

The Joint Council of Taxpayer Associations of Long Beach Island
Post Office Box 2113
Brant Beach, NJ 08008

Members:

Holgate Taxpayers Association
Brant Beach Homeowners Association
Surf City Taxpayers Association
North Beach Estates Taxpayer Assoc.
Loveladies Property Owners
Seaview Beach Taxpayer Assoc.
High Bar Harbor Taxpayer Assoc.

Members:

LBT 10 Taxpayers Association
Beach Haven Taxpayers Assoc.
North Beach Taxpayers Assoc.
Harvey Cedars Taxpayers Assoc.
Loveladies Harbor Assoc.
Barnegat Light Taxpayers Assoc.

May 9, 2008

Public Affairs Office
Attn: Surf City
US Army Corp. of Engineers
Philadelphia District
100 Penn Square East
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3390

Re: Response to Public Notice CENAP-PA-4-03-2008

Dear Sir:

The Joint Council of Taxpayer Associations of Long Beach Island is an organization on Long Beach Island whose membership is composed of 13 taxpayer associations on the island, representing more than 5,000 families. The Council meets on a monthly basis to discuss issues that pertain to and affect LBI communities. One of the major issues is the current beach replenishment project, which encompasses the majority of the island's beaches.

Upon reviewing the Baltimore District's December, 2007, "Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis: Public Beaches Surf City and Ship Bottom, New Jersey", The Joint Council of Taxpayer Associations of LBI views Alternative F as the only viable course of action.

Aware that the Corps. is recommending Alternative E (Sieve Berm and Surf Zone to the Depth of the Sand Placement Project; Continue Land Use Controls on the Dune for five years), we offer the following case against that option:

1. Alternative E relies on land use controls (LUC), an unreliable component of safe beach use. During the summer of 2007, government agencies were not effective in garnering public awareness of the dangerous beach conditions. The pamphlets prepared by the USACE and the NJDEP to alert beachgoers of the dangers and appropriate action upon finding a munition were not adequately distributed.

Local press indicated that the public should not be concerned (Asbury Park Press and Press of Atlantic City 6/16/07). The Sandpaper reported that, after the pamphlet had been published, one individual called police to have a fuse removed from his home. In short, LUC, with their dependence on public awareness are ineffective.

2. Alternative E does not eliminate the possibility of migration of munitions from the dune to the flat beach or to adjacent private property.

3. Alternative E requires that “construction support must be provided during construction of new dune crossovers”. This construction support is inadequate. Ordnance undetected by magnetometers would remain buried in the dunes. Following the 5-year LUC period, every time a municipal employee mended a dune fence or a private citizen repaired his dune crossover, he could be injured or killed by a munition. This horrific circumstance could be avoided through sieving of the dune.

4. Alternative E sets up a high level of vulnerability for private property owners within the project boundaries. Signed easements do not release private property owners from liability due to munitions accidents within the boundaries of their property.

The Joint Council supports Alternative F (Sieve Entire Beach – Berm, Surf and Dune to the Depth of the Sand Placement Project; Discontinue Land Use Controls).

1. Alternative F creates the safest possible beach environment. It has the lowest proportional hazard level score among all the alternatives.

2. Alternative F diminishes and nearly eliminates the possibility of munitions migration to other areas.

3. Alternative F does not require special dune crossover construction support.

4. Alternative F diminishes and nearly eliminates the liability of private property owners due to presence of munitions on their land.

The Joint Council implores the USACE to clear thoroughly the Surf City and Ship Bottom beaches of potentially dangerous munitions. While it is more costly to include the dunes in the sieving of sand, the federal government must not leave the public vulnerable to possible contact with ordnance it has placed on private property; the USACE must reverse the grave potential liability it has placed upon private property owners.

Sincerely,

William Knarre, President
Joint Council of Taxpayer Assoc. of LBI

cc: Governor Jon S. Corzine
Senator Christopher Connors
Mayor Kirk O. Larson, Barnegat Light
Mayor Thomas J. Stewart, Beach Haven
Mayor Jonathan S. Oldham, Harvey Cedars
Mayor DiAnne C. Gove, Long Beach Township
Mayor William Huelsenbeck, Ship Bottom
Mayor Leonard T. Connors, Surf City