

Founded in 1926, ASBPA is dedicated to preserving, protecting and enhancing our coasts by merging science and public policy.

Kill Devil Hills, Dare County, North Carolina



Legislative & federal agency agenda: 2019

1. Investing in coastal resilience: infrastructure, restoration and research funding

Coastal resilience means being better prepared for hazards. This will take coastal infrastructure that reduces risk, healthy coastal ecosystems that can withstand damage and research into future hazards and understanding management challenges. All of which take funding. ASBPA supports the following policies to sensibly invest in healthy coastlines:

Congress should:

A: Immediately invest in coastal infrastructure to protect communities.

The U.S. must invest in coastal flood risk reduction before the next hurricane hits. Wide beaches and high dunes have continued to demonstrate their ability to protect homes, property and critical

infrastructure from coastal flooding. Investing in protection is far cheaper than paying for rebuilding and restoring coastlines generates jobs: engineering and construction jobs, and protects and creates jobs in transportation, recreation and tourism, fishing and more.

- Provide \$5 billion over 10 years to federal, state and local beaches, dunes, wetlands and other coastal risk reduction, erosion control, and habitat infrastructure to address backlog in authorized projects and provide a “down payment” on projects in development. Any major infrastructure legislation should explicitly allow funding to be used for coastal nature-based infrastructure (such as beaches, dunes and wetlands).

- Pass a 2019 disaster supplemental appropriations bill that:

- Provides supplemental Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies (FCCE) funding to rebuild all beach and dune systems eroded by the 2018 hurricanes;

- Funds federally authorized but unconstructed coastal storm damage risk reduction projects along coastlines impacted by 2018 hurricanes;
- Funds coastal research that will lead to communities better able to withstand future hurricanes.

- Provide adequate appropriations for key coastal programs.

There are many important coastal appropriations spread across many agencies. In particular, Congress should:

- Appropriate at least \$75 million for Shore Protection in USACE Civil Works construction.
- Appropriate \$15 million for Regional Sediment Management (RSM) and Beneficial Use of Dredge Material (BUDM) in USACE Civil Works.
- Appropriate at least \$46 million for USGS Coastal and Marine Geology Program (CMGP).
- Appropriate at least \$30 million for Coastal Resilience Grants.
- Appropriate \$2 million for BOEM’s Marine Minerals Program (MMP);

Cardiff Beach, Encinitas, CA



Agency acronyms:

- BOEM: *Bureau of Ocean Energy Management*
- NOAA: *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency*
- NMFS: *National Marine Fisheries Service*
- USACE: *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*
- USFWS: *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*
- USGS: *U.S. Geological Survey*

mined by what agencies' request.

■ Coastal restoration, resilience and research programs at NOAA, USGS, BOEM, and USACE and coastal regulatory programs at NOAA, USFWS, BOEM and USACE should, at minimum, be maintained at FY2019 funding levels.

2. Expediting coastal projects

Coastal projects that seek to improve community resilience and restore habitat must be implemented without delay. The federal government should build on the strides taken recently to expedite the permitting of coastal projects. Though speed and efficiency in regulatory review are necessary to deliver vital coastal projects in a timely manner, proper care must be taken to avoid developing policies or procedures that may undermine environmental protections. ASBPA supports the following to improve regulatory and review processes:

Federal agencies should:

A: Continue to expedite regulatory and permitting timeframes.

Regulations around coastal projects are critical to protecting species, clean water and other ecosystem functions. However, implementation of regulations can be inefficient and duplicative. Individual permitting for similar projects both in and across regulatory jurisdictions can add unnecessary time and costs to projects. In order to improve regulatory timeframes:

- To the extent practical, federal agencies should implement the One Federal Decision approach established by E.O. 13807 for coastal projects;

and \$2.5 million for MMP environmental studies.

■ Increase funding to coastal permitting agencies — including USACE, NMFS and USFWS — to address permitting needs and reduce the consultation backlog.

B: Provide long-term coastal funding from coastal and offshore development.

The need for coastal restoration and protection will continue to grow as sea levels rise and development in the coastal zone increases. Regular and dedicated funding for coastal protection should be tied to new development, in particular any industrial development.

■ Maintain or increase existing sources of dedicated funding for coastal protection tied to offshore energy production — such as coastal funding provided in the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA)

■ Ensure lease fees for any new offshore energy production — whether renewable or fossil fuel — should (in part) be dedicated to coastal protection.

■ Support legislation that provides new dedicated coastal funds.

B: Plan for a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA).

