



The Village of Bald Head Island

March 13, 2026

The Honorable David Rouzer
United States House of Representatives
2333 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Rouzer:

On behalf of the residents of the Village of Bald Head Island, I write in strong support of the Village's request for \$200,000 in Community Project Funding through the Army Corps of Engineers – Investigations account, administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in the Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, for the Brunswick County Beaches, NC (Bald Head Island) Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) Feasibility Study. As Mayor, I represent a community whose very existence depends on the health of our beaches and shoreline, and this feasibility study is the essential first step toward securing a sustainable federal coastal protection partnership for generations to come.

Bald Head Island has faced mounting coastal erosion and storm risk for decades, and the community has responded with remarkable local commitment. Over the past twenty years, the Village has invested more than \$70 million of local funds in beach renourishment and storm protection initiatives – a per capita investment that few communities in North Carolina can match. That investment has been critical to our ongoing existence, protecting homes, businesses, roads, water and wastewater infrastructure, and the irreplaceable natural and cultural assets that define our island. However, Jay Bird Shoals, which has served as our primary sand borrow source for beach renourishment, no longer contains sufficient sand to meet the Village's future needs. The clock is ticking: we must identify new, sustainable sand sources within the next six years to maintain the current level of protection our beaches and dune systems provide. Without a viable path forward, our ability to defend the island against storms and erosion will be seriously compromised.

The Village is home to 'Old Baldy,' the oldest lighthouse in North Carolina, and the Smith Island Museum, both of which attract tens of thousands of visitors annually and contribute to the region's heritage tourism economy. Bald Head Island is also designated a site of national significance by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, recognizing our four distinct ecosystems – beachfront, dune ridge, maritime forest, and marsh – as among the highest-quality examples of their kind in the nation. The

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Bald Head Woods Coastal Reserve is one of the country's largest and finest maritime forests. The tourism, hospitality, real estate, and maritime service sectors that depend on our thriving shoreline generate substantial property tax revenue for both the Village and Brunswick County and support jobs across the regional economy. Tens of thousands of visitors come to Bald Head Island every year, sustaining small businesses, vacation rental operators, restaurants, retail establishments, and a maritime transportation network connecting the island to the mainland.

Without this federal investment, the Village will face the escalating costs of unmitigated shoreline erosion and storm damage – costs that would ultimately fall on local taxpayers and could undermine the very economic foundation that supports our community and contributes to the broader district economy. A \$200,000 investment in this feasibility study is modest compared to the billions of dollars in economic, environmental, and infrastructure assets at stake. Representative Rouzer personally championed the inclusion of Section 1201(b)(29) in the Water Resources Development Act of 2024 (P.L. 118-272), modifying the 1966 Brunswick County Beaches authorization to include Bald Head Island and making this study possible. That legislative achievement reflects your deep commitment to the communities of North Carolina's Seventh Congressional District, and we are grateful for your leadership. We respectfully ask for your support in advancing this critical study through the FY 2027 appropriations process.

Thank you for your continued advocacy on behalf of Bald Head Island and the communities of southeastern North Carolina.

Sincerely,



Mayor Peter Quinn
Village of Bald Head Island



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The Village of Bald Head Island has made beach renourishment and storm protection a fiscal priority for over two decades, committing more than \$70 million in local funds to protect our shoreline. That investment has preserved homes, businesses, public roads, water and wastewater infrastructure, and the natural ecosystems that make this island one of the most ecologically significant communities in North Carolina. But sustaining that program has grown increasingly challenging. Jay Bird Shoals – our primary sand borrow source – has been depleted to the point where it can no longer meet the Village's future renourishment needs. The Village must identify viable alternative sand sources within the next six years, or risk a critical gap in our coastal protection capacity. This is not a distant threat; it is an operational planning challenge we are managing right now, and it demands the technical expertise and institutional resources that only the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can provide.

