



TO: TOPSAIL ISLAND SHORELINE PROTECTION COMMISSION

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SUBJECT: APRIL & MAY JOINT MONTHLY REPORT AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

DATE: MAY 21, 2026

The April and May Joint Monthly Report and Legislative Update provides information on the following:

- **Advocacy Update**
 - 2026 Washington D.C. Advocacy Trip
 - Surf City CSRM Renourishment Project
 - North Topsail Beach CBRA Mapping Issue
 - FEMA Review Council Releases Final Report
- **Washington News**
 - Congress Ends Record-Breaking 76-Day DHS Shutdown
 - Republicans Divided on a Third Budget Bill
 - Army Corps Seeks Section 7001 Proposals for 2027 Water Resources Development Act
 - House ESA Overhaul Stalls Amid Republican Divisions
 - EPA Moves to Roll Back PFAS Drinking Water Standards
 - House Passes Farm Bill, Strips Pesticide Liability Shield

Advocacy Update

2026 Washington D.C. Advocacy Trip

We had the pleasure of holding a series of successful meetings in Washington, D.C., on April 21 and 22 as part of the Commission's annual advocacy visit. The Commission traveled to Washington to attend the meetings with the Ward and Smith and TFG team and met with the following:

- Representative David Rouzer
- Representative Greg Murphy, M.D.
- The Office of Senator Ted Budd
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters
- Brian Nesvik, Director U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- The Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works
- The White House Office of Management and Budget

We discussed the following priorities:

- Secure Passage of H.R. 1885 to Amend the Boundaries of John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Unit L06 in North Topsail Beach
- Supporting completion of the Surf City Coastal Storm Damage Reduction Project.
- Improving FEMA disaster recovery coordination on Topsail Island and using the latest technology to determine losses when making disaster recovery recommendations.

We have already worked with the Commission to conduct the necessary follow-up with the offices we met with. Please see the attached “FY 2026 Federal Priorities” document for more information on the specific talking points used for the meetings.

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. While in Washington, D.C. last month, our team and Surf City town leadership met with both the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to discuss the project. Both meetings were productive and encouraging, and we are now allowing OMB the time it needs to complete its review, which remains the final step in the approval process. Our team stands ready to promptly assist the Corps and OMB in answering any questions that may arise as the review progresses.

North Topsail Beach CBRA Mapping Issue

As Congress continues its legislative work, 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. During last month's meetings in Washington, D.C., we held a meeting with Director Nesvik of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and provided a memo outlining our outstanding issues and unanswered questions from the technical assessment received in early April. A copy of this memo is included with this monthly report. We provided the requested documentation to the Director, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife is currently reviewing the materials and preparing a response. We will continue to work with the delegation and committee staff to advance this legislation and will update the Commission as developments arise.

FEMA Review Council Releases Final Report

As we have previously reported, we have been closely tracking the release of the FEMA Review Council's report. On May 7, the FEMA Review Council released its final report, detailing recommendations to reform FEMA and the federal emergency management framework. The Council was created via an executive order in January 2025 and has spent the last year-plus listening to stakeholders and developing recommendations, primarily focused on giving state and local governments greater responsibility for managing disasters.

Included with this monthly report is a TFG Memo detailing the Council's 10 key recommendations and how these changes could impact local governments. Please reach out to us with any questions you may have about this report. We are happy to continue advocating to the Congressional delegation on any concerns the Commission has regarding this issue as lawmakers continue discussions on FEMA reforms.

Washington News

Congress Ends Record-Breaking 76-Day DHS Shutdown

Congress ended the longest partial federal government shutdown in U.S. history, passing legislation to restore funding to most Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agencies after a 76-day funding lapse that began on February 14, 2026. President Donald Trump signed the bill into law on May 1, restoring funding to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Coast Guard, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), and the U.S. Secret Service. FEMA disaster recovery operations have resumed normal activity following enactment of the bill.

