

SARASOTA COUNTY GOVERNMENT
Natural Resources

TO: Sarasota County Commission

THROUGH: Randall H. Reid, County Administrator

FROM: Amy H. Meese, Director, Natural Resources, Community Services Group
Laird Wreford, Manager, Coastal Resources *Out of office by Kalk*

SUBJECT: Update on the New Pass Inlet Management Plan and Beach Renourishment Projects

DATE: September 17, 2013

SUMMARY:

Sarasota County staff will present an update on current beach and inlet issues of interest to the Town of Longboat Key.

REPORT:

- A. Big Pass/New Pass Inlet Management Plan – New Pass is a federally authorized inlet and has been periodically dredged by the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). A maximum funding cap, established in the original federal authorization for management of the inlet, has been reached. Consequently, future navigational dredging may not occur without authorization of additional federal funding. Big Pass is not a federally authorized inlet and has never been dredged. Lido Beach is a federally authorized beach renourishment project and is currently scheduled for renourishment due to the severe shoreline erosion that has occurred since the last placement of sand. Based on the ever decreasing volumes of suitable offshore submerged sand deposits in the area, the ACOE is exploring the potential use of sand from Big Pass and/or New Pass for the renourishment of Lido Beach. This would potentially solve mutual problems by providing needed dredging in the two inlets and less expensive near-shore sand for Lido Beach.

The volume of sand that is needed for the Lido Beach renourishment exceeds the expected available supply of sand that currently exists in New Pass. Consequently, the ACOE is focusing its permitting efforts on Big Pass as the primary sand source. However, if it turns out that sand is taken from New Pass for this project, ACOE is aware of the sand-sharing agreement between the Town of Longboat Key and the City of Sarasota, and an appropriate accommodation will be made to honor that agreement.

The ACOE has conducted extensive modeling studies in and around the two inlets, to provide assurances that the use of this system as a sand source will not result in significant negative impacts. The results of these studies will be presented by the project manager, Milan Mora, and his team at a number of scheduled venues. This will include the Sarasota County Coastal

Advisory Committee in September; the Sarasota County Commission in October; and the Siesta Key Association and local boating groups in December.

B. Beach Renourishment Projects – In addition to the aforementioned planned renourishment of Lido Beach and the upcoming renourishment of the Longboat Key shoreline, Sarasota County has launched the design and permitting phase of its first renourishment of the South Siesta Key project, centered on Turtle Beach. The goal is to successfully obtain all required permits in time to construct the project during the sea turtle non-nesting period in late 2014 and early 2015. The key challenge for this project is to locate a suitable offshore sand source.

As discussed in previous joint meetings, there is a need for regional coordination of major coastal projects. This could result in cost savings for each jurisdiction and alleviate competition for scarce sand resources. Currently, the County, the Town and the City of Sarasota are in various stages of the design/permitting of their respective beach renourishment projects, so it will be critical to maintain increased communication and coordination as we move towards project construction, in order to realize possible cost savings. We will continue to seek opportunities to foster regional coordination all along the Florida Gulf coast, with a special focus on enhancing the project coordination between the County, the Town of Longboat Key and the City of Sarasota.