - a. No progress this year.

Federal Goals with Accomplishments

- A. Obtain legislation to allow the continued use of sand from the New Topsail Inlet and New River Inlet CBRA zones for non-CBRA zone beach nourishment when federal funds are involved
 - a. Consistent with our advocacy, Representative Rouzer introduced a bill in 2023 (H.R. 524) that became law to address this issue long-term for certain Corps-related projects.
- B. Continue to pursue legislation to amend the NTB CBRA Map Unit L06
 - a. Major progress was made last year to remove developed areas of North Topsail Beach from CBRA and continued this year. At Congressman Murphy's invitation representatives from US Fish and Wildlife visited North Topsail Beach this summer to see firsthand our request. H.R. 2437 introduced by Representatives Murphy and Rouzer would remove certain developed areas of North Topsail Beach from Unit L06 that were served by a full complement of infrastructure at the time that Unit L06 was created in 1982. -The bill passed the House Natural Resources Committee Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries last November (2023), but awaits Congressional Budget Office analysis to determine the financial impact on the federal government. House and Senate approval may occur by the end of the year.
 - b. A minor correction to the Map Unit L06 to remove approx. 2.5 acres from the CBRS in the Barton Bay Yacht Club was considered by both the House Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee so that it could be included in both House and Senate bills for minor corrections to CBRA map units. The overall legislation to make minor corrections to multiple map units stalled in Congress.
- C. Continue to support the 50-yr Surf City Coastal Storm Risk Management Project
 - a. Work continues with the General Re-evaluation Report (GRR) to determine the financial merits of the project after N. Topsail Beach withdrew from the joint project. Town officials are optimistic that sand will be pumped starting in December 2025.
- D. Develop an island-wide consistency with one FEMA team to assist towns in dealing with disaster recovery efforts and to improve knowledge of local coastal conditions
 - a. TISPC met (by video conference) with FEMA Region 4 on April 15 to discuss several critical issues related to disaster recover coordination and the NFIP. Of particular note, FEMA Region 4 was receptive to TISPC's request to have a single post-disaster FEMA representative (PDMG) who works collaboratively with all three Topsail Island Towns instead of separate representatives for each Town. FEMA Region 4 advised the Towns to make this request with the Infrastructure Branch Director at the time of the disaster, who is in charge of setting up PDMG assignments. The Towns may contact Andrew Romer with FEMA Region 4 if they have any issues with their request to the Infrastructure Branch Director
- E. Advocate to maintain funding levels for the Army Corps of Engineers in annual appropriations

a. On-going

- F. Notify TISPC of pending legislation and regulations that impacts Topsail Island
- a. Continued to monitor status of Rufa Red Knot designation for the island as a critical habitat.
- G. Advocate to promote Community Rating System discounts while working to support the Federal Flood Insurance Program with emphasis based on fairness of historical claims
- a. No progress to report. [do we need to keep this 'accomplishment?']

Local Commission Goals and Initiatives

- A. Promote adoption of the 'Beach Clean' initiative by businesses and educate public to its goals
- a. This initiative was adopted by businesses to promote effort as an important part of tourism.
 - b. Topsail Island Chamber of Commerce assisted with the placement of the 'Leave No Trace' beach clean logo in plastic display stands in several hundred vacation rentals on the island.
- B. Promote a public Vitex education and eradication program for Topsail Island
- a. A CSDM grant of \$690 thousand dollars was awarded to the three towns.
 - b. An Interlocal agreement was signed by the three towns.
 - c. A website is under development for Vitex public education.
- C. Work to increase understanding and cooperation between TISPC and environmental groups locally as well as regionally
- a. TISPC has cooperated with the NCCF on several projects from living shorelines, a non-encapsulated foam ban in docks and piers, to bans on abandonment of vessels; several initiatives have become state law.
 - b. Network through NC BIWA and other groups to promote projects that complement beach nourishment and Coastal Resiliency. Representatives of each Municipality and TISPC attended and participated in semi-annual meetings and reported out to local constituencies.
- D. Move to use of mats versus permanent structures over new dune systems
- a. Topsail Beach has been successful in the use of beach mats and North Topsail Beach has CAMA approval for one at a public-parking handicap access.
 - b. We are encouraged that the CRC is considering use of beach mats at dune crossovers without need for a special permit for either public or private crossovers.
- E. Stay abreast of studies on sea-level rise particularly as it relates to coastal and sound-side flooding then integrate into state and federal goals as appropriate
- a. The latest prediction indicates a 1-foot rise by 2050, so state and federal resources will be needed.

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- F. Understand and monitor CRC regulations and proposed rulemaking for integration into state and federal goals as appropriate
 - a. Committee members attend CRAC and CRC meetings to keep abreast of proposed changes and how they will impact Topsail Island.
 - G. Be involved with efforts to find solutions for the disposal of non-federal dredge materials
 - a. Be aware of these efforts as this continues to be an issue for all coastal areas.