

January, 2019

Report Note: The 2018 accomplishments are italicized as bullet points under each 2018 goal.

Overall: *The Topsail Island Shoreline Protection Commission (TISPC) through its members were active in a number of ways related to shoreline protection for Topsail Island. Members attended a number of coastal meetings such as NCBIWA and CRC to keep our commission and ultimately our towns up-to-date on coastal matters. As liaisons to our respective town boards, commission activities and coastal developments within CRC and CAMA were brought before the boards. In December, each town discussed their goals for the coming year which the TISPC then put into a comprehensive list for our advocates.*

We continue outreach and education to our stakeholders through our website tispc.org which had 732 visitors in 2018 and over 2159 page views. Visitors and page views were almost double those for 2017, respectively, indicating that stakeholders have found the website a valuable resource for information.

North Carolina Accomplishments

Protect funding and explore the expanded use of the Shallow Draft Inlet Fund

- *A new manager, Dr. Coley Cordiero, for the Shallow Draft Inlet Fund was appointed by NC DWR. Dr. Cordiero has made improvements in the fund application process as well as continued to coordinate quarterly stakeholders meetings with the Army Corps. The fund is in good financial position with approx. \$12.8 million available for new projects and \$18.8 million committed to new projects.*

Help find permanent sources of funding for the authorized NC Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund that will allow beach nourishment for municipalities not adjacent to inlets

- *The NC State Legislature passed an emergency disaster relief spending bill in response to the damage caused by Hurricane Florence. Included in ratified bill SB823, the appropriation includes \$18.5 million for Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation. Our advocate continues to work with members of the state legislature to secure a permanent source of funds at this same level of yearly funding.*

Work on passage of property insurance legislation to reduce and control the high property and flood insurance rates for Topsail property owners.

- *Our advocate has provided timely updates on insurance matters.*

2018 Accomplishments

- *In the spring, Commissioner Mike Causey, NC Department of Insurance, met in Surf City with Topsail Island officials and stakeholders to give an update on state insurance matters as well as hear insurance issues related to coastal towns.*
- *The commission continues to discuss this issue and alert the towns when a resolution might be appropriate to oppose unwarranted rate increases.*

Assist with needed legislation and funding for hardened structures.

- *This is a longer-term strategy that will require statewide support not just from the coastal communities.*

Encourage the NC Division of Coastal Management to develop a management plan for sound-side flooding

- *In 2011, NCDCM completed a project to evaluate marsh sills that had previously been permitted in North Carolina coastal waters. Results of the various marsh sills in the study group support the fact that marsh sills protect the estuarine shoreline and have little to no adverse effects on adjoining shorelines.*
- *In 2012 and 2014, the UNC Institute of Marine Sciences (UNC IMS) conducted studies on 'living shorelines' i.e. marsh sills that supported oyster colonies and planted marsh plants behind the sill. Living shorelines provided refuge from predators for juvenile fish and crustaceans, in addition to protecting shorelines from erosion. Marsh sills suffered little to no damage following Hurricane Irene, unlike bulkheads.*
- *As sea-level rise continues, NCDCM should use these studies to set policy on protecting the shoreline from sound side flooding.*

Notify TISPC of any legislation that could impact Topsail Island activities on the ocean, inlet and sound.

- *Our advocate has provided timely updates on the major focus of the state legislature as well as keeping the commission informed of potential new legislation that would impact coastal communities like Topsail Island.*

Federal Government Accomplishments

Continue to facilitate the changes to CRBA mapping as Congressional bills move through sub-committee hearings.

- *After successful support from our Congressional delegation via our federal advocate, both the House and Senate agreed on technical corrections to portions of CBRS map L06 that removed 70+ homes in N. Topsail Beach from the CBRA zone. President Trump*

subsequently signed the bill into law. Our website, tispc.org has a link to a mapper feature where stakeholders can see the affected properties.

- *In 2018, both a senate bill and a house bill were introduced by our congressional delegation to amend CBRS map L06 that would remove all N. Topsail Beach from the CBRS system. Although the bills were not acted on by Congress in the 2018 session, our advocate already has informed us that these bills will be re-introduced in the new Congress.*

Seek support from our Congressional Delegation for legislation that would allow the use of sand from inlet CRBA areas for beach nourishment.

- *Our federal advocate met with officials from the Army Corps Headquarters in Washington DC on several occasions to request an administrative change in policy that would allow sand in CBRA areas to be used for beach nourishment in non-CBRA areas for federal projects. However, the Corps continues to support this long-held policy, so the next approach will be Congressional legislation to change the policy.*

Obtain federal funding and/or removal of 7-year sunset clause from approved federal beach nourishment projects

- *A delegation led by our federal advocate along with commission members from Surf City and N. Topsail Beach met with General Holland, Commander of the South Atlantic Division of the Army Corps in Atlanta in September to emphasize the importance of our federal project.*
 - *As a result of this meeting as well as other work by our advocate and commission members, the Army Corps recommended new start construction funds for our project in the FY2019 work plan. However, OMB of the Executive Branch, removed this line item along with some others from the Army Corps work plan for 2019.*

Encourage total NC congressional delegation support committed to programs for coastal management

- *Our congressional delegation is listening to our shoreline concerns on Topsail Island. Staff from both Senator Tillis' office and Representative Rouzer's office frequently attend monthly meetings of the TISPC to hear our concerns.*

Investigate and promote the idea that the shallow draft inlets, the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and beach shorelines are major infrastructure components of our national transportation system and storm mitigation barrier that should be maintained when legislation is written for the National Infrastructure Restoration bill.

- *Given the national debate on other matters, there has been little traction on this proposed program.*

Assist with education of NC congressional delegation of impact of current Community Rating System (CRS) is having on flood insurance cost and possible impact in other areas.

- *The commission has given the CRS continued discussion both from the standpoint of the state building code as well as the effect this program has on insurance rates.*

Notify TISPC of any legislation that could impact Topsail Island activities on the ocean, inlet and sound.

- *Our advocate has provided timely updates on the major focus of the US Congress as well as keeping the commission informed of potential new legislation that would impact coastal communities like Topsail Island.*
- *In addition, our advocate has addressed each item on our 'federal goals list' in his monthly report and the impact that pending federal legislation may have on Topsail Island.*