

Oriental Neuse River Barrier Restoration Project

The issue:

- Our shoreline on the Point has been disappearing over many years, as proper protective actions have not been taken.
- The Point once housed upwards of 18 acres of land, but now it has washed away to just three acres - an 80% reduction in size.
- It has diminished to a point where one more major storm may claim the land exposing our Town to potential flooding and other issues.
- If the Point's disintegration continues, it could have consequences for our residents, businesses, the many visitors that travel to our area and others. As the Point recedes, it's causing shoaling and shifting water levels, inhibiting most of the access for boats that use our waterways.
- Boaters will soon be forced to seek other areas for their service and recreational needs.

Imagine what may happen if we lose this point of land:

- The Town would be open to an increased chance of flooding from storms and winds. Once the Point is gone, our barrier protection from storms and winds would be lost exposing the Town to additional storm surge and further erosion of our waterfront.

- Our businesses in town, such as - marinas, boat services, lodging, retail establishments and restaurants will all be affected due to the reduced number of visitors to the area. It would not only affect our Oriental establishments, but it could also have consequences for out of town establishments (grocery stores, service areas, discount stores, etc.) due to a slowdown of their commerce.

- Homeowners and business owners' property values, not only waterfront, but all properties would be affected. Many of our residents chose the Oriental area due to its waterways, water depths and water accesses, but once these are lost, real estate in Oriental could be hit with lower property values. Potential buyers wishing to relocate to Oriental may decide to look elsewhere for better water access.

- Our local environment would also be impacted and we'd lose a living shoreline that has been protecting wildlife habitats, and fish nurseries for many years.

While the above information may come as a surprise, it is not meant to be a total negative announcement.

The Town has been diligently working with many agencies on securing grants that, if obtained, will help solve the erosion issues on the Point and stop the potential harmful effects.

We are asking you to gather your support for the Town's efforts on securing grants and we ask that you sign a petition that will be included with our grant submissions stating your support of these efforts.

Additionally, you may send a letter addressed to the Town detailing your support and potential

Finally, we are at this time actively working on grants from State, Federal and private sources with the hope of reducing the costs of this project to the Town. The grants will pay upwards of two thirds of the cost, but one third will need to be handled by the Town.

If all grants are obtained, it could reduce our cost to zero, but we will not know that until the end of the grant processes.

Thank you for your consideration, and if you have any questions please contact me, the Commissioners or members of the Harbor Water/Fronts Committee. All numbers and emails are listed on the Town's website, www.townoforiental.com.

Diane Miller

Town Manager



Oriental Neuse River Barrier Restoration Project

Frequently Asked Questions

1) Why should you be concerned?

If we lose this point of land:

- The Town would be open to an increased chance of flooding from storms and winds.

Once the Point is gone, our barrier protection from storms and winds would be lost exposing the Town to additional storm surge and the potential for further erosion of our waterfront.

- Our businesses in town, such as - marinas, boat services, lodging, retail establishments and restaurants will all be affected due to the reduced number of visitors and boaters to the area.

It would not only affect our Oriental establishments, but it could also have consequences for out of town establishments (grocery stores, service areas, discount stores, etc.) due to a slowdown of their commerce.

-Homeowners and business owners' property values, not only waterfront, but all properties would be affected due to decreased sales tax necessitating increased property tax to maintain the level of service. Many of our residents choose the Oriental area due to its waterways, water depths and water accesses, but once these are lost, real estate in Oriental could be hit with lower property values. Potential buyers wishing to relocate to Oriental may decide to look elsewhere for better water access, further increasing necessary tax rates.

-Finally, our local environment would also be impacted and we'd lose a living shoreline that has been protecting wildlife habitats and fish nurseries for many years.

2) How much will this restoration project cost the Town?

-The Town is trying to secure grants from State, Federal and private sources to reduce our overall outlay, but there may be some costs to the Town.

-Our costs would be the 1/3-1/2 portion and the grant would cover the ½-2/3 portion. With current estimates for this grant at around \$700,000-\$1.2million, our cost could be significant, or could be minimal if we can leverage some sources against other, and include in-kind contributions of land and labor and materials.

-We will not know for sure what our costs are until the grant process is complete. We can also separate the project into phases to further reduce the costs at each individual phase.

3) Does the Town currently own the land in questions?

-The Town does not currently own Whitaker Point.

-We have an outstanding offer by the owners to transfer title and ownership of the property to the Town for no charge.

-We are holding the offer and will make a decision to accept, or not accept, based on the outcomes of the grant processes.

4) Could residents and business owners in the Town be asked to cover some of the above costs?

