

WALTER B. JONES
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

January 27, 2016

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

Lieutenant General Thomas P. Bostick
Commanding General & Chief of Engineers
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G St., NW
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Brig. Gen. C. David Turner, Commander
Army Corps of Engineers, South Atlantic
60 Forsythe St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8801

Colonel Kevin P. Landers, Commander
Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington
69 Darlington Ave.
Wilmington, NC 28403

Dear Asst. Sec. Darcy, Lt. Gen. Bostick, Brig. Gen. Turner, and Col. Landers:

Last year I wrote the attached letter urging you to allocate federal funding to New River Inlet at a level sufficient to meet the operational needs of the Marine Corps, as well as commercial and private vessel traffic. As Marine Corps Installations East – Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune stated in an attachment to that letter:

“ . . . it is vital that the New River Inlet remains passable to support said missions. To accommodate II MEF’s operational needs through the inlet, the channel should be dredged to a depth not less than 10 feet and not less than 70 feet in width.”

I bring this to your attention again because the channel has deteriorated and is nowhere close to that depth. As the most recent Corps’ survey shows (see attached), much of the channel is now just 4-6 feet deep. Some sections are shallower than that.

Last week I met with senior leaders of Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune and the local county government to discuss this project. They reiterated that channel conditions are impacting Marine Corps operations and training. That’s not right. We must do better.

While the presidents’ budget requests included an average of \$663,000 a year for New River Inlet in fiscal years 2000 to 2011, the president’s budget requests for the past five years included no money for the project. As you know, due to the ban on congressional earmarks, North Carolina’s senators and I have no ability to add money to the project through the legislative process.

However, to address situations like these, Congress added to the Corps’ fiscal year 2016 appropriations bill several unallocated pots of money for different project categories. In particular, \$48 million was added for “Small, Remote or Subsistence Navigation.” New River Inlet should be eligible for funding from this pot.

Given the critical importance of this project to the operations, training and readiness of our Marines at Camp Lejeune, I strongly encourage you to allocate a portion of the FY16 resources provided to you by Congress to dredge New River Inlet back to 10 feet. I also once again encourage you to do all you can to ensure that federal funding will be allocated to New River Inlet in future fiscal years at a level sufficient to keep the channel at 10 feet.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Walter B. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress

WALTER B. JONES
3D DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

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

June 1, 2015

Mr. Shaun Donovan, Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Mrs. Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary, Army
Department of Defense
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, Chief of Engineers
Army Corps of Engineers
441 G St., NW
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Brig. Gen. C. David Turner, Commander
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Colonel Kevin P. Landers, Commander
Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington
69 Darlington Ave.
Wilmington, NC 28403

Dear Director Donovan, Asst. Sec. Darcy, Lt. Gen. Bostick, Brig. Gen. Turner, and Col. Landers:

Late last month I received the attached letters from Onslow County and Marine Corps Installations East – Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune regarding maintenance of New River Inlet. You will note that the second paragraph of the Marine Corps' letter states the following:

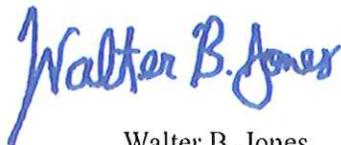
“ . . . it is vital that the New River Inlet remains passable to support said missions. To accommodate II MEF's operational needs through the inlet, the channel should be dredged to a depth not less than 10 feet and not less than 70 feet in width.”

I bring this to your attention because after the presidents' budget requests included an average of \$663,000 a year for New River Inlet in fiscal years 2000 to 2011, the president's budget requests for the past five years included no money for the project. As you know, due to the ban on congressional earmarks, North Carolina's senators and I have no ability to add money to the project through the legislative process. As a result, the funding (or lack thereof) specified for a project in the president's budget request is, more often than not, the amount that ultimately gets spent on the project in any given year.

With that in mind, I am seeking your assurance that, in both current and future fiscal years, federal funding will be allocated to New River Inlet at a level sufficient to meet the operational needs of the Marine Corps as stated in the attached letter. It is bad enough that limited federal funding for dredging is negatively affecting commerce on our nation's waterways and the jobs associated with it. It is another thing entirely when it may impact the readiness of our armed forces.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Walter B. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "W".

Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS EAST-MARINE CORPS BASE
PSC BOX 20005
CAMP LEJEUNE NC 28542-0005

3100
G-7

Mr. Jeffrey L. Hudson
Onslow County Government
234 NW Corridor Boulevard
Jacksonville, North Carolina 28540

Dear Mr. Hudson,

In response to your email of 31 Jan 2015, inquiring as to whether the USMC or USCG are experiencing difficulties with water borne vehicles accessing Onslow Bay through the New River Inlet, the following response is provided:

Mile Hammock Bay (MHB) is a strategic asset for the purpose of providing II MEF units a secondary embarkation/debarkation site other than Morehead City/Wilmington Ports. Additionally, MHB and the New River Inlet often serves as II MEF's primary embark/debark site during amphibious training exercises in Onslow Bay. Therefore, it is vital that the New River Inlet remains passable to support said missions. To accommodate II MEF's operational needs through the inlet, the channel should be dredged to a depth not less than 10 feet and not less than 70 feet in width:

If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact my Point of Contact, Mr. Joe Ramirez at (910)451-7645.

Very Respectfully,

William A. Meier
WILLIAM A. MEIER

AC/S G-7

Marine Corps Installations East-
Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune

Copy to:
Colonel Kevin P. Landers
Commander, District Engineer
US Army Corps of Engineers
Wilmington District
69 Darlington Avenue
Wilmington, North Carolina 28403