

**CRC Study of the Feasibility and Advisability of the Use of Terminal Groins
Public Hearing – January 13, 2010
N. Raleigh Hilton, Raleigh, N.C.**

Paul Tschirky stated this is the third public hearing on the terminal groin study. This study is based on House Bill 709. The Bill was made up of two sections and the second section specifically addressed that the Coastal Resources Commission study the feasibility and advisability of the use of a terminal groin as an erosion control device. The legislation specifically referred to six parts. The first part was to look at the effectiveness of terminal groins and the physical parameters of how a terminal groin works. The second part was to look at the environmental parts of a terminal groin and what impacts they would have. The third was to look at engineering and construction techniques. The next three parts were the economic side of the study. Look at the economic impacts to the state, local government, and private sector of erosion due to shifting inlets. Look at associated construction and maintenance costs of these structures. If these structures are applicable or feasible should they be limited to certain situation such as inlets that are already dredged for navigation. Also identified in House Bill 709 was the need for three public hearings. This is the third public hearing and there are two additional hearings scheduled. The report from the CRC to the Environmental Review Commission and General Assembly is due April 1, 2010. The draft report will be provided to the CRC by February 1, 2010. The contractor will gather and pull information together for the study. The CRC and CRAC will develop policy recommendations from the information. The Science Panel has been involved in the scoping to provide peer review of the information. Five sites were selected along the southeast coastline of the United States to look at in more detail. There were two in North Carolina, Oregon Inlet and Fort Macon, and three along the coast of Florida, Amelia Island, Captiva Island and John's Pass. All presentations, public comments, and future meeting dates can be found on the Division of Coastal Management website (www.nccoastalmanagement.net) under the "What's New" section. Comments can be made by e-mail to Jim.Gregson@ncdenr.gov.

Martin Cooke, member of the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners, stated I am a small businessman at Ocean Isle Beach, North Carolina. I want to say that initially when I started finding out about terminal groins I didn't know much about what they really were either. I thought they might have been jetties or something else and thanks to Moffatt & Nichol and all the information that you folks have presented I have become much more educated as far as what it might be and what it might do for our area. That being said, I am grateful for the level of participation that you have done with the public. You have carried yourselves all over this state to try to get public input. I am grateful for that. No one can ever say that you haven't done due diligence. I, as an individual citizen of the state, want to thank you for that. I think one of the things that we look at as individuals is that when I talk to the public they don't always know what it is when they seem to understand what it might be. They are looking for you as being the arbiter to determine whether it would be viable for our area or not. That is the main central thing is that you will be the ones that will make that decision for us. We know it is in the legislature right now. Personally, I feel like it would be a really good option. I have seen what has taken place with respect to Fort Macon. I have walked that jetty, rather terminal groin, and have looked at it myself. In fact, I had to hunt for it and make a phone call to find out where it was. With respect to the one at Oregon Inlet, it seems to be very benign in its impact. Regardless of

that situation I would hope that with respect to this that it will be settled and there will be something that will be able to bring stability not only to our cities but to the overall infrastructure of our state to preserve the tax base as well as the ability to have a long-term solution to the concerns that confront us. Again, thank you.

Frank Iler, NC General Assembly House District 17, stated he took a picture of the terminal groin at Fort Macon after the hearing before last. It is hard to tell where the sand stops and where the rocks begin and I would like to share it with anyone that would like to see it. I want to talk about one or two things very briefly. Open mindedness is one of them. The existing Bill, which is in Committee and passed by the Senate, Senate Bill 832 says that the Coastal Resources Commission may authorize the construction of a terminal groin by variance if certain criteria are met. It says various things in that Bill if you get the chance to read it. It is online. It indicates that terminal structures are unobtrusive, permeable and basically place a template back to where the land and beach was. It allows it to fill in with sand without detrimental consequences to the shoreline. It has actually filled in with sand in many cases. Another question that has come up is whether they will work or not work. I am not sure of what the definition of work is. It depends on what they are intended to do. I picked up a publication today and read it at lunch. The Coastal Review which is published by a group called the North Carolina Coastal Federation. The two articles about this seem to determine that they do not work and so forth. They determine that they would exist everywhere if they did work. There are a lot of them in existence including Florida. One of the Commission members at one time made a statement and it is in the publication that what we may find out is terminal groins will work well in some places and not in others hamstringing the Commission's ability to offer a definitive recommendation. To me that is a recommendation that they will work in some places and not in others. The word management is in your division title and I am asking you to keep an open mind so that you may manage the coast. You will have the choice when these should be used. I made a phone call to my brother who has done environmental studies in Florida for over 30 years. I asked him what has been his experience with these was. He said that all he knows is when they are permitted they do extensive environmental studies to see if they are hurting the reefs or if they are impacting the environment in any way. There are studies in each case. I am asking you to take over the management and keep an open mind about this Bill when it authorizes you to manage the coast.

