

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OMB HAS PULLED THE PLUG ON COASTAL PROTECTION

ASBPA has learned that the White House Office of Management and Budget has pulled funding for every beach renourishment project from the Stimulus list prepared by the Corps of Engineers. We understand their reasoning is that using Federal funds for periodic beach nourishment is contrary to Administration budget policy. We doubt that a President from a state that has one of the largest shore protection projects in the nation, or a Vice President from a state whose coastline is lined with sandy beaches that are favorite summer destinations of thousands of Washington-area residents supports such a wrong-headed policy.

ASBPA is outraged by this decision. The lessons of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Ike and others have been quickly forgotten by OMB, or never learned. While professing to insist on Corps projects that reduce risk and have high benefit-to-cost ratios, they have denied funding to the very coastal restoration projects that will reduce the risk to lives and property – and reduce the American taxpayers' cost of storm recovery.

Beaches are coastal levees. OMB supports inland levees, but not those on the coast. Beaches provide nesting ground for endangered species. OMB supports environmental restoration projects, but not if they are on the coast. European countries have learned that sand is one of the tools to be used in adapting to rising sea levels. Apparently OMB is opposed to adaptation.

OMB is also ignoring the mandate of the Recovery Act to fund projects that create jobs. Every year, there are over 2 billion visitors to the America's beaches. At a time of economic recession, the beach is an even more desirable destination than other domestic and foreign alternatives. In 2007, beaches contributed \$322 billion to the America's economy. More importantly, for every dollar the federal government spends on beach nourishment, it gets \$320 back in tax revenues. An Administration that is looking for more ways to bail out Wall Street firms that made bad investments is summarily rejecting one of the best investments of American taxpayer dollars, investments that directly benefit Main Street.

Year after year for the past 14 years, Congress has decisively rejected the efforts of these same faceless bureaucrats who have tried to gut the Federal beach nourishment program. Year after year for each of those 14 years, the President has signed appropriations legislation that has included funding for beach nourishment projects. The Recovery Act, however, put OMB in the driver's seat, and they have chosen to ignore the will of Congress and instead have driven the bus in the wrong direction.

We are asking every family that plans to go to the beach this summer, and every American who has ever gone to the beach, to send this message to the White House and Congress today --

Please Don't Let OMB Destroy America's Beaches!

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You can send your message directly to the White House and Your Elected Officials:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/> and

<http://capwiz.com/mandcmp/issues/alert/?alertid=12992596&type=ML>

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. The group strives to engage 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 benefits within the reach of the largest possible number of people in accordance with the ideals of a democratic nation. For more information on the ASBPA, go to www.asbpa.org.