

**SHORELINES – February 2004**  
**As presented to the Island Review Magazine.**

**“The Outer Harbor Phase” – A Section 933 Success Story**

There was every intention this month to provide a 2003 “year-in-review” shore protection summary, but after what seems like a recurring dream (or nightmare for some) of “on again – off again”, “good news – bad news” Section 933 Project scenarios that often dominated the local headlines the past several months, the first grains of sand from the Section 933 Project should be molded into beach contours by the time this edition of the *Island Review* arrives at your doorstep or favorite local shop. So rather than reflecting on 2003 this month, it’s time to hit the ground running and discuss Phase I of the Section 933 Project that will be constructed from January to March 2004 and is estimated to place 900,000 cubic yards, or the equivalent of 60,000 dump trucks loads of sand along a 3.0 mile stretch of Bogue Banks encompassing Indian Beach, Salter Path and the westernmost 2,500 feet of Pine Knoll Shores.

As a quick reminder, the entire Section 933 effort involves the distribution of sand from two sources related to the Morehead City Harbor. Dredged material from the Inner Harbor reach near the Port of Morehead City is temporarily stored at the upland disposal site of Brandt Island, which is subsequently pumped to the shorelines of Fort Macon and Atlantic Beach at 100% Federal cost once every decade when Brandt Island becomes “full”. The incremental expenditures to pump this material to Pine Knoll Shores constituted a portion of the Section 933 Project that was intended to be constructed this year. Dredged material from the Outer Harbor, which is normally dumped offshore, was scheduled to be placed along the shorelines of Indian Beach/Salter Path next year and would complete the Section 933 effort.

However, a legal dispute filed by Norfolk Dredging, the contract runner-up to Bean Stuyvesant, has delayed the Brandt Island pump-out indefinitely. This essentially left Project leaders with the month of December to shift our 933 focus for 2004 and concentrate on implementing what is now commonly referred to as the “Outer Harbor Phase” of the Section 933 Project (Phase I). Fortunately, the legal dispute mentioned above had no bearing to the Outer Harbor dredging bid solicitation because different types of dredging equipment are involved. Weeks Marine, the dredging contractor for the eastern Emerald Isle beach nourishment project constructed in 2003, provided a very favorable bid for the Outer Harbor Section 933 Project in early December and there has been a flurry of activity since to execute the proper agreements, transfer funds, and award the dredging bid to begin construction in a timely manner. Weeks Marine will use two ocean-certified, self-contained 4,000-cubic yard capacity hopper dredges (the *B.E. Lindholm* and *R.N. Weeks*) to dredge the Outer Harbor and transfer this material to the Project beach beginning in mid-January 2004.

From a pragmatic standpoint, the Outer Harbor Phase of the Section 933 Project can be viewed as a “win-win” situation for the following reasons.

**(1) Sand Management** – The sources of beach sand along the N.C. Coast are limited and are derived from eroding beaches, inlets, and the capes. Although waterway dredging is an important component of our infrastructure, the diversion of beach-quality sand from the inlet/beach system essentially prohibits this precious resource from reaching adjacent beaches. The Section 933 Project permits all forms of Government to come together and start viewing sand as the resource we all enjoy - not as a by-product, or “spoil”, which has historically been the

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case. This will be the first instance that Outer Harbor sand will be used to restore the beaches since the Morehead City Harbor was first constructed in 1911.

(2) **Navigation** – Critical navigation infrastructure will be maintained. The Morehead City Harbor accommodates approximately 174 ships and 560 barges per year, based on the past ten-year vessel trend.

(3) **Public Beach Access & Parking** – One of the requirements associated with Federal participation in beach nourishment is that access and parking to the beaches shall be provided to everyone on fair and equal terms. The Corps regulations and guidance concerning this issue stipulate that an access shall be located every half mile with adequate parking associated with each access. In general, adequate parking has been designated as ten spaces located within a quarter mile of each access. The local communities have made terrific progress in meeting the access and parking requirements as exemplified by Indian Beach that is in the process of constructing three additional access/parking facilities as part of the Outer Harbor Section 933 effort. From east to west these areas include; (1) The Sea Isle Plantation west access with parking located north of Hwy 58, (2) A walkway located between the Ocean Club and Salter Path Campground with parking located north of Hwy 58, and (3) An access/parking area located immediately east of the Baptist Children’s Home oceanfront gazebo. These new areas are in addition to the Trinity Center, Roosevelt State Park, and Indian Beach access/parking facilities.

(4) **Sand Quality** - “Top grade” beach-quality sand will be utilized for the Outer Harbor Section 933 beach nourishment. This statement is supported by the sediment texture data obtained from the Outer Harbor, but also makes intuitive sense, because for the for the most part, the shoal material that enters the navigation channel is sand that has traveled from adjacent beaches.

(5) **A Healthy Beach** – Implementing sand management measures, such as the Section 933 Project, helps preserve and enhance recreational opportunities, critical beach habitat, and the economic vitality that is associated with wide, healthy beaches.

The Shore Protection Office website should be updated with the latest details concerning the Section 933 Project including project updates at [www. protect the beach .com/usaceshoreprotect933.htm](http://www.protectthebeach.com/usaceshoreprotect933.htm) by the time this issue of the *Island Review* is printed. A graphic depiction of the Project is included in this edition of *Shorelines* as well. Once again, it is important to recognize that the key to the success we are currently experiencing for the Section 933 Project was, and will continue to be, a direct function of local support. Thanks again, and here’s to calm seas, no mechanical breakdowns, and a great sand management/beach nourishment project!!!

