



North Carolina General Assembly
Senate Chamber
State Legislative Building
Raleigh, NC 27601-2808

May 26, 2015

The Honorable Richard Burr	The Honorable Thom Tillis
The Honorable G. K. Butterfield	The Honorable Renee Ellmers
The Honorable Walter B. Jones, Jr.	The Honorable David Price
The Honorable Virginia Foxx	The Honorable Mark Walker
The Honorable David Rouzer	The Honorable Richard Hudson
The Honorable Robert Pittenger	The Honorable Patrick McHenry
The Honorable Mark Meadows	The Honorable Alma Adams
The Honorable George Holding	

Dear North Carolina Congressional Delegation:

We are writing this letter asking for assistance with the critical situation at Oregon Inlet (Manteo – Shallowbag Bay). An open, dependable and navigable channel is needed to protect and allow economic growth in the region and for the entire State of North Carolina. The safety and navigability of Oregon Inlet is also needed for commercial and recreational boats. In addition, it is imperative that there is an in-and-out-flow for the waters of the Albemarle, Pamlico, Currituck and Croatan sounds. Without a constant exchange of water, the combined sounds have no way of flushing and therefore affecting the ecosystem. Many species of fish and other marine life that need both the ocean water and freshwater in order to spawn and complete other stages of their life cycles are impacted without access to and from the ocean.

The economic impact of Oregon Inlet is very significant and far outweighs the costs necessary to keep the inlet passable. The latest study (completed May 2014) suggests a total annual economic impact of 4,348 jobs and \$548.4 million in total economic impacts to Dare County, the surrounding region, and the State of North Carolina. The inlet has provided outstanding economic impacts to our state, even with the navigation closed more than 25% of the time in recent years. Until recently the navigation channel was closed for six (6) months in succession. In 2013, just federal taxes collected attributed to Oregon Inlet were reported to be \$33.7 million.

The U.S. Corps of Engineers has rarely achieved the authorized depth and width of the navigation channel at Oregon Inlet in the last decade, and if and when achieved, it was very short lived. At the present time, dredging is the only approach permitted, and federal maintenance funds appear to be very difficult to find. Therefore, attempts are proceeding to put together state and local funding in the short term to fill the obligation, which is ultimately a federal responsibility in order to avoid a complete navigation shutdown at Oregon Inlet.





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The history of decreased federal funding and the state efforts to find other sources of sustainable funding indicate that North Carolina will need to find a long term solution to navigability at Oregon Inlet. We write to urge the delegation to help North Carolina obtain the tools it needs to find that long term solution.

One key tool is control of the land surrounding Oregon Inlet. Included in the 2014 North Carolina State Budget are provisions directing the N.C. Department of Administration (DOA) to negotiate with the U.S. Department of the Interior to reclaim the land around Oregon Inlet. Therefore, we would like for our federal congressional delegation to explore authorizing ownership of the property adjacent to Oregon Inlet to the State of North Carolina so the state can more effectively pursue the responsibility of managing the sand at Oregon Inlet in the long term.

Simply acquiring the property will allow the state to protect and enhance our economy for the present and future at Oregon Inlet. If you or someone in your office could be of any assistance, we would greatly appreciate it. For further information, please contact DOA Secretary Bill Daughtridge at (919) 807-2324.

Sincerely,

Senator Bill Cook
 N.C. Senate District 1

Senator Phil Berger
 N.C. Senate District 26

Senator Harry Brown
 N.C. Senate District 6

Senator Tom Apodaca
 N.C. Senate District 48

Senator Bob Rucho
 N.C. Senate District 39

Senator Jerry Tillman
 N.C. Senate District 29





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Senator Brent Jackson
N.C. Senate District 10

Senator Andrew Brock
N.C. Senate District 34

Senator Ralph Hise
N.C. Senate District 47

Senator Buck Newton
N.C. Senate District 11

Senator Bill Rabon
N.C. Senate District 8

Senator Trudy Wade
N.C. Senate District 27

Senator Stan Bingham
N.C. Senate District 33

Senator Tommy Tucker
N.C. Senate District 35

Senator Norman Sanderson
N.C. Senate District 2

Senator Mike Woodard
N.C. Senate District 22

Senator David Curtis
N.C. Senate District 4

Senator Fletcher Hartsell
N.C. Senate District 36





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Senator Erica Smith-Ingram
 N.C. Senate District 3

Senator Andy Wells
 N.C. Senate District 42

Senator Joyce Krawiec
 N.C. Senate District 31

Senator John Alexander
 N.C. Senate District 15

Senator Mike Lee
 N.C. Senate District 9

- cc: The Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States of America
 Secretary Sally Jewell, U.S. Department of the Interior
 The Honorable Patrick McCrory, Governor of North Carolina
 The Honorable Daniel J. Forest, Lt. Governor of North Carolina
 Secretary Bill Daughtride, N.C. Department of Administration

