

# Protect America's Coasts

**Whereas**, the coast of Okaloosa County is one of the region's natural treasures; and

**Whereas**, the nation's coastal regions are economic engines providing recreational opportunities and environmental resources that deserve to be preserved and protected; and

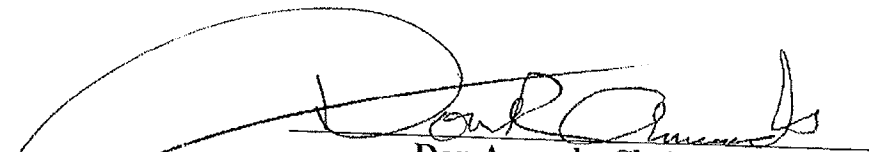
**Whereas**, nearly 60 percent of all Americans live within 50 miles of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the Gulf of Mexico, and the five Great Lakes; and

**Whereas**, America's beaches are major tourist destinations for millions of domestic and foreign visitors, providing jobs and business profits that produce billions of dollars in tax revenue for the federal government; and

**Whereas**, the devastation caused by hurricanes and severe weather underscores the urgent need to invest in our nation's water resources infrastructure to reduce the risk that lives will be lost and property destroyed;

**Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved** that Okaloosa County supports the efforts of the American Shore & Beach Preservation Association to promote initiatives that encourage the federal government to acknowledge its responsibility for partnering with state and local governments to develop and implement plans that will protect and preserve America's coasts and their inhabitants.

**Be it Further Resolved** that a copy of this **Resolution** be furnished to **Senator Martinez, Senator Nelson, U.S. Representative Boyd and U.S. Representative Miller**, and that said elected officials be requested to lend their support to the passage of these desperately needed programs



**Don Amunds, Chairman**  
Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners

**Date:** December 21, 2007

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## ASBPA and Okaloosa County Support the following Federal Initiatives

- **Increase funding for federal-state-local studies and projects whose primary objective is to preserve valuable coastal resources and prevent storm damages.** ASBPA estimates the cost of providing adequate funding for the federal share of the most pressing of these studies and projects in Fiscal Year 2009 to be about \$300 million, which will be matched by over \$175 million from states and localities
- **Provide adequate funding for shallow draft federal waterways,** including the nation's Intracoastal Waterway systems. These shallow draft and Intracoastal waterways are an essential part of America's waterways system, whose commercial and recreational users provide significant tax revenues to the federal government
- **Fund the National Shoreline Technology Demonstration Program at no less than \$10 million, the National Shoreline Management Study at no less than \$1 million, and \$30 million for the newly-authorized National Regional Sediment Management Program.** Together, these programs provide new initiatives to involve stakeholders at all levels of government the opportunity to use the best data, the latest proven technologies, and the best techniques for resource management to protect and preserve America's coasts
- **Initiate \$1 million in funding for the National Coastal Data Bank** to begin a four-year effort to establish an Internet-based home for existing federal, state, and academic institution data on coastal processes
- **Increase funding for FEMA's pre-disaster mitigation program** so that communities can take steps to reduce the damage caused by severe storms
- **Complete the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment** begun in 2005 by NOAA's Coastal and Ocean Resource Economics Division to allow NOAA to share the collected economic data with coastal states
- **Enact a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) in 2008** so that Congress can return to a biennial schedule of this bill that is critical for the nation's water resources infrastructure
- **Include in WRDA language requiring the federal governments to give equal weight to the economic benefits of tourism, recreation, boating, and fishing to the region and the nation in formulating beach nourishment projects**
- **Develop guidelines that enable local governments and private homeowner groups to avoid being penalized for undertaking interim erosion control measures prior to a pending federal beach nourishment**
- **Encourage federal initiatives to develop new research in coastal engineering and science** that will keep the U.S. as a leader in those disciplines
- **Support 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
- **Promote improved beach water quality through reauthorization of the BEACH Act** and investing in the testing of new technologies that will offer the public faster and surer warnings of contaminated swimming water
- **Support a multi-level, multi-agency approach to assess the economic and environmental impacts of beaches and the beach nourishment process** and develop a coherent national coastal policy preserve resources and reduce risk
- **Urge all levels of government to adopt measures to assure that all members of the public have access to coastal resources and encourage development practices that are consistent with natural hazards and local conditions.** In addition, programs managed federal agencies such as FEMA and the Corps of Engineers should reward those communities that have adopted such measures