



PUBLIC INFORMATION

ITEM NO. 4.

DATE OF MEETING: December 3, 2012

REQUESTED BY: Howard Braxton, Mayor, Town of Topsail Beach

SHORT TITLE: Dredging New Topsail Inlet

BACKGROUND: The purpose of this item is to bring the Board's attention to the necessity of its support in securing funding to keep the New Topsail Inlet open. The New Topsail Inlet is a key concern for Pender County, Hampstead, Surf City and Topsail Beach. Last year we were fortunate enough to receive federal monies for damage to the inlet from Hurricane Irene and the inlet was dredged. Federal funding for maintaining shallow draft inlets is no longer available. The State of North Carolina recognizes the importance of these shallow draft inlets and is willing to provide matching funds for Army Corps dredging up to fifty percent. New Topsail Inlet is at risk for closing, to depths that are hazardous to boaters. If this condition worsens, there is a possibility that the channel markers will be pulled. The cost annually for dredging is \$450,000. The State will pay half this cost, but require a match from municipalities. Revenues from activities associated with the inlet benefit all Pender County towns. If Pender County, Surf City and Topsail Beach participate at equal levels for this project, (\$75,000) the State match will be \$225,000. The inlet is the life blood of this area for recreational and commercial boating. Keeping this inlet open is a top priority to maintain a pollution free and environmentally sustainable ecosystem for residents and visitors to the area.