

Storm Recovery Work

Lee County

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is helping to reduce storm damage risk and build resiliency in Florida communities. Thousands of people live and work on the Island of Gasparilla in the Gulf of Mexico.

Lee County Beach Erosion Control Project

Located along the southwest coast of Florida, the Lee County Beach Erosion Control Project places sand on three barrier islands, including Gasparilla Island. The Gasparilla Island Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Project includes renourishing approximately 2.8 miles of shoreline every seven years.

Hurricane Irma impacted Gasparilla Island in 2017, reducing sand volume and eroding the southern portion of the project. Flood Control and Coastal Emergency (FCCE) supplemental funding allows Jacksonville District to begin a project to dredge and place about 320,000 cubic yards of sand on 1.8 miles of the beach. This work will also include beach tilling, pipeline corridor hardbottom mapping, construction vibration controls and monitoring, turbidity monitoring, environmental species monitoring, beach fill remediation, and any incidental related work. The project will not use hopper dredges.

Jacksonville District awarded a \$6,428,820 contract April 23 to Weeks Marine of Cranford, NJ, for the work. Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/JacksonvilleDistrict or visit our webpage at www.saj.usace.army.mil/Gasparilla to get updates once construction starts May 13.

Beach material will be dredged from a borrow area located in the shoal to the north of Boca Grande Pass and piped onto the beach. Once started, construction operations will run 24 hours a day; however, work delays may occur due to mechanical problems or inclement weather. The beach will remain open to residents and visitors outside the work areas. The portion of the beach in active construction will close temporarily. Pedestrian crossovers will be built over the pipeline in intervals for public access to the ocean. Without delays, construction should move an average of about 500 feet (one to two city blocks) along the beach each day and the beach should be clear of all equipment and materials by June 22.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers received disaster funds provided in Public Law 115-123, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. The act provides nearly \$17.4 billion to the Corps for disaster recovery. Jacksonville District received \$3.348 billion for long-term recovery investments in its area of responsibility, which includes Florida, Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands. This funding will go towards 13 studies and 22 projects that will reduce risk to communities damaged by storm events. The total Federal funding allocation for Jacksonville District recovery efforts so far, including six FCCE projects, exceeds \$4 billion.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT

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US Army Corps
of Engineers



Frequently Asked Questions

Lee County Beach Erosion Control Project

Where on the beach will the project be located?

The project is located along a 2.8 mile stretch of the beach, but only 1.8 miles of beach will be renourished. The northern portion of the project area includes 1.4 miles of beach running from around 1st Street to 18th Street, where 161,000 cubic yards of sand will be used. The Southern .4 mile portion is in Gasparilla State park, which will get 159,000 cubic yards of sand.

What is the schedule?

Mobilization will begin May 13 and run to May 22. During this time, crews will bring equipment to the beach, lay the pipelines, build crossovers for pedestrians, and start the vibration pre-study. Beach renourishment begins around 1st Street on May 22 and continues north to around 18th Street where it should be finished on June 1. Work on the southern section of the project in Gasparilla State Park runs from June 1 to June 10, and removal of all equipment and materials will be completed between June 10 to June 22. The schedule may change if there are weather or mechanical delays.

Where will the pipeline be located?

There will be two pipelines feeding material from the borrow area. One will run to the northern part of the project, and the other to the South. Pedestrian bridges will allow access to the water, and beachgoers are asked to stay off of the pipeline for their safety.

Is the beach open during construction?

The area of active construction will be closed, which is usually about 1000-1500 feet of the beach at a time, but the rest of the beach will be open. Crews will build pedestrian crossings over the pipeline so visitors can reach the ocean.

Where will the sand come from?

The sand will come from an approved borrow area about 1 mile from the beach on a shoal north of Boca Grande Pass.

What parking areas will be impacted?

The crews will be using a portion of the parking area at Range Light Park as an access point for equipment, so visitors there may experience some congestion and parking impacts depending on when they visit. A second parking area near the state park may also be used for staging.

Will the entire beach get more sand?

No. Only 1.8 miles of the 2.8 mile project area need renourishment.

Will vibration monitoring occur along the beach?

Yes. A firm is contracted to monitor vibrations from construction throughout the project and will be completing a pre-project survey of specific buildings near the project area. These surveys are at no cost to the property owners.

How much sand will be placed?

A total of around 320,000 cubic yards in two project areas.

Will the sand be the same color?

Visitors may notice the new sand is slightly more coarse and gray. This sand meets specific criteria mandated by the State of Florida for Lee County beaches, including grain size distribution, shell content, and color. Over a few weeks, the sun will bleach the sand until it becomes closer to the color of the pre-project beach.

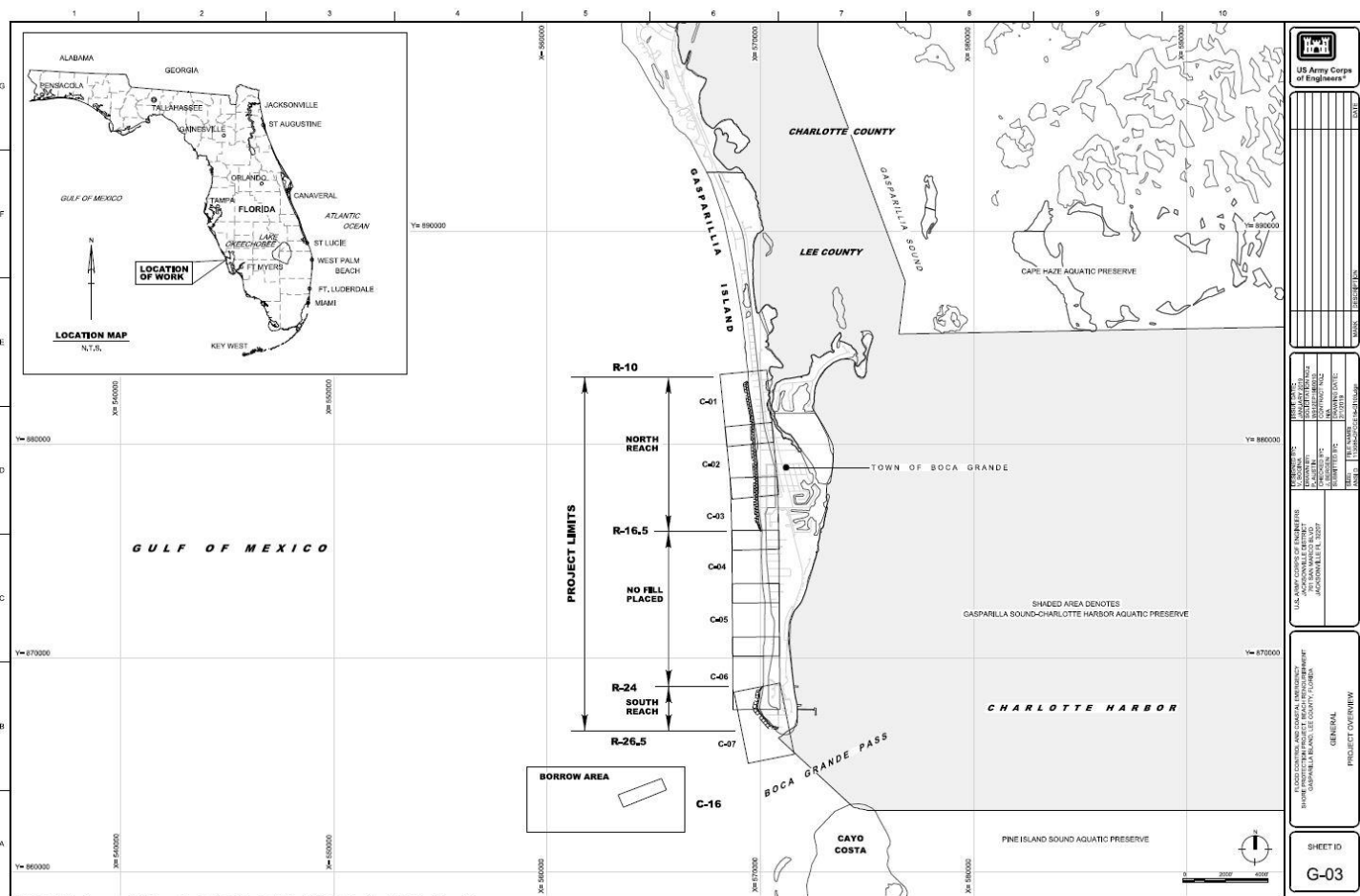
How quickly will the project move along the beach?

Barring any weather or mechanical delays, the work usually proceeds an average of about 500 feet along the shore per day, or about 1-2 blocks. The equipment shouldn't be in one location for long. The dredge pipeline, however, will likely remain on the beach until the filling operations are complete.



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