

## New sand destined for LBI beaches

Published in the Asbury Park Press 09/23/05

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HARVEY CEDARS — What would take Mother Nature years to repair, the state Department of Environmental Protection will see done in 45 days.

The DEP gave final approval to a beach nourishment project — the spreading of 150,000 cubic yards of sand across a 900-foot section of oceanfront between Salem and Cumberland avenues. Work is scheduled to begin Sept. 30.

The estimated cost is nearly \$500,000, according to Benjamin Keiser of the state Bureau of Coastal Engineering. Keiser said most of the sand will be placed above the high tide line to the base of the dunes. Sand will also be added at the ocean side of the beach, extending between 50 and 75 feet into the surf, Keiser said. When completed, the beach will be 8 feet above sea level at its highest point, he said.

"We've lived in Harvey Cedars for 22 years, and in that time we've seen the beach come and go," said Lillian Neiblum of E. 86th Street. "I've seen times when the dunes have been turned into steep cliffs by the waves.

"There's no question this needs to be done," she said. "Flooding is a concern both at the north and south ends."

Mayor Jonathan S. Oldham said an average of 40 truckloads of sand per day for 30 days will be delivered from the Sahara Sandpit on the Eagleswood-Stafford boundary. The trucks will empty on the Hudson Avenue beach and the sand will be spread by bulldozers.

Keiser said an estimated 840 truckloads of sand will be needed to complete the project. Environmental Engineering and Construction of Landover, Md., will be doing the work, Keiser said.

"We understand residents in the area will be disturbed for a period of time, but I also believe they realize the ultimate gain will be worth any inconvenience," Oldham said. "This is something a lot of people have worked diligently toward for 10 years."

Oldham said the sand color will be matched as closely as possible to that of the existing beach. He said when about 465,000 cubic yards of sand were placed on the beach during the winter of 1994-95, the last beach nourishment project here, it was orange-tinted.

"This time we want it white," Oldham said.

Oldham said he believes most of the sand that gets washed away from Harvey Cedars' beach is being trapped by the north jetty at Barnegat Light. The sand for this project will be placed between two existing jetties.

"Our goal is to keep the sand in place for as long as possible," Keiser said.

Kevin Cooke, an employee at Surf Shack in Long Beach Township, said he isn't sure the work will make the waves better or worse for local surfers.

"Harvey Cedars used to have a great surfing area, but in recent years it has become shallow," Cook said. "I don't think there has been much information about the work released.

"I know this," said Cook, who lives in the North Beach section of Long Beach Township. "The property values in Harvey Cedars have gone from \$400,000 to \$4 million, so I understand their stake in this project."

The DEP said federal, state, county and local funds will be used to pay for the beach replenishment. The federal government will pay \$292,500, the state \$157,500 and the borough \$39,375. Keiser said Ocean County has agreed to fund a yet-undetermined amount of the borough's portion.

The project is the first phase of an extensive beach replenishment program planned for the length of Long Beach Island.

Work will be done in all six island towns and will take 2 1/2 years to complete. That \$71 million project could begin in late winter or spring, according to Keiser, and includes placing sand-trapping Geotubes on the Leeward Avenue beach in Beach Haven.

Keiser said the Army Corps of Engineers recently completed a five-year feasibility study of Long Beach Island, and the engineering and design portion is 90 percent completed. He said sand from an offshore ocean site will be used to replenish the rest of the LBI beaches.

Keiser said the DEP stands to receive an additional \$5 million in the 2006 fiscal budget pending in Congress. If it's approved, the work all along the island will begin on time, he said.

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