



First Round of Public Input Meetings

Five meetings were held during the period of December 2 through December 11, 2008 to outline the ongoing development of the North Carolina Beach and Inlet Management Plan (BIMP). These provided opportunities for members of the public and communities to be informed of the progress to date and to provide valuable input and comments.

The meetings consisted of two main parts. The first part was a presentation on the BIMP and the second involved interactive breakout sessions where maps and flip charts were available to document comments, questions, and concerns during the session. The presentations are available for viewing on the project website www.ncbimp.net. The comments from the meeting break out sessions are summarized in this document. Additional opportunities for comment are the questionnaires provided at the meetings and email feedback at DENR.NCBIMP@lists.ncmail.net. Public input and participation in the process is greatly appreciated.

Summary of Public Comments at Each Meeting

Region 1 Meeting – Held December 3, 2008 from 6-8:00 pm at Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation, Supply NC

Discussion in the breakout sessions ranged from data availability to strategies and priorities of the BIMP. The following list summarizes the comments made:

General

- All alternatives should be on the table. The BIMP discussion should not be limited to current policy but also consider things not currently allowed under rule or statute such as terminal structures.
- There is a difference between using structures for sediment control vs. shoreline armoring

Data

- The current sandbag structures database should be updated
- Current NCDCEM erosion rates use “end point” method. Rates should be calculated more scientifically.
- Complex analysis may not be as accurate as gut feel
- The current USACE GRR- considering nearby inlets and limited offshore
- Include most recent data in erosion rates – 1998 is a bit dated
- Tidal Prism data and hydrography needed at inlets
- Systematic data standard for gathering data needed

Strategies/Priorities

- Use dredge material nearshore if not beach quality (find beneficial uses when possible)

- wetland creation
- do not dispose offshore
- Prioritize where sand is needed
- Standardized defensible approach to prioritization is key (keep it simple)
- Frequency of nourishment is an environmental issue (turbidity, etc.)
 - Big projects less often
 - Also, mobilization and cost potentially reduced with larger projects
- Sediment compatibility criterion – is this limiting potential sand resources in sand starved areas?
- Holden Beach has received limited sand from inlets- any other options? Relying now on upland sources
- Don't ignore the inlets as a sediment source
- Maybe increasing depths and widths of channels should be considered
- Sediment budgets needed
- Funding sources – room occupancy taxes – statewide- county by county

Regions 2a and 2b Meeting – Held December 2, 2008 from 5-7:00 pm at New Hanover County Northeast Regional Library, Wilmington NC

The attendees were divided into six breakout sessions where discussion ranged from data sets to BIMP strategies, vulnerability indexes, and funding. The following list groups and summarizes the comments made:

General

- Regions as shown are OK
- BIMP needs to be holistic/comprehensive with human component, natural system, and ecosystem all included
- Statewide plan
- Promote better cooperation between stakeholders and regulators
- Sand as a resource maybe not just as an “asset”
- If BIMP goes beyond currently allowed state policy, where would it stop?
- How can you consider something not allowed?
- Differing opinions among break-out groups with some wanting to keep within scope of General Assembly mandate while others wanted to include all options in strategies; don't limit your project by current state policy (for example, terminal structures at inlets should be considered)
- Ease local project EA/EIS through development of “To-Do” guide for permitting
 - i.e. flow charts, etc
- Have local shoreline protection officers
- Increase channel dimensions for inlet dredging
- Inlet management
- Inlets should be used as sources of sand for nourishment and not declared off limits by NMF (National Marine Fisheries)
- In cases where beach disposal is not the least cost alternative, state should make up the difference so that beach quality sand is not wasted

- Do not move environmental goal posts as far as permitting is concerned
- Biological impacts of various projects and what are the recovery rates are of beaches – How long does it take?
- Frequency of nourishment projects should be looked at to allow biological community to recover from nourishment impacts
- Look at innovative ways to hasten the ability of the beach to recover from a nourishment event, such as seeding beaches with mole crabs, ghost crabs, small clams as you would find in abundance on natural beaches
- Work on united message to General Assembly through a variety of groups, NCBIWA, Coastal Resources Advisory Council (CRAC), North Carolina Coastal Federation, NC Port Authority and others... What should the message be?
- Merge staff from DCM, DWR and others to implement the BIMP – don't develop another group - afraid of the BIMP being just another bureaucracy nightmare to get projects through
- Need to understand what information that each regulatory agency needs ahead of time when planning these projects –too many surprises after the fact.

