

## Administration

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Flagler County to host groundbreaking ceremony for Army Corps project 10 a.m. June 17 at Veterans Park

**June 11, 2024** –Flagler County will host a groundbreaking ceremony for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) “Coastal Storm Risk Management Beach Nourishment Project” – more than a decade in the making – at 10 a.m. June 17 at Veterans Park in Flagler Beach.

“We are ecstatic to finally see this project getting underway,” said County Administrator Heidi Petito. “There is an overwhelming sense of relief for our residents and businesses that a portion of our beach and dunes will be rebuilt with 90 cubic yards of sand per foot, which is 15 times the amount of sand that has been placed for the multiple ‘emergency sand’ projects we have completed following several damaging storms.”

The Army Corps of Engineers agreed in May 2023 to expand the original 2.6-mile project between South 6th Street to South 28th Street to add two Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) projects that take the project northward to North 7th Street and southward into the Gamble Rogers State Park for a total 3.5 miles. This expedites restoration of a larger section of beach and dunes around the Flagler Beach Pier in a more cost-effective manner.

“The project will provide a holistic, environmentally friendly defense against future storms once it is constructed,” said Coastal Engineering Administrator Ansley Wren-Key. “This project will provide a wide recreational beach for our residents and tourists that supports the local economy. Simultaneously, it will protect A1A, homes, and businesses along this section of the Flagler coastline, while increasing coastal resiliency for faster and less expensive recovery after large coastal storms.”

The chief benefit of having a federalized Army Corps project, which is just the original 2.6 miles, is that a completed beach project that is washed away by future hurricanes and significant storms will be rebuilt without additional local funding, according to USACE Senior Project Manager Jason Harrah. Emergency renourishment after declared storm events is 100% federally funded for 50 years within Army Corps project areas.

Other benefits include: preventing damage to State Road A1A and other property; more towel space for bathers on the beach – returning its appearance to what it was before Hurricane Matthew; and, native vegetation will

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stabilize the dunes, and permit extra natural habitat for shorebirds, sea turtles, as well as other marine and coastal species.

Flagler County held a ceremonial signing of its agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers in July 2019. At the time, it was stated that the project should reduce potential damage by 95% over the 50-year period of federal participation, upon project completion, and produce just under \$1.2 million in average annual benefits.

The initial construction will be followed by four additional nourishments about 11 years apart.

The original project approved in the USACE “Chiefs Report” that was signed in 2014 called for 330,000 cubic yards of sand to be taken from the borrow source that is 11.75 miles offshore. The current project – slated for construction to begin in June 2024 – calls for 1.3 million cubic yards of sand.

“As always, safety in construction areas is a concern so beach access will be prohibited in the active work zones,” Wren-Key said. “Outside of that active area, there will be public access complete with sand ramps to cover the pipelines every 200 to 300 feet. The Army Corps of Engineers will have a website to show where they will be working each week throughout construction of the project, and we will have that link on our website as well.”

The project is expected to take four months to complete. For additional project information, go to [www.flaglercounty.gov/departments/engineering/coastal-engineering](http://www.flaglercounty.gov/departments/engineering/coastal-engineering).

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