Congress must continue a two-year cycle for passing WRDAs and should

begin to develop a WRDA in 2019. That bill should include:

- Policy that requires the USACE to develop, and maintain, a multi-year schedule of priorities for federally-authorized coastal projects that incorporates a regional approach to coastal resilience.
- Policy to expand the Beneficial Use of Dredged Material.

Federal agencies should:

A: USACE should issue implement coastal policies outlined in WRDA 2018 and WRDA 2016.

■ USACE should issue implementation guidance and carry out the instructions of Congress, specifically:

- WRDA 2016 Sec. 1122 and WRDA 2018 Secs. 1130 & 1148, on Beneficial Use of Dredged Material;
- WRDA 2016 Sec. 1184 and WRDA 2018 Sec. 1149, consideration of Natural and Nature Based Feature in flood risk management projects;
- WRDA 2018 Sec. 1112, Hurricane and Storm Damage Protection Program;
- WRDA 2018 Sec. 1160, on Emergency Response to Natural Disasters.

B: Request coastal funding commensurate to the challenges faced.

Although Congress ultimately funds the government, funding is partially deter-



Thompsons Beach, NJ

- Agencies must work together to develop a single permitting timetable for reviews and decisions;
- All review agencies prepare a single EIS and sign a single Record of Decision (ROD).
- USACE and NMFS Protected Resources Division (PRD) should reduce the overall number of individual consultations:
- Continue to provide training and protocols to staff to clarify which determinations can be made without formal or informal consultation with NMFS;
- Provide timely updates of Programmatic Biological Opinions;
- Streamline the process for non-federal interests to undertake authorized Civil Works projects.
- NMFS should reduce bureaucratic delays in its approval process:
- NMFS scientists should engage in early scoping meetings;
- Department of Commerce should allow NFMS project biologists and regional council to make final decisions.
- USFWS and USACE should collaborate to develop programmatic biological opinions for beach nourishment projects regionally, where appropriate.
- In the absence of sufficient federal funding, NMFS, USFWS, and USACE should seek out collaborative agreements with state agencies to allow the state to fund a regulatory staff position within the permitting agency.

B: Advance Beneficial Use of Dredged Materials (BUDM) and RSM.

Often the cheapest way to restore a beach or coastal system is to use the dredged or spoil material from a navi-

gation project, however bureaucratic policies can make this funding difficult or impossible to obtain. To improve use of BUDM and RSM:

- USACE should select the 10 BUDM pilot projects chosen under Sec. 1122 of the WIIN Act; choose an additional 10 as authorized in Sec. 1130 of WRDA 2018; and expand the use of BUDM beyond the pilot program;
- All USACE districts should adopt RSM practices and budgeting;
- Streamline the process for non-federal interest to implement BUDM projects that mimic federally authorized projects.

C: Federal coastal project implementation should be collaborative and science-based.

USACE should improve regulatory and construction timelines through coordination with states, stakeholders, industry and other regulatory agencies.

- Improve collaboration with federal and state resource agencies, and ensure collaboration is kept to an agreed upon timeline;
- Ensure federal agencies demonstrate that for coastal resource management

science is the basis for decisions;

- Value sediment as a resource, not a waste product;
- Engage private industry when USACE does not have the personnel and/or local expertise to complete a design project.

D: Regulatory reform should help advance coastal resilience.

