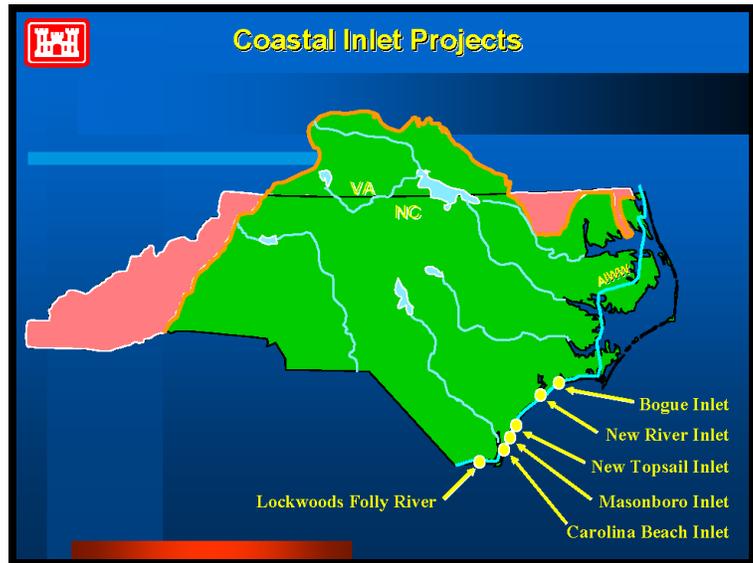




US Army Corps
of Engineers
Wilmington District

Coastal Inlets, NC (Shallow Draft Navigation) (O&M)

- Coastal inlets provide critical access to protected waters from the Atlantic Ocean for life safety, commercial and recreation vessel traffic



CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: NC 3 and 7

DATE: 6 March 2014

1. **AUTHORIZATION:** Reference authorization for the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW) in the River and Harbor Act 1912, as amended.

New River Inlet: Authorized as a modification to the AIWW in 1935, 1937, 1938, and 1948.

Bogue Inlet: Authorized as a modification to the AIWW in 1963 and 1983.

Carolina Beach Inlet: Authorized as a modification to the AIWW in 1966.

Lockwoods Folly River: River and Harbor Acts of 1890, 1960 and 1980 (Section 107) as amended.

New Topsail Inlet: Authorized as a modification to the AIWW in 1966.

2. **LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION:** The coastal inlet projects are located across the east coast of North Carolina and provide for navigation channels ranging from 6 to 8 feet in depth and 90 to 150 feet in width. The coastal inlet projects extend from the deep water in the Atlantic Ocean through each of the inlet gorges and connect to the protected waters of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW) and adjacent rivers. Below are the five coastal inlets located within the state of North Carolina with their respective project dimensions:

New River Inlet consists of channel 6-foot deep by 90-feet wide from the deep water of the

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Atlantic Ocean, through the inlet gorge, to the intersection of the AIWW and a channel 12-feet deep by 90-feet wide from the intersection of the AIWW, extending north within the banks of the New River, terminating just south of Hwy 24 in Jacksonville, North Carolina. This reach of the project is known as the Channels to Jacksonville.

Bogue Inlet consists of an 8-foot deep by 150-foot wide channel from the deep water in the Atlantic Ocean to the inlet gorge and a connecting channel 6-foot deep by 90-foot wide from the inlet gorge to the intersection of the AIWW.

Carolina Beach Inlet consists of an 8-foot by 150-foot wide channel from the deep water in the Atlantic Ocean to the intersection of the AIWW.

Lockwoods Folly River consists of an 8-foot deep by 150-foot wide channel from the deep water of the Atlantic Ocean to the intersection of the AIWW and a channel 6-foot deep by 100-foot wide from the intersection of the AIWW, extending north within the banks of the Lockwoods Folly River, terminating at the N.C. State Hwy 211 bridge.

New Topsail Inlet consists of an 8-foot deep by 150-foot wide channel from the deep water in the Atlantic Ocean to the inlet gorge and a connecting channel 7-foot deep by 80-foot wide from the inlet gorge to the intersection of the AIWW.

3. **FY 2013 AND FY 2014 ALLOCATIONS** : FY 2013 allocations include Disaster Relief funding that was used to restore the coastal inlet to pre-hurricane conditions.