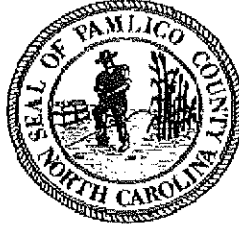
Our hope and goal at this time is to secure grants and other funding initiatives to reduce the Town's overall cost of this project, but there could be some costs to the Town residents. We will know more once the grant processes are complete.

5) Where can I get more information on the projects?

Diane Miller, Town Manager, at 252-249-0555 is the project coordinator and can assist you, but any of the Commissioners (numbers and emails on www.townoforiental.com) are also up to date on the project. Additionally, there will be a presentation at the June 5, 2018 Regular Board meeting. The meeting is open to the public. We urge everyone to attend.

6) Can residents and business owners submit letters or emails of support for the grants?

Yes, and we welcome all letters of support. Please send the letters to the Town of Oriental, PO Box 472, Oriental NC, 28571. You can also drop them off at 507 Church Street, or email Jeannine Russo at admin@townoforiental.com.



COUNTY OF PAMLICO

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
POST OFFICE BOX 776
BAYBORO, NORTH CAROLINA 28515
(252) 745-3081
FAX (252) 745-3754

June 5, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

Whittaker Creek is one of main economic tributaries for the Town of Oriental. It is a stopping point for many Intracoastal Waterway travelers and a hot spot for regional and local boating activity. Its accessibility is vital to the economic and community well-being of the town and to Pamlico County. Whittaker Point is the main barrier that protects the Creek, several marinas, numerous properties, and boat yards that provided over 50 direct jobs. Because of this, and the reasons outlined below, Pamlico County Government and the Office of Economic Development fully support the restoration of Whittaker Pointe.

Part of why we support the efforts to restore Whittaker Pointe are the over 50 marine based service and retail businesses and over 8,000 boats in Pamlico County. Due to the excellent reputation of our marinas, yards and service providers, many boaters come from surrounding Counties to have their vessels docked, repaired and maintained in Oriental area. Many boaters travel from marinas in other parts of the county to Oriental for services.

In addition, approximately 6,000 Intracoastal boaters stop into Oriental and Pamlico County yearly. Many of them plan their trips to include repairs and maintenance done at local boat yards or through regional contractors and subcontractors who are allowed to provides services in the yards and marinas. While here, they stock up on groceries, eat in restaurants, buy property, and use other available services.

Restoring Whittaker Poinet will also enable being able help to keep Whittaker Creek fully accessible by protecting the channel to businesses and other properties. This will prevent negative comments on sites like Active Captain that warn boaters if areas are not easy to access or unprotected. Active Captain is a widely used online aid to navigation and marine travel, where mariners/boaters place positive and negative comments and warn of hazards. Negative comments impact the economy of the area.

There are private residences on the creek that can berth in excess of 50 boats. This large concentration of boats is serviced by many support services that generate significant revenue and jobs in areas of marine electronics,

sails, canvas, mechanical, bottom cleaning, various repairs, detailing, paint and varnish finish, and management. Property appraisals and taxes in this area are greatly influence by the value of the passable waterway.

For your convenience here are a few bulleted points on the value of Whittaker Point and Whittaker Creek on the Town of Oriental, Pamlico County and the State of North Carolina.

- **Over 8000 boats in Pamlico County – Approx. 2000 registered in Oriental**
- **6000+ ICW boaters visit Oriental & Pamlico County YEARLY**
- **Over 8,000 youth from around the world attend local camps and learn boating skills. Many of them later return to carry out these activities with their families**
- **50 Marine-based service, education & retail businesses locally, plus we feed over another 25 marine businesses in the region**
- **Oriental has the largest Yanmar Engine Dealer within a 3 states region (Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina), and is often an emergency stopping point for vessels in distress and has towing services available.**
- **150+ jobs are direct marine-industry jobs. 200+ jobs are associated with service support jobs (retail, tourism, restaurants, hotels, pharmacies, lodging....) The 350 people employed in these jobs also have a direct daily impact on all areas of the local and State economy**
- **Recreational fishing, kayaking, and other water-based activities are growing.**
- **Commercial vessels dock, access repair services, fuel and stock up on groceries in Oriental.**
- **According to the State of North Carolina, our boating and water access contributes about \$17.2 million to the tourism economy. It contributes over \$3 million directly to the payrolls in Pamlico County. It provides \$1.94 million to the state tax receipts.**

These are just a few of the reasons that we support the restoration of Whittaker Pointe. Thank you for your consideration and support of this project. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact the Office of Economic Development- Beth Bucksot at (252)745-3081 or beth.bucksot@pamlicocounty.org.

Sincerely,

Beth Bucksot
Director of Economic Development