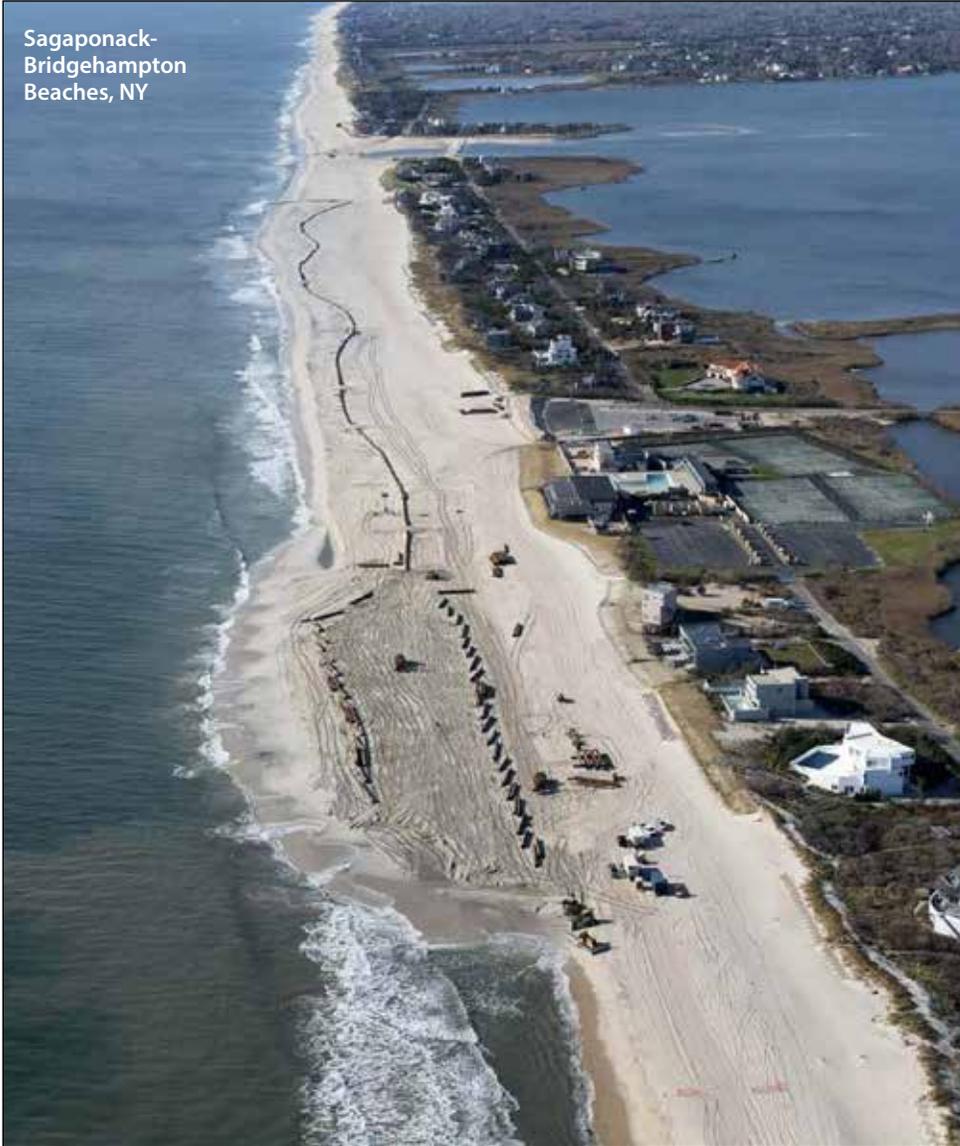
The administration and federal agencies should maintain regulations that will help communities become more resilient and should not implement reforms that will hinder coastal resilience.

- Regulations for coastal development or restoration should consider future conditions and/or sea level rise.
- The Coastal Barrier Resource Act (CBRA) should allow developed communities adjacent to CBRA-zone properties to improve their resilience in the most efficient manner possible so long as that does not undermine the purpose of CBRA.



Galveston Seawall Beach, TX

Sagaponack-
Bridgehampton
Beaches, NY



3. Investing in regional resilience

Coastal vulnerability doesn't end with political boundaries. Improving regional resilience will take science and policy working together across state lines and collaboration across jurisdictions. ASBPA supports the following in implementing regional and state coastal plans:

Congress should:

A: Authorize and fund the USACE Comprehensive Coastal Studies.

The North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study (NACCS) put forth a strategy for integrating shore protection with estuarine and environmental restoration, using structural, non-structural and "nature & nature based features" (NNBF) in the region hit by Hurricane Sandy. Other regions of the country should benefit from similar regional studies. Congress should:

- Fund a Great Lakes Coastal Resilience Study.
- Authorize a Pacific Coast Resilience Study.

Federal agencies should:

A: Restore the Gulf Coast.

Following the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill, billions of dollars have become available to restore the Gulf Coast.

■ Natural Resources Damage Assessment (NRDA) trustees and the RESTORE Council should ensure funding that they control is spent only on improving the environmental health of the coast and is spent on science-based restoration projects.

■ The RESTORE Council and BOEM should develop a Gulf-wide sediment budget and offshore sediment assessment.

B: Advance the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study (NACCS).

USACE should finish construction on the remaining authorized projects that were funded by the "Sandy Supplemental" appropriation.

C: Begin a South Atlantic Comprehensive Study and a Great Lakes Coastal Resilience Study.

USACE South Atlantic Division (SAD) should engage local communities and coastal stakeholder to begin assessing vulnerability and resilience in the South Atlantic region and the Great Lakes region.

D: Begin assessing need for Pacific Coast Resilience Study.

Get each district with Pacific Coast jurisdiction (including Honolulu) to determine time and funding needs to participate in a nationwide resilience and sediment management study.