

**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Jason E. Brown, County Administrator

THROUGH: Richard B. Szpyrka, P.E., Public Works Director

FROM: Eric Charest, Natural Resources Manager

SUBJECT: Sebastian Inlet Technical Advisory Committee Participation

DATE: October 25, 2021

DESCRIPTION AND CONDITIONS

On August 31, 2021, the Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection within the Florida Department of Environmental Protection released the final version of their Annual Inlet Report (2021). This report represented the Department's efforts under a new requirement within Section 161.143 (5) of the Florida Statutes (FS). The FDEP is now required to update and maintain an annual report concerning the extent to which each inlet project within the State has succeeded in balancing the sediment (sand) budget of the inlet. The report estimates the amount of sand bypassed, transferred, or otherwise placed on adjacent eroding beaches for the purpose of offsetting the erosive effects of inlets on the beaches of the State.

This 2021 Annual Inlet Report identified an apparent deficit of the Sebastian Inlet in meeting its' bypass objective, reflecting only 61.57% of their sand bypass objective was being met. This bypass objective, identified in the Sebastian Inlet Management Plan (IMP), was established through a Technical Review Committee's (TRC) recommendations to the FDEP in 2000 after review of supporting studies and reports under provisions of FS Sections 161.161. Representation on the TRC included the FDEP, the Sebastian Inlet Tax District Commission, Brevard County and Indian River County.

As a result of on-going studies in and around the Sebastian Inlet and adjacent beaches since the TRC recommendations were prepared, a better understanding of the transport of sand has been obtained and with that information, the FDEP is seeking to convene a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The formation of a TAC provides FDEP with a means to involve key stakeholder groups and professionals in utilizing the most recent scientific information available to provide technical expertise and feedback to the FDEP for decision making. The Sebastian Inlet TAC will address questions and comments regarding the Inlet's sediment budget and findings reported in the 2021 Annual Inlet Report.

Indian River County was represented in the initial TRC back in 2000, and since Indian River County possesses a vested interest in the down-shore transport of sand from the Sebastian Inlet to the shoreline south of the inlet, it is in the best interest of the County to participate in the upcoming TAC. As participation on the TAC requires extensive coastal engineering data analysis and review, the County's participation in the TAC would also require that County obtain professional assistance from coastal engineering experts familiar with beach design in the northern part of the County.

County staff is currently working with Aptim Environmental & Infrastructure LLC, under the Continuing Contract Agreement for Continuing Engineering Services, on a proposal for technical support during the Sebastian Inlet TAC.

FUNDING

Funding is not required for County staff to participate in the Sebastian Inlet Technical Advisory Committee. However, there will be a cost for technical coastal engineering support services, which will be provided to the Board of County Commissioners (Board) at a later date for action.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests that the Board approve Indian River County Public Works Director Richard Szpyrka, P.E. to serve as County's representation on the TAC, with Indian River County's Natural Resources Manager Eric Charest serving as his alternate.

ATTACHMENT

1. Annual Inlet Report (2021)

APPROVED AGENDA ITEM FOR NOVEMBER 2, 2021