



TO: TOPSAIL ISLAND SHORELINE PROTECTION COMMISSION

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SUBJECT: FEBRUARY MONTHLY REPORT AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 2026

The February Monthly Report and Legislative Update provides information on the following:

- **Advocacy Update**
 - Surf City CSRM Beach Renourishment Project
 - North Topsail Beach CBRA Mapping Issue
 - Washington Advocacy Trip Planning for 2026
- **Washington News**
 - Congress Ends Partial Government Shutdown Following Passage of Remaining FY 2026 Spending Bills
 - FEMA Announces Additional \$116M for North Carolina
 - Senate EPW Hearing Provides Insight into Future of Permitting Reform Efforts

Advocacy Update

Surf City CSRM Beach Renourishment Project

We have continued our efforts to work with the Army Corps of Engineers to secure approval for the Surf City CSRM renourishment project. In late January, we received an update that the complete package had been reviewed and sent to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review. This is the last step in the process. OMB has stated that it needs time for review, which may take several weeks, and has indicated it may be the end of April before they complete their review. Should any updates arise in the approval process, our team is ready to promptly and fully assist the Corps in answering any questions from OMB.

North Topsail Beach CBRA Mapping Issue

As Congress has resumed legislative work at the beginning of the new year, we have continued to work with the delegation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and committee staff to ensure H.R. 1885/S. 1724 remains a top priority. On February 5, we received technical assistance on the legislation from U.S. Fish and Wildlife, which we shared with the Commission and North Topsail Beach. We are encouraged by the feedback from U.S. Fish and Wildlife and will continue to work with the delegation and committee staff to advance this legislation. We will update the Commission as developments arise.

Washington Advocacy Trip Planning for 2026

We look forward to welcoming the Topsail Island Shoreline Protection Commission to Washington, D.C., for the 2026 advocacy trip. We have identified Monday, April 21, through Wednesday, April 23, as dates for meetings with your Congressional delegation, relevant Congressional Committees, and federal agencies. We will keep the Commission updated over the coming months as we confirm meetings and prepare meeting documents.

Washington News

Congress Ends Partial Government Shutdown Following Passage of Remaining FY 2026 Spending Bills

Congress returned to Washington on Monday, February 2, facing a partial federal government shutdown that began on Saturday, January 31. By midweek, lawmakers ended the three-day shutdown after the House passed and President Donald Trump signed into law the Senate-amended Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026 (H.R. 7148), which funds the remaining federal agencies for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026.

House leaders worked to align their version of the spending package with the Senate-passed plan, which had removed the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding bill from the broader measure following the Jan. 24 fatal shooting of a Minneapolis man by federal immigration agents. The Senate proposal advanced five full-year appropriations bills: Defense, Financial Services–General Government, Labor–HHS–Education, National Security–State, and Transportation–HUD, providing funding through September 30, 2026, along with a two-week continuing resolution (CR) for DHS funding through February 13.

Passage of the compromise package in the House followed days of tense negotiations within and between both parties. House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) and Senate Democratic leadership, in consultation with the White House, struck an agreement on the limited DHS CR, despite initial opposition from House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-N.Y.) and Homeland Security Committee Ranking Member Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.). Several prominent Democrats, including Reps. Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and Jim Clyburn (D-S.C.) publicly urged their caucus to support the package to swiftly reopen the government.

For Republicans, securing sufficient votes proved challenging amid opposition from some members seeking inclusion of additional border security provisions and the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act (H.R. 22). Nonetheless, after last-minute negotiations and procedural votes in the Rules Committee, the package advanced to the floor, where it passed with bipartisan support late Tuesday.

With President Trump’s signature on Wednesday, February 4, federal agencies impacted by the lapse in appropriations resumed normal operations, marking the official end of the short-lived partial shutdown. However, the deal leaves out the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which is funded by a short CR only through February 13, setting up a new “funding cliff” and likely another partial shutdown. If no agreement is reached by the February 13 deadline, DHS agencies such as FEMA, TSA, the Coast Guard,

and CISA could face a shutdown or another short-term funding patch, with particular concern about FEMA's disaster recovery funding. Meanwhile, ICE will continue to be funded under the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act*, which Congress approved last year.

Lawmakers will now turn their focus toward the FY 2027 budget and appropriations process, with initial discussions expected to begin in the coming weeks.

FEMA Announces Additional \$116M for North Carolina

On January 14, FEMA [announced more than \\$116 million](#) in federal funding to support the state of North Carolina's recovery from Tropical Storm Helene and help prevent future disaster damage across the state.

Of the approved funds, more than \$72 million will go to rebuilding or restoring critical infrastructure, clearing debris from public roads, and repairing roads and bridges damaged by Tropical Storm Helene. An additional \$44.6 million will support hazard mitigation investments to protect communities from future flooding and severe weather.

Prior to this announcement, FEMA provided more than \$1 billion to North Carolina for recovery efforts. FEMA has also paid more than \$549 million in grants to survivors to help them recover directly. The full press release can be read on [FEMA.gov](#).

DC Circuit Court Denies EPA Request to Vacate Biden-Era Limits for PFAS

A D.C. Circuit appellate motions panel has denied the Trump Administration's request to immediately vacate four PFAS limits in the Biden-era drinking water rule, keeping all six standards in place while litigation proceeds. The court said the legal merits for vacating the standards were not clear enough to justify early action, dealing a setback to EPA's effort to quickly roll back parts of the rule it claims were procedurally flawed. As a result, states and water utilities must continue preparing to meet existing monitoring and compliance timelines, even as uncertainty persists over the rule's ultimate fate.

Senate EPW Hearing Provides Insight into Future of Permitting Reform Efforts

On January 28, the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee held a hearing that highlighted broad bipartisan agreement that federal permitting reform is urgently needed to meet rising electricity demand and accelerate infrastructure development. However, top Democrats, led by EPW Ranking Member Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), are still boycotting formal negotiations until the Trump Administration reverses actions that restrict federal support for renewable energy projects, including halting offshore wind construction. Whitehouse framed the dispute as executive overreach rather than a partisan fight and urged industry to push the Administration toward a technology-neutral approach.

Witnesses from business, labor, fossil fuel, and renewable energy groups all supported permitting legislation but stressed the need for "permitting certainty," warning that projects should not be shut down for political reasons after approvals are granted. Lawmakers also discussed House-passed permitting bills, including the SPEED Act, PERMIT Act, and ePermit Act, as well as the importance of transmission reform

and workforce stability. Despite tensions over the treatment of renewable and fossil fuels, Senators expressed cautious optimism that bipartisan progress remains possible.

ND:4910-2072-0015, v. 1