<u>Project Name</u>	FY 2013 Allocations (\$000)	FY 2014 Allocations (\$000)
New River Inlet	\$ 0	\$ 0
Bogue Inlet	\$ 0	\$ 0
Carolina Beach Inlet	\$ 250	\$ 0
Lockwoods Folly River	\$ 494	\$ 0
New Topsail Inlet	\$ 0	\$ 0
Total	\$744	\$ 0

For FY 2014, no federal funds are anticipated for maintenance dredging at any of these projects. However, the state of North Carolina and the Corps executed a five-year multi-project memorandum of agreement to use state and local funds to perform additional maintenance dredging of many of these coastal inlets, as needed. This will likely be the primary source of funding to perform maintenance dredging of these projects in FY 2014. Also, the Corps will be performing periodic hydrographic condition surveys of the coastal inlets throughout fiscal years 2013 and 2014 using project condition survey funds. The surveying frequency is dependent upon funding, storm events, U.S. Coast Guard/project user reports of channel conditions, and review of aerial imagery.

4. **FY 2015 BUDGET AMOUNT:**

New River Inlet: \$0. Funds in the amount of \$2,700,000 could be used as follows: \$500,000 to perform two dredging events with Government-owned plant for project availability 25% of the year; \$500,000 to perform two additional dredging events with Government-owned plant for project availability 75% of the year; \$1,000,000 to perform maintenance dredging of the connecting channel from the inlet proper to the AIWW and the channels to Jacksonville, north of the AIWW; and \$700,000 to perform maintenance dredging events of the connecting channel for project availability 85% of the year.

Bogue Inlet: \$0. Funds in the amount of \$750,000 could be used to perform periodic hydrographic condition surveys and two maintenance dredging cycles with Government-owned plant.

Carolina Beach Inlet: \$0. Funds in the amount of \$900,000 could be used as follows: \$500,000 to perform periodic hydrographic condition surveys and two maintenance dredging cycles with Government-owned plant for project availability 40% of the year; \$400,000 to perform an additional two maintenance dredging cycles with Government-owned plant, which will provide project availability 85% of the year.

Lockwoods Folly River: \$0. Funds in the amount of \$1,850,000 could be used as follows: \$600,000 to perform two maintenance dredging cycles with Government-owned plant for project availability of 40% of the year; \$500,000 to provide an additional two maintenance dredging cycles with Government-owned plant which will provide project availability 85% of the year; and \$750,000 to award a dredging contract with disposal to the confined disposal islands.

New Topsail Inlet: \$0. Funds in the amount of \$1,850,000 could be used as follows: \$650,000 to perform periodic hydrographic condition surveys and two maintenance dredging cycles with Government-owned plant which will provide project availability 50% of the year; and \$1,200,000 to perform maintenance dredging on connecting channels with disposal to adjacent shorelines which would provide project availability 85% of the year.

5. **ISSUE AND/OR STATUS:** The project users which are adversely impacted by lack of maintenance dredging of the inlets and associated connecting channels include:

- Small business commercial fishing vessels
- Small business contractor and Government dredging vessels
- U.S. Coast Guard Search and Rescue and Homeland Security Operations
- Charter fishing vessels
- Joint maritime training at New River Inlet (Camp Lejeune)
- Recreational vessels
- Vessels seeking safe haven from storms

Draft restrictions and possible channel closures through these inlets will force vessel traffic seeking shelter from storms to navigate in the Atlantic Ocean rather than using protected inland

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waterways. There is a major potential for vessel groundings and/or accidents. Without the utilization of these projects, seafood could only be landed at Morehead City and Wilmington. Other sites in the state serving the seafood industry could be closed with corresponding job losses. Small independent fishing vessels will continue to use these channels for their sole source of income, putting safety and vessels at risk. This may result in economic losses to the state, property damage, and danger to health, safety and welfare.

The shoaling patterns within the coastal inlet projects are unpredictable and heavily dependent upon storm events. Because of the sandy bottom characteristics, each of the inlet projects channel alignments are constantly changing. Through the use of hydrographic condition surveys and aerial imagery, the Corps is able to identify the deepest natural depths and concentrate maintenance dredging along those alignments. This practice minimizes dredging costs and the environmental impacts associated with the work.