

**TOWN OF HOLDEN BEACH  
RESOLUTION 13-07**

**Resolution Opposing the United States Fish & Wildlife Service's Proposed  
Designation of Critical Habitat for the Northwest Atlantic Ocean Distinct  
Population Segment of the Loggerhead Sea Turtle**

**Whereas**, On March 25, 2013 nearly thirty-five years after listing the loggerhead sea turtle as threatened, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS) proposed to designate 740 miles of shoreline in six states as critical habitat, including 96 miles in North Carolina and the entire shoreline of Holden Beach, located in Brunswick County, and

**Whereas**, designation of critical habitat would impact a wide variety of coastal projects involving federal action (activities or programs of any kind authorized, funded, or carried out, in whole or in part, by federal agencies), including, but not limited to, coastal and inlet management activities, such as dredging and beach renourishment permitted, funded or implemented by the United States Army Corps of Engineers and hurricane recovery activities funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and

**Whereas**, the USF&WS's specifically disclosed that special management considerations will be necessitated to address the following 12 threats to critical habitat that are quoted as follows; recreational beach use, beach driving, predation, beach sand placement activities, in-water shoreline alterations, coastal development, artificial lighting, beach erosion, climate change, habitat obstructions, human-caused disasters, and military testing and training activities, and

**Whereas**, the special management considerations that will be required for the 12 threats identified by the USF&WS will likely include other federal actions such as the implementation of the Nation Flood Insurance Program, implementation of building codes, federal grants for public access and infrastructure improvements, and more, and

**Whereas**, these special management considerations therefore will unnecessarily and negatively impact the local, state, and federal economies; and the public's access and enjoyment of the beach, and

**Whereas**, despite these far reaching impacts on the federal, state, and local economy, the USF&WS failed to include an economic analysis at the time of its proposed designation as stipulated in the Endangered Species Act, and

**Whereas**, not only would designation of critical habitat for the loggerhead sea turtle result in more regulatory hurdles for federal coastal projects, the USF&WS ignored other successful measures already in place as coastal governments such as Holden Beach have constructed and maintain active shore damage reduction projects, which not only provide protection of and benefits to public and private infrastructure, small businesses, the tourism industry, public recreation, and state and local tax bases; but also maintain and enhance habitat for loggerhead sea turtles, and

**Whereas**, these costal storm damage reduction projects are conducted pursuant to stringent federal and state regulations that ensure habitat for threatened and endangered species, including the loggerhead sea turtle, is protected before, during and after these events, and

**Whereas**, local volunteers, in coordination with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, also conduct a sea turtle management program whereby sea turtle activity is monitored daily during nesting season, and volunteers assist in protecting nesting sites during hatching and assist in tending to and collecting data with respect to stranded turtles, and

**Whereas**, if critical habitat is designated, some of these existing and successful programs will be burdened with additional and unnecessary regulations, and therefore will become more costly, which will increase the threat to the loggerhead sea turtle and its habitat.

**Now, therefore, be it resolved** the Town of Holden Beach is strongly opposed to the USF&WS's proposed designation of loggerhead sea turtle critical habitat along the shorelines of Holden Beach as set forth in Document Number 2013-06458 of the Federal register and will work with State and federal resource officials and elected representatives to ensure the proposed designation is in no manner included in the final rule.

**Be it further resolved** the designation of critical habitat thirty-five years after the listing of the loggerhead sea turtle is the wrong management tool for the conservation of the species and the Town of Holden Beach will continue to support the protection and recovery of the loggerhead sea turtle by utilizing effective management guidelines and rules currently in place, while evaluating new practices as they develop.

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J. Alan Holden, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Heather Finnell, Town Clerk