

SHORELINES – March 2004
As presented to the Island Review Magazine.

2003 – A Year In Review

The Outer Harbor Phase of the Section 933 Project should be progressing nicely by the time this issue of the Island Review goes to press. As mentioned last month, this phase of the Section 933 Project is estimated to place 900,000 cubic yards (cy) of sand from the Outer Harbor reach (Ocean Bar) of the Morehead City Harbor along a 3.0 mile stretch of Bogue Banks encompassing Indian Beach, Salter Path and the westernmost 2,500 feet of Pine Knoll Shores. The Project is scheduled to be completed by April 1st and please don't forget to check www.protectthebeach.com/phase1updates.htm for the latest Project updates. With this good news in mind and remaining cognizant of the many challenges lying ahead for all of our beach projects in 2004, let's take a quick break and revisit last year's beach restoration efforts and other newsworthy events.

2003 got off to a quick start when Weeks Marine's cutterhead dredge the *RS Weeks* arrived to the offshore waters of Emerald Isle (EI) on January 13th to begin Phase II of the Bogue Banks Restoration Project, or commonly referred to as the Eastern EI Restoration Project. The hopper dredges *RN Weeks* and *BE Lindholm* accompanied the *RS Weeks* in the following months to place a total of 1,847,762 cy of sand along the easternmost 5.89 miles of EI by March 27th. That's a volume equivalent to a block of sand the size of 50 x 100 yard football field well over a 1,000 foot high! Approximately 101,000 cy of sand included in the project total was utilized for dune construction. The remaining balance of the beachfill was distributed in three different zones along the project that each received a specific volume of sand based on pre-project conditions and the health of the beach.

Concurrently with the construction of the Eastern EI Project, a group of individuals representing State and Federal resource agencies, advocacy groups, property owners, and local government officials began meeting on a regular basis to help formulate the proposed Bogue Inlet Channel Realignment Project. This group is collectively known as the Project Development Team and continued to meet throughout the entire year to provide guidance for the environmental/planning/engineering document associated with this effort, which is known as the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). EI's consultants, Coastal Planning & Engineering, issued a Draft EIS for a public comment period that closed just before 2003 came to an end (December 26th). There is every intention that this Project will be constructed in winter 2004-05 and accordingly, the Final EIS should be completed in the next couple of months and the appropriate permits will need to be obtained in summer 2004 to make this project a reality.

The proposed channel realignment is estimated to be positioned approximately 3,550 feet west of its current location near the Pointe, and is anticipated to range from a width of 150 to 500 feet for approximately 7,000 feet, with an estimated channel depth of 13.5 feet. A total of one million cy will be dredged during the realignment event. Approximately 800,000 cy will be used to nourish the beaches of western EI extending from the vicinity of Land's End eastward to Pinta Drive (approximately 4 miles total), and the final 200,000 cy will be used to construct a sand dike in the present Bogue Inlet channel. The proposed channel dimensions have been designed to adequately capture the tidal prism of Bogue Inlet and the dike feature has been proposed to augment shoaling of what will be the former inlet channel.

Let's not forget another newsmaker this year, Hurricane *Isabel*. *Isabel's* site of landfall, her angle and speed of approach, and the orientation of Bogue Banks proved to be favorable in terms of limiting the damage sustained by the island from this Hurricane. However, many of these same

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circumstances were the means for serious damage to personal property, businesses, and infrastructure in Down East Carteret, Hyde, and Dare Counties in 2003.

And of course, we couldn't discuss the year of 2003 without mentioning the Morehead City Harbor Section 933 Project. In an effort to overcome Federal appropriation obstacles, the overall Project was divided into two construction phases in summer 2003. Dredged material from the Inner Harbor reach near the Port of Morehead City is temporarily stored at the upland disposal site of Brandt Island and 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 originally expected to be constructed in 2003-04. However, a legal dispute filed by Norfolk Dredging, the dredging contract runner-up to Bean Stuyvesant for the pump-out, has delayed the Brandt Island pump-out to Fort Macon, Atlantic Beach, and the Section 933 portion to Pine Knoll Shores indefinitely as the contract for this phase of work is still being contested in the courts.

Dredged material from the Outer Harbor on the other hand, which is routinely dumped offshore, was scheduled to be placed along the shorelines of Indian Beach/Salter Path in 2004-05 and would complete the overall Section 933 effort. The circumstances regarding the Norfolk Dredging vs. Bean Stuyvesant lawsuit has simply shifted our efforts this year and the "Outer Harbor Phase" of the 933 Project is being constructed this winter as mentioned in the opening of our year in review summary. Hopefully the legal dispute that has upset our Brandt Island pump-out schedule will be resolved in 2004 and we can look forward to completing the "Pump-Out Phase" of the Section 933 in 2004-05.