

The Federal Beach Nourishment Program



#YESToBeaches

HOW BEACH NOURISHMENT WORKS

Survey & Model

Engineers survey the region and determine expected beach behavior over the project life.

Source Sand

Compatible beach sand is dredged from offshore, navigation channels, or inland sources.

Place Fill

Sand is pumped by pipeline, delivered by barge, or trucked onto the beach. Berms & dunes are spread as needed.

Monitor & Renourish

Beach fill shifts over 2–10 years. When excessive erosion occurs, periodic renourishment restores the beach.

HOW PROJECTS ARE APPROVED:

Step 1 – Local request

A local government or non-federal sponsor identifies erosion risk and submits a request to the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

Step 2 – Congressional Authorization

USACE must be authorized to conduct a study through the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). Congress authorizes WRDA biennially.

Step 3 – Feasibility Study

USACE executes a study on economics, engineering, environment, and public access before determining the beach nourishment project.

Step 4 – Chief's Report & WRDA Authorization

If the feasibility study recommends a project, the Chief of Engineers issues a report to Congress, which then authorizes construction in WRDA.

Step 5 – Appropriations & Construction

Congress appropriates annual funds through the Energy and Water Development bill. USACE then contracts for design and construction. Periodic renourishment typically has a 50-year project life.

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CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL

- **Federal Interest:** A project's benefits must outweigh costs and must include public access
- **Sand Compatibility:** Borrow source must match grain size & composition to native sand
- **NEPA & State Policy Compliance:** Environmental Impact Assessment, state and local permits
- **50-year Plan:** Planned timeline for renourishment

WHO'S INVOLVED?

- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Members of Congress
- Local and State Governments
- Private Contractors

COSTS

Costs range from \$15– \$60 per cubic yard. Typical federal projects involve at least 200,000 cubic yards.

65% of costs are federally covered. The remaining **35%** is paid by the non-federal sponsor, typically split between state and local governments. **However, this percentage does not guarantee funding.** If projects are underfunded during the appropriations process, beach nourishment may be only partially completed or cancelled entirely.

KEY POLICIES

- Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)
- The Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA)
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- The Jones Act