

WALTER B. JONES
3D DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

ROOM 2333
RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3415

COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1105-C CORPORATE DRIVE
GREENVILLE, NC 27858
(252) 931-1003
(800) 351-1697

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

April 29, 2014

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I am writing to respectfully request a meeting with elected leaders from Dare County, North Carolina and me to discuss funding for maintenance dredging of Oregon Inlet.

As you may know, in 2003 the White House Council on Environmental Quality killed the jetty project that would have largely solved the problem of maintaining safe navigation through the inlet. In lieu of jetties, the administration pledged to provide sufficient funding for dredging to maintain the channel. Unfortunately, that promise has not been kept. Dredging dollars in the presidents' budget requests have gone down almost every year since then. The president's request for fiscal year 2015 is roughly \$800,000, an amount that is woefully short of what is needed to keep the inlet maintained year round. And because both Congress and the president have banned congressional earmarks, thereby eliminating the legislative branch's ability to increase funding for any individual project through legislation, the funding amount requested in the president's budget is effectively the amount allocated to the project.

The inlet is now in crisis. A channel that is authorized at 14 feet deep has shoaled in to less than 4 feet in some places, effectively closing it to most marine traffic. The situation is taking a significant economic toll on the commercial and recreational fishing fleets that depend on the inlet, and the broader Dare County economy as well.

The Army Corps of Engineers – Wilmington District has done everything they can with the limited funding available to them. However, the fiscal year 2014 appropriated operations and maintenance dollars that the Corps has allocated to the project are almost gone. Additional financial resources are required to get the inlet back open and to keep it open, and Dare County's leaders and I would like to meet with you to discuss options for achieving that goal.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Thank you!

Walter B. Jones

Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress