Protecting our Natural Environment

It's no secret that the heart and soul of Hilton Head Island is the 12 miles of beautiful beach that visitors and residents enjoy year-round. The beach is also the mainstay of the Island's environment and economy, and is why thousands live here and millions more visit. In order to preserve our beach, an infusion of sand is needed along some of the coast to ensure the sandy shoreline is wide enough for everyone – visitors and residents alike – to play and relax in the surf and sun. The Town of Hilton Head Island sponsors and funds the 2016 Beach Renourishment project. The project engineer is Olsen Associates, Inc. of Jacksonville, FL and the contractor Weeks Marine Inc. of Covington, LA.

2007 Beach Renourishment active work site near Palmetto Dunes. Photo courtesy of Town of Hilton Head Island

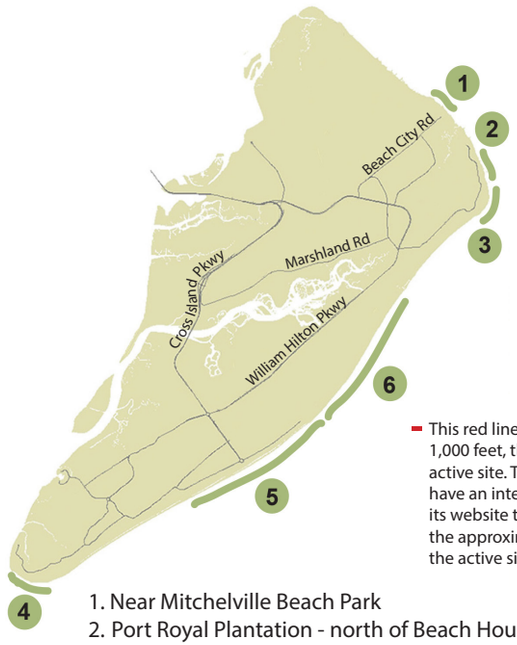
How do I obtain project updates?

- For more information regarding this project including daily location updates, an interactive map, photos, FAQ's and more, visit the Town of Hilton Head Island's website at **www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov**.
- Subscribe to the Town's E-Subscription Service "2016 Beach Renourishment Project" category to receive project updates and daily restricted area location reports via email and/or text message notifications. Visit the Town's website to sign up for this free service.
- Join the Town's Facebook page for project updates: **http://facebook.com/TownofHiltonHeadIslandSC**

Our Beach is Open in 2016!

When and where will beach renourishment take place?

This map displays the total project area that will be addressed during the renourishment project. Construction will start mid-June and progress in order of the numbered areas below. Town officials hope to have the project complete by the end of October, though the schedule is subject to change and is dependent upon the weather, wind, waves and other unforeseen issues. Check the Town's website at **www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov** for any updates.



This red line illustrates 1,000 feet, the approximate active site. The town will have an interactive map on its website that will show the approximate location of the active site.

1. Near Mitchelville Beach Park
2. Port Royal Plantation - north of Beach House
3. Port Royal Plantation - south of heel
4. Southern Sea Pines near South Beach
5. South of Coligny Circle to Palmetto Dunes
6. Palmetto Dunes to the Folly tidal inlet at Singleton Beach

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BEACH Renourishment Project

PROTECTING & Sustaining *Our Beaches*

Hilton Head Island

WEEKS MARINE, INC.

olsen associates, inc. Coastal Engineering

Beach Renourishment
Questions & Answers

Q: Why is beach renourishment important?
A: Renourishment replaces sand lost to natural erosion and maintains a wide beach to ensure the health of our shoreline. A wider beach safeguards a natural environment for the endangered sea turtles and sea birds, and provides extended storm protection for oceanfront homes, villas and businesses. It also allows beach-goers to spread out, ride bikes and bask in the sun.

Hilton Head Island is the second largest barrier island on the East Coast, and most beach erosion is a naturally occurring phenomenon. Geologically, the Island is a "transgressive" relic coastal barrier that has migrated landward over the last several centuries. Controlled by forces of the Port Royal and Calibogue Sound, beach sand moves from the center of the Island toward its ends. The daily ebb and flow of water continually shapes the shoreline.

Q: How much sand will be moved onto the beaches?
A: The $20.7 million project will include three principle parts (six specific areas displayed on the map) and replace more than 2 million cubic yards; that's enough sand to fill 610 Olympic-sized swimming pools!

1. Placement of about 600,000 cubic yards of sand along 7,000 feet of the Port Royal Sound shoreline.

2. Placement of about 360,000 cubic yards of sand along 5,000 feet of Atlantic shorefront at South Beach.

Port Royal Plantation, looking northeast, before (2011) and after (2012) renourishment. Photo courtesy of the Town of Hilton Head Island.

3. Placement of about 1.1 million cubic yards of sand along 5.3 miles of Atlantic shorefront – from just south of Coligny Circle to the Folly, just north of Palmetto Dunes.

Q: What is the beach renourishment process?
A: Before the project begins, coastal engineers conduct a sand search to locate a grade of sand that approximates the same size, color and texture of the existing beach. The shoreline is also evaluated and sand is placed to make up for erosion lost from previous years.

The new sand will be excavated by hydraulic dredge from two offshore sites, Bay Point Shoals and Barrett Shoals. The dredge will move sand through miles of submerged and floating pipeline, from the ocean floor to the beach. After the mixture of sand and seawater makes it to shore, the water runs back out into the ocean, and bulldozers and other construction machinery construct the elevation and form of the beach with new sand.

Construction will take place 24 hours a day in a continuous active site in 1,000 foot increments along the shoreline, **meaning only 2 percent of the beach will be affected at a time.** The small, active site will be restricted during construction, but temporary beach access ramps and clear signage will direct beach-goers to open areas of the beach. As soon as a section is completed, the equipment will move down the beach and the newly, renourished section will open.

The newly placed sand will at first appear dark, as dredging picks up small amounts of shell and mud with the sand. Within a few days, the sun will turn the beach sand as light as it was before the project.

Some oceanfront properties may see construction for several days. Noise from bulldozers may be heard, and adjacent properties may experience short-term, minor inconveniences.

Q: What equipment will be used during this process?
A: The renourishment requires a dredge, a booster pump, many miles of pipeline, and attendant tug boats and barges, bulldozers, survey equipment and support vessels.

Q: How often is beach renourishment needed?
A: This will be Hilton Head Island's third large-scale beach renourishment since the original project in 1990. A beach renourishment is necessary every seven to 10 years, depending on weather conditions and storms.

Q: What happens after the beach renourishment project is complete?
A: Beach renourishment is an ongoing process. There are 52 beach monitoring stations that the Town of Hilton Head Island maintains to observe sand from recent beach renourishment projects. Aerial photos are taken annually to monitor how the coastline changes. The American Coastal Coalition named Hilton Head Island the Top Restored Beach for 2003, recognizing our project "has proven itself over a significant period of time."