Data

- Data should include a biological database as well as geophysical database
 - Historic reports, PhD dissertations
 - Monitoring data
- Set up a panel to review the data (especially monitor data) to provide a summary or QA/QC
- Recommend on what monitoring data needs to be collected, instead of just a stock list
- Data that is being collected and assembled for the BIMP should be the “right type” for looking at any future alternative strategies
- Research prior to policy/regulations
- Science/Biological/Oceanographic Panel to report to CRC?
- Data gaps identified?
- How can public access EIS/EA data or permit data?
- Recognize importance of inlet systems (e.g. Caveats of inlet “mining”)
- Don't just “get” data but also analyze/synthesize data
 - Let science drive decisions
- Sediment budgets/naturally what is happening, background is needed
- Monitoring before and after any projects

Vulnerability

- Vulnerability index:
 - “human factor” of a panel supplementing hard variables in formula (i.e. ERs, sand, etc.)
- Coastal Avoidance Hazard Fund
- Subjective data are tough for vulnerability decisions
- Scientific data and objectivity may be better variables for a vulnerability index
- Vulnerability index data should only be used to determine availability of state funding for beach fill.

- Vulnerability index could affect coastal land uses instead of just addressing funding
 - Must be objective
- Vulnerability – needs to be detailed and up to date
 - 2004?
 - Otherwise do more harm
- Inlet Hazard Areas
 - Stabilize inlets
 - Insurance will go up
 - Property values will go down
- Vulnerability should take into account historic nourishment

Funding

- Money to build a project should not be the driving force
- Look at room occupancy tax and the laws and regulations around that, since it can vary from County to County and between Municipalities –it would be competing with the Regional Concept of sharing funds and resources
- Should be various dedicated pot of money for the BIMP and their associated projects – money from potential oil and gas revenues, money raised through Local Governments with regional concept, annual money from the State Legislature through Division of Water Resources, allow for greater tax tools for Local Governments, reward Local Government’s for doing the right thing when prioritizing projects.
- Instead of just beach fill money how about money for buybacks of property (Specifically in IHAs)
- Use the “Funding availability” as one way to prioritize projects, that is local government’s ability to fund projects, because they have raised the money, should be one of the priorities that would qualify for State and other Federal Funding
- Incentive to build smaller, higher, farther back (tax breaks, cash payment, etc)
- If a community can get non-public money maybe project should still not be feasible due to environmental impact
- Should BIMP recommend funding sources from local taxation (occupancy tax, impact fees) where they don’t currently exist?
- BIMP can show value of a particular management scheme to the local/county/state
- Folks in western NC need to remember that its their beach too
- If an area shouldn’t be touched (e.g. sand mining) then show cost/benefit
- Show values of management away from beach – upstream, out west
 - Natural asset/capital
 - Fiscal asset
 - Weigh together to compare and contrast
- Encourage state legislature to set up permanent funding source; future oil/gas exploration
- Will CBRA zone designations impact State funding of projects under the BIMP? (for example, stretches of beach along North Topsail)

- Beach nourishment should be the function of the US government supplemented by state and local
- What are identified sources of funding for beach nourishment?

Regions 2c and 3a Meeting – Held December 4, 2008 from 6-8:00 pm at East Carteret High School, Beaufort, NC

Discussion in the breakout sessions ranged from data sets to strategies and BIMP funding prioritization. The following list summarizes the comments made:

General

- Implementation plan – what is the role of NCBIMP
- Plan -> Action
- Adhere to state law. No hard structures!
- What about terminal groins?

