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## **Danger in the President's Fiscal Year 2009 Budget**

**Washington, DC** – Despite 53 percent of all American's living in coastal counties, and an average of 3,600 people per day moving to coastal areas, the President's Fiscal Year 2009 Budget proposes drastic spending cuts for projects to protect coastal communities from natural disasters and coastal erosion. A review by American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) of the budget proposal finds that the cuts are contrary to stated Administration policy and the desires of Congress and the American people.

“Although the President pledged only two years ago to never let a disaster similar to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita happen again, with this budget he is setting up America for more such disasters,” said Mayor Harry Simmons, President of the ASBPA.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which is the primary federal agency to construct and maintain coastal flood control projects, will face a budget cut of over 15 percent in the proposed budget. Unfortunately the majority of that cut comes in the accounts that fund projects and studies designed to limit the impact of future disasters. Thirty-nine percent has been cut from the Construction General account, which funds congressionally authorized coastal flood control projects that have been shown to offer economic, environmental, and disaster prevention benefits. Even worse, 76 percent will be slashed from General Investigations account that funds studies to determine how to reduce coastal hazards, as well as prevent loss of life and property destruction. As the climate warms, storms increase in severity and sea levels rise, these flood control projects will be the first line of defense to protect coastal communities.

“What is most disturbing about this budget proposal is that with so little money proposed for the Construction and General Investigation accounts, the President clearly feels that the federal government has no future role in protecting coastal communities.” Mayor Simmons concluded, “While there are over 100 beach protection studies or construction projects that have been authorized by Congress to receive federal funding, the President's Fiscal Year 2009 Budget provides funding for only nine. It will once again fall upon Congress to increase the budget and to find funding for these projects that have been shown time and time again to provide protection to millions of Americans.”

**ABOUT ASBPA:** *Founded in 1926, the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) represents the scientific, technical and political interests along the coast in an effort to shape national research and policy concerning shore and beach management and restoration. ASBPA strives to engage in a factual debate on coastal issues and economics that will foster sound, far-sighted and economical development and preservation of our beaches; thereby aiding in placing their beliefs within the reach of the largest possible number of people in accordance with the ideals of a democratic nation. For additional information about ASBPA, please visit [www.asbpa.org](http://www.asbpa.org).*