

Administrator's Update for 7/1/15
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

The Stump Pass ten-year beach and inlet management program provides for continued monitoring, as required by permitting, of the dredging that re-established the 1980 channel alignment and provided for re-nourishment of critically eroded beaches. As part of the program, maintenance dredging of Stump Pass and beach re-nourishment will be conducted approximately every three years and an engineered structure will be installed at Stump Pass to improve program performance. An Adaptive Management Plan Strategy will be employed to provide options in response to beach and inlet management activities and storm erosion impacts. Overall, this program includes many agencies and stages.

The Florida Park Service prefers a rock terminal groin sited as far south as practicable. Coastal Engineering Consultants (CEC) completed a project modeling study to determine how far south it can be placed. This modeling showed that reducing the structure height by 1.5 feet did not affect performance and decreased negative impacts downstream. However, the State Park Service did not choose this as their desired configuration and asked for a design that would increase the amount of sand placement upstream of the structure. Modeling showed this would be more costly and could have negative impacts on the down drift beaches and the pass itself.

CEC submitted draft t-groin plans to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) in response to a Request for Additional Information (RAI.) The FDEP issued a second RAI to which the CEC and county staff prepared a response. The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) submitted permit documents to the State Historic Preservation Office for review of potential impacts to historical and cultural resources.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service agency is working on a new Biological Opinion (BO) for this project, to include migratory birds including Piping Plover and Red Knot as well as sea turtles.

County Staff and CEC recently held a telephone application conference with the ACOE; the project may change slightly to allow additional fill to be placed behind the structure to provide for quicker impoundment of the groin. To date, the changes are viewed as favorable by the ACOE.

A marine marker survey has been completed and Charlotte County signing and marking crew has relocated marine markers to better delineate the channel.

The Governor signed the 2015-2016 General Appropriations Act and all corresponding bills, which provides funding for beach management projects including \$2.5 million for the initial phase of the Stump Pass ten-year beach and inlet management project.

The overall project schedule has permits issued from FDEP in June 2015 and ACOE in July 2015, procurement process in summer 2015, and a projected start of construction in November 2015.

Enterprise Zone program sunseting

To encourage economic development in economically distressed areas of the state, in 1982 Florida launched an Enterprise Zone program by providing incentives to induce private investment. At the 2015 legislative session, extension of the Enterprise Zone program was not authorized, and the program will sunset on Dec. 31, 2015.

Incentives include business machinery & equipment sales tax refund, building materials sales tax refund, job tax credit, and property tax credit for Florida corporations. To qualify for the incentives, a business or home

must be within the Enterprise Zone, and further specific eligibility criteria must be met. The Charlotte County Enterprise Zone was approved by the state in 2013. The zone includes portions of the Punta Gorda Interstate Airport Park, Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Area (CRA), Parkside CRA, and Punta Gorda, totaling approximately 16 square miles. Visit http://floridasinnovationcoast.com/index.php/site_selection/enterprise_zone for more information.

Applications must be approved by the Florida Department of Revenue before the sunset date. For more information contact Debrah Forester, Redevelopment Manager with the Charlotte County Economic Development Department, at 941.764.4943 or Debrah.Forester@CharlotteCountyFL.gov.