Data

- In planning and management understand limits of NHP (Natural Heritage Program) - need to capture this
- Species data from Carteret County
- Expand to species of special concern, not just Federal and State protected
- SAV (2007) survey
- Analysis methods needed to utilize/apply data to understand system.
- Focus first on understanding system based on existing data and studies
- Symposium to collaborate or exchange knowledge
- USGS to report on Core Banks
- Clearly identify gaps that are important
- Data should be readily available to the public
- Keep links active
- NC One Map – clearinghouse for spatial data
- Overlooked? Renourishment - definition may be different among users
 - How far back does data go?
- ICW first time dredged? Sand should be used for renourishment.
- More robust monitoring, e.g. shoreline is 1998

Strategy Issues

- Beneficial use of material
- For non-beach grade sediment- other beneficial uses? Build up other eroding areas? (estuarine)
- Can it be used to build up new areas of upland to build houses?
- Sea walls - like at Pine Knoll Shores – if it falls, can it be rebuilt?
 - What about buried wooden sea walls like at Atlantic Beach?
 - Virginia Beach (ca. 1970s) large X structures set as breakwaters for off shore appeared to work?
 - What about going offshore and finding sand to pump back onshore?

- Sea level rise needs to be important consideration policies to day that will have significant implications in the future (setbacks could take into account)
- Inlet management needs to address catastrophic changes (breaching, closure) – Inlet Hazard Areas
- Inlet maintenance – is it better to go deeper?

Vulnerability

- How would other people use this data? (for example insurance companies and overwash vulnerability/erosion data)
 - Data already public. Information is already available.
- Rather than “vulnerability” – call it an Assessment Index and needs to be updated

Prioritization and Funding

- Prioritization- something that has additional value in addition to beach renourishment.
 - Multiple benefits
 - More groups in favor, more \$\$
 - Figure out how many people you can attract to the beach
 - Look at economic impact of maximum congestion
 - Economic stimulation up to 50 miles from beach - attracts business
- Funding?
- Economic analysis needs to be detailed to capture to use value – example wading bird population.

Regions 3b and 4 Meeting – Held December 9, 2008 from 6-8:00 pm at NC Aquarium, Manteo NC

Discussion in the six breakout sessions ranged from procedures of keeping public/communities informed to funding. The following list summarizes the comments made:

General

- Consider frequency of updating BIMP plan
- Too many state agencies involved
- Are we adequately addressing sea level rise?
- Clarify how plan will be used in policy development
- Important to capture value of commercial fisheries
- No oversight of beach pushing
- Publicly owned seashores should be allowed to function naturally – no nourishment
- Beach policies should benefit all homeowners equally
- Socio-economics should weight smart growth of Dare county
- Weigh considerations of desire of citizens versus political drivers
- Remember Currituck Sound Restoration Project “New Inlets”
- Needs to be clarification of who owns what part of the beach

- Does BIMP address sound-side beaches?
- BIMP should not be narrowly defined to how we do beach nourishment
- Opposed to hard structures
- What happens to a property when someone chooses to retreat or does not rebuild?

Data

- Would like to see data on number and location of condemned or threatened homes
- Need data on storm effects: North-Easters do more damage than hurricanes because it is sustained
- Does Duck (COE) have information on Currituck and Dare counties due to recent Virginia Beach projects?
- Bodie Island's nourishment (Dean & Dolan)
- Look at data from other areas on effectiveness of strategies
- Ensure that key environmental areas are identified
- Data Sets:
 - RENCID Database
 - UNC-CSI – wave data AWACS/ADCP
 - Wind Data – water flow
 - UNCW-ADCP's – Lyn Lanard
 - UNC-IMS (Institute of Marine Science) –NCCOOS (NC Coastal Ocean Observing System –SECOORA (Southeast Coastal Observing Regional Association)
 - USGS – Woods Hole; profile data- Currituck to Oregon Inlet
 - NEST – sea turtle group
 - Mike Marshall, Greg Allen- NCDMF Shellfish
 - NCDOT data
- Monitoring of the beach needs to be done before and after changes are made.
 - Money available?
 - State's erosion data – when available? Are funds available for update?
 - Include monitoring of existing/previously removed structures, e.g. sandbags

