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August 5, 2024

Lt. Col. Jeffrey Beeman  
Commander  
US Army Corps of Engineers—Philadelphia District  
100 East Penn Square  
The Wanamaker Building  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107-3323

Dear Lt. Col. Beeman,

I am writing to you directly as a follow-up to conversations with your staff over this past weekend regarding an immediate and very time-sensitive safety issue that has arisen in the Manasquan Inlet in my congressional district.

The build-up of sand on the Point Pleasant side of the inlet against the jetty has reached unprecedented proportions. As you know, this is not only a grounding hazard to vessels, but the waves created inside the inlet as a result of this shoaling are enough to capsized boats that regularly traverse the channel.

I am aware that Manasquan Inlet is categorized as a dynamic inlet with constantly shifting sands created by the currents, but this inlet beach is highly dangerous to navigation during the busiest boating time of the year on the Jersey Shore.

You may be aware that in August of 2022, I met with LTC Brigantti at the Inlet regarding dangerous shoaling which was causing a significant safety issue for boaters on the south side of the seaward end of the Manasquan Inlet. As a result, a survey vessel was promptly dispatched and continued to survey the river floor every few weeks.

I remain appreciative of the Army Corps' timely actions to protect our shoreline and boaters. I was looking forward to the possibility of seeing these dredging activities in person while onboard the Murden this week as it was scheduled to perform maintenance dredging starting yesterday, August 4<sup>th</sup>. However, I am now advised that because of a mechanical failure, the dredging has been postponed for up to two weeks. Clearly, this new development situation calls for a more urgent response.

Based on these concerns and understanding that the safety and viability of recreational, for-hire and commercial vessels is of utmost importance—especially during these last few weeks of summer when inlet traffic is at its peak, I respectfully request that the Army Corps take immediate corrective action to mitigate this dangerous navigational hazard. I truly appreciate your team’s responsiveness to answering my urgent phone calls yesterday, Sunday, and I look forward to hearing that the survey vessel will be on site—hopefully within the next 24 hours—followed by the dredge Murden or Currituck.

I believe the Army Corps of Engineers is the federal government’s master builders, and nobody does it better than the Corps. I stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,



CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH  
Member of Congress