



# MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC# **116-2011**

## LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Matti Herrera Bower and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: May 16, 2011

SUBJECT: City of Miami Beach Named One of America's Best Restored Beach

The purpose of this Letter to Commission (LTC) is to inform you that the City has been named one of America's Best Restored Beaches for 2011.

### **BACKGROUND**

Beach restoration is the process of placing beach-quality sand on eroding beaches to reverse or offset the effects of erosion. The three main reasons for restoration are storm protection, habitat restoration and recreation.

The American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) was founded in 1926 as an organization recognizing the need to combat erosion, a serious problem in many coastal areas. ASBPA created the Best Restored Beach award as a way of highlighting the value of restored beaches. In order to enter the Best Restored Beach competition, coastal communities nominate their projects for consideration and an independent panel of coastal managers and scientists select the winners. Judging is based on three criteria: the economic and ecological benefits the beach brings to its community; the short- and long-term success of the restoration project; and the challenges each community overcame during the course of the project.

Past Best Restored Beach award winners include: Panama City Beach, Fla., in 2002; San Diego Beach in 2003; Ocean City, Md., in 2004; Indian River County, Fla., in 2005; Delaware's Rehoboth and Dewey Beaches in 2006; the Chalant Headland Restoration Project in Louisiana in 2007; Olympic Sculpture Park in Seattle, Wash. in 2008; South Padre Island, Texas, in 2009 and Navarre Beach, Florida in 2010. A complete list of award-winning beaches, and more information about beach restoration and ASBPA, is available online at [www.asbpa.org](http://www.asbpa.org).

The 2011 winners will be spotlighted beginning in June in the ASBPA's "Coastal Voice" e-newsletter and photos will also be included on the ASBPA website. The actual award will be presented at the ASBPA Coastal Summit in Washington, DC in Feb. 28, 2012. On May 16, 2011, the staff will participate in a conference call with the ASBPA and the other winners to get further details on the media plans and distribution of national and local press releases.

### **ANALYSIS**

The City entered this competition based on the federal project that renourished its seven (7) miles of the sandy beach in the 1980's. As a result of the continual erosion, subsequent projects of varying sizes have placed sand at the erosional hotspots along the original project area

(Attachment). Sand for the first projects was pumped or hydraulically dredged from deposits of sand about a mile off our coast. More recent efforts have utilized inland quarries and the sand back-passing method to nourish the beach and maintain hotspot areas.

These renourishment efforts have resulted in numerous economic and ecological benefits to the community. The beach system is the driving force of tourism (the largest contributor to Miami Beach's economy) and attracts new industries to the local South Florida economy. In addition, the rebirth of South Beach as one of the most recognized cities in the world is closely linked to the revitalization of the Art Deco Historic District and the development of a world-class beach environment. The continued success of Miami Beach is directly related to the maintenance, enhancement, and cross-utilization of both resources.

In addition to economic benefits, the beach and dune ecosystem represents the City's last of line defense against storm surge and wave energy impacts from tropical storms and hurricanes. The continued preservation of the shoreline not only supports peripheral economies, but also protects life safety and the real interests of residents and business owners.

The renourished sandy beach also plays a critical role in upland habitat conservation and supports endangered and threatened sea turtles, butterflies, and several dune vegetation species including the Biscayne Prickly Ash and Beach Star. The protection and enhancement of our natural resources is closely linked to the preservation of quality of life and the stability of our tourism-based economy.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me.

Attachment: Excerpt from the Miami-Dade County Beach Erosion Control Master Plan

  
DRB/FHB/HDC/LEB

# Miami-Dade County Beach Erosion Control Master Plan

