

**Blind Pass Restoration  
Project Update  
January 4, 2008**

**Acronyms:**

**Agencies of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)**

BBCS – Bureau of Beaches and Coastal Systems;  
CHAP –Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve;  
FWS – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

**Federal Agencies:**

USACE – United States Army Corps of Engineers  
FWS – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
NMFS – National Marine Fisheries (also part of NOAA)

**Local Agencies:**

CEPD – Captiva Erosion Prevention District

**Other:**

RAI – Request for Additional Information  
BO – Biological Opinion (issued by FWS through USACE)  
JCP – Joint Coastal Permit

**Items Previously Completed:**

Prior to the month of December the state and federal agencies had conceptually agreed to the maintenance dredging project and were awaiting the specific details of the proposed work and mitigation. The main concerns were as follows:

- (1) How to separate and handle the non-beach compatible material during the dredging event and
- (2) What type of mitigation efforts would clearly satisfy all concerns the project would be in the best interest of the environment and public.

Lee County, CEPD and the City of Sanibel had been working to address the concerns and clearly illustrate the projects intent through the DEP's RAI system. Once the concerns are formally addressed a JCP will be issued by BBCS and USACE.

**Progress This Month:**

The biggest accomplishment in the month of December was BBCS acceptance that all of the State's concerns were being properly addressed in the project plans. This means **no more RAI's**. BBCS accepted the following documents to establish the protocol for construction and monitoring of the project:

- Physical Monitoring Plan;
- Shorebird Management Plan; and
- Dredge Plan.

There were minor modifications required for the following documents, however not a sufficient amount to warrant an RAI:

- Sediment Quality Assurance / Quality Control Plan
- Biological Monitoring Plan
- Mitigation Plan; and
- Permit Sketches.

BBCS has been communicating with Lee County on a daily if not hourly basis to complete the documents and it is believed all but the permit sketches are in their final review by the State agencies. A revised set of permit sketches have been prepared by the design consultant and are scheduled to be delivered to BBCS on Monday, January 7<sup>th</sup>.

The time critical document in terms of construction is the Mitigation Plan. FWS requires this document to conduct the federal review of the project and issue a BO. This process takes an average of 90 days, which is expected to start on Monday, January 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Outstanding Items:**

Although BBCS recognizes the applicant (Lee County, CEPD, and City of Sanibel), has done everything to address the DEP's concerns of the project, they can not deem the permit complete without a federal BO. After the permit is deemed complete, a permit must be issued or denied within 90 additional days. Thus, a permit is expected no later than July. Construction can not begin prior to issuance of the permit.

During the federal review process, Lee County will be completing the Construction plans, specifications and contract documents so construction can begin when the permit is issued. Also, formal establishment of the no motor zone and pre-construction seagrass monitoring will be completed prior to construction. Any additional issues with the remaining items may also be resolved while the federal review process is occurring so the project may be bid in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2008 and construction in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.

The next update will be issued the first week of February.