

ASBPA GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AGENDA FOR 2007

Founded in 1926, the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association represents the scientific, technical and political interests along the coast in an effort to shape national coastal research and policies that promote responsible stewardship of America's coastal resources. The following outline of ASBPA's Government Affairs Agenda for 2007 lists the major federal policy initiatives needed to accomplish that objective. More information on this agenda can be obtained by emailing beaches@asbpa.org.

- **Funding Initiatives**

1. ASBPA supports *increased funding for studies and beach restoration projects throughout the nation* and urges the Administration to include them in its budget recommendations. If the Administration does not recommend adequate funding for these studies and projects, *ASBPA respectfully reminds Congress that it is essential that priority be given to funding the periodic nourishments* to which Congress has made a statutory commitment. In addition, *ASBPA urges Congress to fund new beach nourishment study and construction starts, and permit projects to move seamlessly from study to design to construction*. ASBPA estimates the cost of providing adequate federal funding for all beach restoration projects and studies in FY 2008 to be over \$170 million, which will be matched by nearly \$100 million from states and localities.
2. ASBPA supports *adequate federal funding for shallow draft federal waterways*, including the nation's Intracoastal Waterway systems.
3. ASBPA supports *funding for the National Shoreline Technology Demonstration Program* (the "Section 227 Program") at no less than \$10 million, and the *National Shoreline Management Study* at no less than \$1 million. Equally important is the need to provide at least \$20 million for the national "*Regional Sediment Management (RSM) Demonstration Program*" as well as other RSM programs in coastal states.
4. The U.S. Ocean Commission report and the President's Ocean Action Plan highlight the need to assemble and make available to the public coastal and ocean data. ASBPA urges Congress to *initiate funding for the National Coastal Data Bank*. By appropriating \$1 million, Congress can begin a four-year effort to establish an Internet-based home for existing federal, state, and academic institution data.
5. ASBPA also supports *increased funding for FEMA's pre-disaster mitigation program* and urges that agency to recognize the significant damage mitigation benefits derived from nourished beaches.

6. ASBPA supports the *completion of the 2005 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment* being conducted by NOAA's Coastal and Ocean Resource Economics Division. As this study continues, ASBPA supports \$375,000 in FY 2008 funding to complete the 2005 Survey and \$20,000 for a demonstration project that will allow NOAA to share the collected economic data with coastal states.

- **Policy Initiatives**

1. ASBPA supports *passage of a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)* as early in 2007 as possible.

2. ASBPA supports *enactment of WRDA bill language that prohibits the Administration from making any change in the federal beach nourishment program* without prior congressional approval.

3. ASBPA supports inclusion in WRDA of *new authority for the Corps of Engineers to use regional sand management, sand recycling, and watershed management planning in all coastal regions* of the country. This holistic approach should include coastal shorelines, intracoastal waterways, as well as the inlets, canals and other facilities which enable people to utilize these coastal resources and waterways. In addition, the approach should emphasize the wise management of environmental resources to include sand availability and disposal.

4. ASBPA urges the inclusion in WRDA of language requiring the Corps of Engineers to give equal weight to the economic benefits of tourism and recreation in formulating beach nourishment projects.

5. ASBPA urges that WRDA include language which (a) *extends the authorization and increases the funding level of the National Shoreline Technology Demonstration Program* (b) provides a procedure for *extending the authorized period for federal participation in the costs of periodic renourishment* beyond the limit established by WRDA '86.

6. ASBPA supports the *development of guidelines that enable local governments to avoid being penalized for undertaking interim erosion control activities* prior to a pending federal beach nourishment project.

7. ASBPA encourages *federal initiatives to develop research in coastal engineering and science*.

8. ASBPA supports the *development of the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS)*. Enhanced collection and analysis of coastal and ocean data will improve public policy decisions and will also help provide advance warning of hazardous conditions to potentially-affected coastal communities.

9. ASBPA urges Congress to *reauthorize the BEACH Act*. This legislation allows the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to continue working with states and communities to improve the quality of our nation's recreational coastal waters including adjacent watersheds that are critical to clean beaches.

10. ASBPA supports a *multi-agency approach to assess the economic and environmental impacts of beaches and the beach nourishment process.*

11. ASBPA urges all levels of government to adopt measures to assure that all members of the public have *access to coastal resources* and to encourage *development practices that are consistent with natural hazards and local conditions.* In addition, federal agencies such as FEMA and the Corps of Engineers should reward those communities that have adopted such practices.

12. ASBPA urges the Corps of Engineers to adopt changes its internal regulations which permit the development of quality-based water resource project plans in a shorter time and at less cost.

13. ASBPA urges the Corps of Engineers and federal resource agencies to initiate *a pilot program to test protocols that assure that the long-term environmental impacts of beach nourishment projects are better understood.* The goal of this effort is to lessen to the maximum extent possible any negative long-term impacts of such projects.

- **Other Initiatives**

1. ASBPA supports the *re-creation of a Senate Coastal Caucus* as well as the *strengthening of the House Coastal Caucus* and the *Congressional Waterways Caucus* and will provide each with day-to-day assistance.

2. ASBPA supports the mission of the *re-established Congressional Hazards Caucus* and will participate in the activities of the Congressional Hazards Caucus Alliance, a working group formed to provide information and support to Caucus members. The Hazards Caucus is focused on reducing the impacts of natural disasters and enhancing the nation's ability to recover from these events.

3. ASBPA supports the efforts of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to *expand property owner participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.*

ASBPA is committed to providing factual, science-based information on the issues affecting America's coastal communities and resources. ASBPA pledges to work with Congress, the Administration, and public and private sector water resource interests to achieve the objectives outlined above.

Further information about these issues can be found on ASBPA's website (www.asbpa.org).