

THE BEACH RESTORATION / PROPERTY PROTECTION PROJECT  
Status as of December 16, 2011 – Simplified Summary

PROJECT SCOPE:

Using sand dredged and pumped from an off-shore shoal, the project is designed to nearly double, to some 50 feet, the width of the protective dunes and to significantly increase average beach width along the most southerly stretch of beach in St. Lucie County. The goal is to restore the beach to a condition better than that found some 40 years ago and, *most importantly, provides dramatically better protection for the ocean front buildings*. The sand to be used is essentially the same as that found on our beaches at present and the project will not adversely impact the environment in any significant way.

Because of concerns for natural reef formations near Sand Dollar Shores, these areas have been eliminated from the project, significantly reducing the scope of work and cost from the original proposal.

The total project would result in approximately 550,000 cubic yards of sand to be deposited along our beaches and dunes. If this work was to be done by truck haul using land based sand, it would require some 55,000 truckloads of material, clogging our area and ruining our roads. The land based sand would also be nearly twice the cost of off-shore sourced material.

THE COST:

Based on past owner feedback, St. Lucie county personnel have decided that the project will not be pursued without Florida state funding. Based on conversations with state officials, the county people are now more optimistic about receiving significant state funding if the project receives local voter support. The state funding would represent some 44% of the total project cost. Further, the county has increased its participation in the project to 23% of the total cost. The remaining 33% of the cost would be borne by St Lucie County property owners on South Hutchinson Island - principally ocean front owners whose property is most at risk.

The net result of these important changes is that the average residential cost share amount for ocean front property owners is now estimated at approximately \$1450 per condo or less than \$200 per year for 10 years if that option is taken by the owner. Given previous estimates of an average assessment of \$3400, these changes represent a major reduction of some 57%.

SOME POINTS WORTH NOTING:

The project will be submitted to a vote of affected parties on a proportional basis. For example, if one property owner's assessment is twice that of another owner, that owners vote would be worth twice the value. The vote will likely take place in February and will be accompanied by a very specific amount for each property's tax assessment.

Should the vote not garner 51% support, the issue would be dead. Any resubmission of requests for similar future beach restoration property protection would require a duplication of the extensive testing and approvals this project has undergone and probably would not be well received by the public authorities.

FEMA does require periodic beach nourishment but at a minimal scale compared to this project. Further it is hoped that this project will qualify us for no-cost future federal assistance in beach restoration.

FINAL THOUGHT:

No one likes to spend \$1500 unnecessarily, but considering what a larger beach and significantly increased building protection is worth to a \$300,000 + condo investment, it seems a pretty reasonable value. Storm damage is real, its impact is serious, and reasonable prudence in dealing with that threat seems only sensible to me.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Mike Monin, President, Island Dunes Oceanside I  
Patricia M. Pacitti, President, Presidents' Council of S Hutchinson Island