The legislation does not fund Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or the Border Security Operations of Customs and Border Protection (CBP), as Senate Democrats refused to fund those operations absent policy reforms. Congressional Republican leaders are now advancing a separate budget reconciliation package to fund those agencies. On May 4th, the Senate Judiciary Committee and Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee released legislative text providing \$71.7 billion in spending across the two main agencies not covered by the shutdown deal, including \$30 billion for ICE and \$3.4 billion for CBP through FY 2029. Looking ahead, House Budget Committee Chair Jodey Arrington (R-TX) is pushing to pair any future FY 2027 funding package with the Prevent Government Shutdowns Act (H.R. 5870) to prevent another lapse.

Republicans Divided on a Third Budget Bill

Congressional Republicans are pushing forward on a second party-line spending bill to fund immigration enforcement (see above), but appetite for a third "reconciliation" bill, one that could advance GOP priorities on energy, permitting, and fraud prevention, seems to be in flux.

The hesitation stems from a crowded legislative calendar, the constraints of the reconciliation process, and the political risks of tough votes heading into the midterm season. With Republicans already juggling their immigration funding bill, which they hope to send to President Trump by June 1, a third major legislative push may be a bridge too far.

Army Corps Seeks Section 7001 Proposals for 2027 Water Resources Development Act

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is now accepting proposals from non-federal interests for inclusion in its 2027 Annual Report to Congress on Future Water Resources Development under Section 7001 of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA). Submissions are due September 1, 2026.

The Sec. 7001 process is the primary pathway for communities to request new congressional authorizations—or modifications to existing authorizations—for water resources studies, projects, and environmental infrastructure programs through the next biennial Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). Eligible submitters include local governments, public bodies of any kind, Indian tribes, and qualifying nonprofits. Proposals are submitted by emailing a completed Army Corps form to WRRDA7001Proposal@usace.army.mil.

House ESA Overhaul Stalls Amid Republican Divisions

A House Republican-backed rewrite of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is in limbo after House Natural Resources Chair Bruce Westerman (R-AR) pulled the bill last week due to internal GOP opposition. Westerman says he has "work to do" and hopes to revive it, possibly in May, but offered no firm timeline.

The legislation ran into trouble largely over offshore drilling concerns. After the Trump Administration exempted Gulf of America drilling from ESA requirements, Florida Republicans grew uneasy, given broad bipartisan opposition to new offshore drilling off their coasts.

Opinions within the party are split. Rep. Kat Cammack (R-FL) said the bill "missed the mark" but expressed support for reforming the law, noting that only three of 1,600 listed species have been effectively recovered. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), however, was blunter: "It's not going to pass."

EPA Moves to Roll Back PFAS Drinking Water Standards

On May 1, 2026, the White House cleared two draft Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed rules that would significantly roll back the Biden-era national primary drinking water regulations for PFAS, or "forever chemicals." The first rule would extend the compliance deadline for the maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for PFOA and PFOS from 2029 to 2031. The second rule would rescind the MCLs entirely for four additional PFAS, including the GenX chemicals, with EPA arguing the prior administration failed to follow proper rulemaking procedures when establishing those four standards.

The proposed rollbacks have drawn pushback from public health advocates and remain subject to ongoing litigation. A federal appeals court is separately weighing a legal challenge to the original 2024 PFAS rule, which the D.C. Circuit declined to vacate earlier this year while the case proceeds.

House Passes Farm Bill, Strips Pesticide Liability Shield

The House approved a five-year farm bill on a 224-200 vote, advancing legislation that covers food, farming, and rural development programs, but not before stripping out controversial liability protections for pesticide manufacturers.

The pesticide language, a priority for chemical companies facing glyphosate-related lawsuits, was removed by a bipartisan 280-142 vote after pushback from the "Make America Healthy Again" movement aligned with Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. House Agriculture Chair Glenn Thompson (R-PA) warned the issue isn't dead, as the bill still faces Senate action and a House-Senate conference.

The Senate Agriculture Committee has yet to introduce its own version, and Chair John Boozman (R-AR) has signaled a preference for a strongly bipartisan package, potentially complicating the path forward.

The House-passed bill includes conservation, forestry, and rural development provisions, and builds on farm program changes from last year's *One Big Beautiful Bill Act*. Notably absent is a provision lifting summer restrictions on E15 ethanol fuel sales.