Tracy Skrabal, North Carolina Coastal Federation, stated I want to make a couple of comments about the methodology discussion that we had today. As with the first speaker I think you all have done an amazing job on due diligence with regard to discussion between all of the CRC members, the consultants and the science panel on the scientific sections of the study. We had addressed some concerns about the economic analysis at the last Science Panel meeting. I think some of the Science Panel members have the same amount of discomfort as I do as a scientist discussing the economic strategies and methodologies. What I was wondering was if we could have a discussion, those of us that are involved in this, in possibly invoking a peer review of the economic side of this. We have gone to great lengths to do a peer review process on the scientific, but we have not done the same on the economic side. Basically we have one consultant, with all due respect to Dr. Dumas who I respect, but it seems as though there would be some value in having other experts in the field of economics evaluate the methodology at this point in the game. I don't want to speak for other scientists, but I do not even know what I don't

know to be able to ask the questions. Having said that, I do question when I hear his methodology things like it appears that there is little information being prepared or evaluated on the risk factors on these project sites outside of the structures themselves. From a lay person standpoint, I would question how we are going to evaluate other risk factors that would affect success or failure. Secondly, it looks as though the methodology takes us from now and looks at risks looking forward, but does his scope involve evaluation of success or failure from an economic standpoint back in time to the beginning of these projects. I just don't even know the answers short of picking up the phone and asking Dr. Dumas. I am sure I would not be asking the correct questions. I just throw it out for your consideration that we ought to give as much opportunity for broad evaluation of the economic evaluation as we are doing for the scientific because certainly that aspect of the study is very critical.

Drew Ball, NC Sierra Club, stated I would like to thank the Commission for the continued openness and commitment to public input. I want to stress the importance of continuing to maintain this transparency. I listened to the Moffatt & Nichol briefing this morning and heard the continued emphasis on economics. I didn't hear any mention of taking sea level rise into account. That is a major concern. We are keenly aware that the study has an overarching focus on the economics and we understand that it is not a very big study and the Commission is doing the best you can with the resources that you have. In order to create a study that is truly going to contribute to the dialogue on this issue in a meaningful way we need to be sure we evaluate the economics in a way that understands we are not in a static environment. The North Carolina sea level rise science forum is going to be held within these very walls in the coming days. It is an issue that does need to be taken into account and incorporated within this study in the conclusions that the CRC comes out with. The emphasis of the CRC's report really needs to focus on comprehensive far-sided strategies and not a head in the sand outlook. That could include buy outs if it does come to that. One last point I will make on the economics of this issue is North Carolina's coastal policies are consistently held up as a model to protect public beaches and public access to those beaches. It should be noted that any kind of short term actions to protect private property could put that valuable resource in jeopardy. I appreciate the time that I have to speak with you today and thank you for your work.

Scott Gardner stated my wife and I reside in Durham, North Carolina but we own property on Bald Head Island. We have been following this issue closely as it has been deliberated. I would like to make the point to be mindful of the impact of man-made decisions on the use of terminal groins. The Cape Fear River channel has been deepened and widened and shifted toward Bald Head at the request of the Port Authority and executed by the Corps of Engineers after intensive environmental studies to understand the impact. The negative impact has been as with any youngster that digs in the sand, the whole is going to fill up. That is what is happening down there. It is having a severe negative impact on Bald Head, particularly the west beach area. Please consider the potential of considering terminal groins. If not in a number of places, at least where man-made impacts, where man is having a negative impact on a channel and the beaches close by. Thank you very much.