The CSRM feasibility study authorized under Section 1103 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2024 (P.L. 118-272) – and made possible by Representative Rouzer's direct advocacy through Section 1201(b)(29) of that Act – will direct the Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District, to evaluate whether a federal coastal storm risk management project is warranted for Bald Head Island, identify new sand borrow sources, and assess long-term shoreline management strategies. This study represents a \$200,000 federal investment with a total project study cost of \$5,000,000, and the Village is prepared to partner with the Corps on full execution on the Corps' timeline. The study

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will provide the scientific data and strategic framework necessary to implement effective, long-term coastal protection measures – the kind of evidence-based planning that gives taxpayers confidence that every federal dollar invested is wisely spent.

From an infrastructure standpoint, a failure to act has direct and tangible consequences. Our roads, water systems, and wastewater facilities are all vulnerable to storm damage, and protecting them requires a durable shoreline. Beyond physical infrastructure, Bald Head Island's economy relies on tourism, hospitality, real estate, and maritime services – all sectors directly tied to the health of our beaches. The ferry and barge operations connecting the island to the mainland, the small businesses that serve residents and visitors, the vacation rental economy, and the high-value real estate market that generates property tax revenue for Brunswick County and the Village – all of this economic activity is at risk if our shoreline management program loses the capacity to replenish and protect our beaches. A modest federal investment in this study today will help avoid far greater costs down the road. We are grateful for Congressman Rouzer's leadership and strongly urge his support for this request in FY 2027.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,



Chris McCall
Village Manager



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The Village of Bald Head Island has one of the most active and well-documented local shoreline management programs in North Carolina. Over the past two decades, we have invested more than \$70 million in beach renourishment and storm protection initiatives, maintaining wide, sandy beaches and vegetated dune systems that serve as the island's primary defense against hurricanes, nor'easters, and chronic erosion. Our groin systems complement the renourishment program by slowing sediment transport and stabilizing the shoreline. This integrated approach has been effective – but it is now at a critical inflection point. Jay Bird Shoals, the offshore borrow source that has supplied the sand for our renourishment efforts, no longer contains sufficient material to sustain future renourishment cycles. Our technical analysis indicates that we must identify alternative sand sources within the next six years to maintain the current level of beach and dune protection.

The challenge of identifying new, suitable sand borrow sites in the offshore and nearshore environment requires the kind of specialized hydrographic and geotechnical survey capabilities, environmental analysis, and multi-agency coordination that the Army Corps of Engineers is uniquely positioned to provide. The CSRM feasibility study authorized by Section 1103 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2024 (P.L. 118-272) will allow the Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District, to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the coastal storm risk facing Bald Head Island, identify viable long-term sand sources, and analyze a range of shoreline management strategies – from structural

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solutions to nature-based approaches – to determine what combination of measures is technically feasible and economically justified. Without this study, the Village will lack the scientific basis and federal partnership needed to advance a long-term solution. The \$200,000 CPF investment initiates a \$5,000,000 federal study effort and positions the Village to move toward construction of a federally cost-shared coastal storm risk management project.

The natural and environmental assets at stake make this study all the more compelling. Bald Head Island is designated a site of national significance by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, home to four distinct ecosystems – beachfront, dune ridge, maritime forest, and marsh – that support rare plant and animal species of the highest quality found anywhere in the nation. The Bald Head Woods Coastal Reserve is one of the country's finest maritime forests. 'Old Baldy,' North Carolina's oldest lighthouse, and the Smith Island Museum draw tens of thousands of visitors annually and anchor the island's heritage tourism economy. All of these assets, along with the roads, utilities, and buildings that serve our permanent and seasonal population, are protected by the same beaches and dunes that our renourishment program maintains. Without a sustainable long-term strategy, these irreplaceable cultural, environmental, and economic resources face accelerating risk. The Village has demonstrated its commitment through \$70 million in local investment; we now ask for the federal partnership to take the next critical step. We are grateful for Congressman Rouzer's direct role in securing the authorization for this study and respectfully urge his support for the FY 2027 appropriation.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Jae Kim
Assistant Village Manager and Shoreline Protection Manager