

# Sullivan's seeking input for accreted land

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MOULTRIE NEWS

What should the Town of Sullivan's Island do with nearly 90 acres of Town land currently held in perpetual trust?

Island residents gathered Aug. 4 to hear and discuss a management plan for the town's accreted land - land that has built up as sand and deposited on shore over the years.

Challenges have come with the build up of land (the study revealed that some sections of the beach have accreted over 1500 feet since the 1940s).

Besides the changing landscape which has pushed front beach residents away from the beach, there has been an influx of vegetation, such as dune grasses and waxed myrtles.

Other issues to be noted include fire hazards, nuisance species and lowered security along beach-access paths, says the study.

The plan presented was prepared by hired consultants Coastal Science & Engineering (CSE) as well as Sabine & Waters, Inc. and Dewberry who studied the accreted land area.

Timothy W. Kana, President of Coastal Science & Engineering said, "very few people on the East Coast are fortunate enough to deal with this (land build-up.) Rather, they deal with erosion."

The goal, Kana explained, is to develop a consensus of a management approach to the accreted land, noting that management options may vary from one part of the island to another.

According to the study, "a broad dune field seaward of development has an area [that] buffers buildings during storm events, provides a natural edge between the ocean and development and offers an attractive set of habitats for coastal wildlife."

However, the flip side of the  
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IMAGE COURTESY OF COASTAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

This is how land around the eastern half of the accreted land appears. This image shows the area around Station 26 where there is less mature vegetation. This shot is looking seaward with the ocean barely visible in the distance. The beach access path is shown on the left.

# Input: SI town officials want to hear from residents on accreted land issues

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accretion zone "has low relief and is subject to overtopping during major storms."

"Dense vegetation in some areas combined with easy public access creates certain public safety issues including increased risk of fire and assaults. The scale of the study area and its inherently variable nature are assets. This offers opportunities for improved access, enhanced dunes and wetlands, and improved habitat for certain species," according to the study.

Based on the consultants' findings, the town has four management approach options:

- Do nothing and allow the AL to evolve naturally.
- Continue present practices which include vegetation controls such as pruning to maintain the views.
- Implement more extensive management of vegetation to address goals and objectives of the community.
- Modify the topography for purposes of reducing potential storm damages and implement expanded management of vegetation to address the goals and objectives of the community.

"Previous council that made the brave decision to protect all that land from any sort of development was wiser than anyone ever thought," said Councilman and Real Estate Chairman Pat O'Neil.

"The town needs to be the best steward that it can be of that land and the best neighbor it can be."

But residents have concerns and questions that the town hopes to address with the resident feedback worksheet that has been given out.

"There should be a concern with the evaluation of front beach properties that



IMAGE COURTESY OF COASTAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

Land around the western half of the accreted land looks like this. This image shows more mature, unpruned vegetation. The ocean is barely visible at top center, beyond foliage.

are not afforded front view or a front view corridor," said Tim Reese, island real estate agent with Carriage Properties.

O'Neil doubts that growth of the accreted land has made the land worth less than it was.

Bobby Hood, who has had his Atlantic Avenue home for 20 years, said, "The proposal on how to deal with accreted land is very significant to everyone who lives on the first three rows. If vegetation is not controlled, residents will lose their ocean breeze, as well as their view. Why spend money to live on the front beach if you can't see the ocean?"

Hood pointed out that there were snakes left on the island after Hurricane Hugo. An Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake killed his Golden Retriever in his front yard.

The CSE study (as well as the feedback worksheet) can be found at [www.sullivan-sisland-sc.com](http://www.sullivan-sisland-sc.com).

Read this entire story online at [www.moultrienews.com](http://www.moultrienews.com).

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