



SHORELINES – April 2009

One Beach, One Ocean, Two Reports

The State's Department of Environment & Natural Resources (**DENR**) is currently in the process of developing two large-scale policy documents; (1) The **Ocean Policy Report** and (2) The **Beach and Inlet Management Plan**. Because the bulk of these documents pertain to issues related to our oceanfront beaches here in Carteret County and abroad, the purpose of this edition of *Shorelines* is to briefly de-mystify the scope of these two efforts.

As you read this summary, we're cognizant that it's easy to get the State environmental hierarchy confused with all the divisions, advisory groups, and commissions out there. Perhaps the best rule of thumb is to remember that DENR is comprised of many different Divisions, such as the Division of Coastal Management, Division of Water Resources, Division of Water Quality, etc. that focus upon regulating and managing different components of the State's environmental resources. In many instances, Governor- and/or Assembly-appointed Commissions are used as the policy-making arm for the various Divisions. For instance, the Coastal Resources Commission (CRC) is the policy-making arm for the Division of Coastal Management, the Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) is policy arm for the Division of Marine Fisheries, and the Environmental Management Commission (EMC) has ties to the Division of Water Resources, Division of Water Quality, Division of Air Quality, and Land Resources. So with this environmental civics lesson aside, let's discuss the two new reports.

(1) The Ocean Policy Report – is actually shorthand for a report entitled, "*Developing a Management Strategy for North Carolina's Coastal Ocean.*" The report should be finalized by the time this edition of the *Island Review* is distributed and was prepared by the N.C. Coastal Resources Law, Planning and Policy Center through contracts with the Division of Coastal Management and the N.C. Sea Grant College Program. The catalyst for the report was really two-fold; (1) similar ocean policy documents were prepared in 1994 and 1984, and hence a new ocean policy report was in order, and (2) In 2004, both the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy (Federal government group) and the Pew Oceans Commission (non-profit group) released ocean assessment reports encouraging all levels of government to take a fresh look at ocean resource issues.

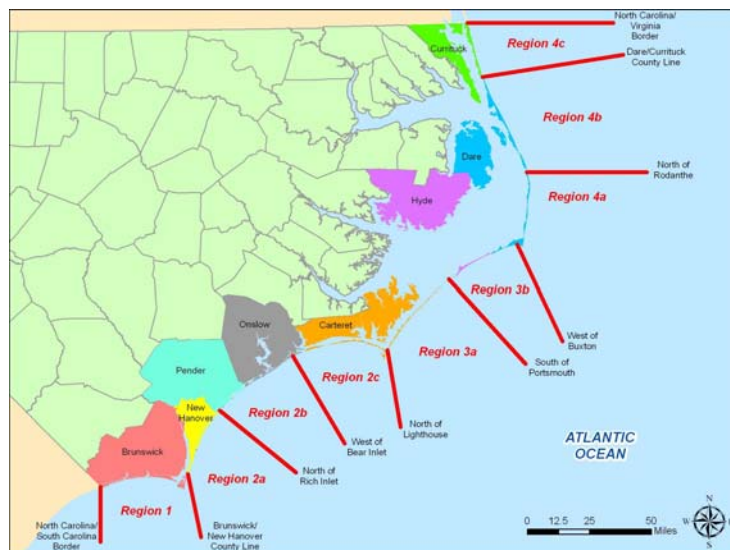
The authors and a steering committee developed five emerging ocean resource issues facing the State, which became the focus of the new Ocean Policy Report and include; (1) sand resource management (generally tied to beach nourishment), (2) ocean-based alternative energy development (wind and to a lesser extent wave energy), (3) ocean outfalls, (4) marine aquaculture, and (5) comprehensive ocean management (ocean zoning to avoid/resolve future conflicts). The report is available at <http://www.nccoastalmanagement.net/opscreport.pdf>.

(2) The Beach and Inlet Management Plan or "**BIMP**"– is a joint effort between the Divisions of Coastal Management and Water Resources, and the engineering firm of Moffatt & Nichol has been selected as a contractor to develop and prepare the document. Importantly, the BIMP has been mandated (or referenced) by three separate State legislative initiatives including; the Coastal Habit Protection Plan (CHPP) completed in 2005, Section 13.9(b) and (c) of SL 2000-67 (the 2000 appropriations bill), and a commissioned

report that examined the cost, benefits, and management issues related to maintaining North Carolina's shallow draft navigation channels that was completed in 2005. A BIMP report is due later this year summarizing five tasks that were initiated in 2007 - (1) data identification & acquisition, (2) define beach and inlet management regions, (3) hold and facilitate stakeholder meetings, (4) develop draft management strategies, and (5) prepare final beach and inlet management plan report. See <http://dcm2.enr.state.nc.us/bimp.htm> for the State's BIMP website.

Management regions and sub-regions have already been proposed for the BIMP. They make intuitive sense based upon dominant differences in geomorphology, underlying geology, and coastal process along the State's shorelines - Bogue Banks is positioned in region "2c". Currently, economic values of beach and inlet activities, a coastal erosion vulnerability index, estimated financial needs for beach nourishment and channel maintenance, environmental considerations, and potential funding strategies are being refined for the final report. In summary, expect this first BIMP report to utilize the physiographic assessment/characterization of the State's coast to slowly move towards concepts of geo-political regionalization and the recommendation of financial instruments to help pool both local and State monetary resources for beach nourishment, waterway dredging, ecosystem restoration, and other activities.

Concluding Miscellany – Most likely the recommendations (or concepts) contained in either the ocean policy document or the BIMP will not go immediately into effect. It will take further action(s) within certain Divisions of DENR, or take separate action by one or even a few of the policy-making State Commissions, the General Assembly, or even the Governor. While the BIMP is very focused upon issues that most concern the Coastal Resource Commission, the ocean policy report contains aspects that deeply involve the Marine Fisheries Commission, the Environmental Management Commission, and the Coastal Resources Commission, so the wheels of progress may take longer to turn. Also, there is some cross-over between some of the principles in the ocean policy report concerning the chapter dedicated to sand resource management and concepts articulated in the BIMP. It's expected the Coastal Resources Commission would want consistency between the ocean policy and BIMP documents, and therefore it's likely that any of the issues identified in the ocean policy report that is relative to beach nourishment and waterway dredging will be incorporated into, or passed under the guise of the BIMP.



Management regions proposed in draft versions of the "BIMP" – Bogue Banks is located in Region 2c.