Strategies

- Socioeconomic evaluation needs to be moved up in priority, not just sand management. What is next after the priorities are completed?
- Site-specific design should be used- match strategy to actual field conditions.
- Consider nearshore attenuation; avoid strategies that will relocate the problem.
- Reconsider hard structures, placement of material nearshore
- Publicly owned seashores should be allowed to function naturally – no nourishment
- Preference of how beaches should be treated:
 - Sand bypassing at Oregon inlet is fine – sand is a problem on Pea Island's beaches
 - Is retreat really an option?
 - Are buy-outs feasible?
- Think about non-traditional alternatives:

- Use recycled glass for beach nourishment
- Why not let State utilize USACE permits and possibly buy State dredge plants
- Clarify goals of strategies
 - Balance development with ecology (those are competing)
 - Can we balance ecology and development and can they be sustained?
- Correlate dredging and nourishment to storm events
- Consider links between physical processes and socioeconomic result
- Clarify factors used in prioritization. For example, not all communities currently have public access
- How do policies and land ownership affect project strategies? For example, beaches in Kitty Hawk vs. beaches at National Seashore and villages
- Understand effects of structures on biological community and moving sand through nourishment. What effects removal has on offshore sites (borrow sites), benthic and biological community, how does it effect erosion (wave formation)
- Encourage natural functions of all beach and inlet ecosystems and their associated habitats.
 - Encourage education associated with this idea
 - By getting this “right” we can be sustainable
- Should state provide help to let people buy out properties before they fall into the ocean?

Funding

- Funding concerns – Is money available?
- Prioritization – don’t spend lots of money on extreme areas because under current policy, long term sustainability may be an issue
- Compare the cost of retreat and relocation to the cost of beach nourishment – e.g. Rodanthe
- Represent more than local people because of federal money, and that is money from all over the US
- Perceived benefits of beach nourishment for funding – oceanfront only benefit.
- Public vs. Private funding

Procedures

- Make data available to the public to allow for public involvement on strategy development and funding priorities, etc., including education
- Will maps be available online?
- Not enough time to take in all data- details? (will be on website)
- How can the public give input between meetings?
- How do we better reach out to non-resident property owners?

All Regions – Held December 11, 2008 from 6-8:00 pm at NCSU McKimmon Center, Raleigh NC

Discussion in the breakout sessions ranged from data sources to BIMP strategies and ecological issues. The following list summarizes the comments made:

General

- Modeling of island/inlet behavior should be performed
- Stay out of moratorium (do not allow coastal structures)
- Include other strategies currently outside state policy in study – For example, terminal structures.
- Do not exclude strategies upfront – state policy changes with time.

Data

- Sources:
 - USACE
 - DOT - photos
 - LIDAR
- Shoreline Erosion Data
- Potential offshore/nearshore resources, and hardbottom
- Identify gaps and recommend studies to gain necessities to understanding natural system.

Strategies

- Sand pushing/bulldozing/scraping – what’s allowable?
 - Given frequency of events
 - Coordinate with other activities
 - Newly created inlets- policy for response
- Frequency of nourishment- minimum 4 year (ecological considerations)
- Economic alternative should take a hard look at “do nothing” approach (For example, Bogue Inlet)
- Restore natural sediment pathways
- Land acquisition
 - Doesn’t mess with existing physical/environmental processes
 - Maintenance lower
 - No ‘downdrift’ problems
- Look at developed/undeveloped areas moving inland
 - Impervious area impacts, consideration into strategies
- If structures were considered, need to really assess whether they are needed and where
- Kelp forests? (look at possibility of using kelp forests to dissipate wave energy)
- Manage inlets such that the inlets do not destabilize (what is an acceptable level of mining?)
- Property buy-outs (structure and/or land)
 - Convert to parklands

Ecological

- Impacts of overwash – loss of next habitat
- NOAA/NMFS/DMF Larval Fish Mitigation and dredge window
- Design for turtle nesting (template/slope)
- Detailed coastal processes and estuarine ecology necessary to understand and document as part of BIMP
- NEPA/SEPA not addressing complex system

Funding

- Continuous tax/funding source (occupancy tax) or property tax add-on targeted to the BIMP
- Public beach access should be tied to funding/prioritization formula