

CSI Izzy's Inlet project subject of LWV program

The League of Women Voters of Dare County will host a program of interest to everyone, residents and visitors alike, and especially to those with a bent for knowledge of ecology related topics. Zac Long, a University of North Carolina Institute of Marine Sciences ecologist, is currently working on a project on behalf of the UNC Coastal Studies Institute with headquarters in Manteo.

He will present a one-hour program at 7 p.m. on Thursday, June 7 in the Jockey's Ridge State Park auditorium in Nags Head. The public is welcome, and there is no charge for attending. The presentation centers about work he is conducting on environmental effects as the result of a particularly severe storm system that struck the area three and a half years ago.

Mother Nature delivered a stunning blow to our fragile Outer Banks in 2003 when she spawned Hurricane Isabel. As a result of her furor, a watery passage, aptly named Izzy's Inlet, was cleaved from ocean to sound, separating Hatteras Village from the town of Frisco. It was of sufficient magnitude, both in width and depth, that the only way to get from one side to the other was by boat. The breach was mended at substantial cost in as timely a manner as possible by pumping significant amounts of sand from a nearby ferry channel to fill in the gap and reinstate the roadway, thus permitting a return to normalcy for those who had reason to traverse highway NC 12 in either direction.

No doubt the only positive benefit derived from the fiasco was the opportunity to observe, over a span of time, elements of the recovery process of the established natural environment that was so dramatically impacted by the event. The habitat for plant life as — more -

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well as for some creatures and birds had been obliterated. It is hoped the results of this research will lead to an understanding of how soon and to what extent environmental restoration might come about in instances of loss of land mass and subsequent re-creation as occurred in the case of Izzy's Inlet. The findings

could well be applied to restorative efforts should similar situations come to pass in the future here or elsewhere.

The Coastal Studies Institute research project commenced in 2006 under the direction of Charles "Pete" Peterson, Morehead City marine sciences professor. It will continue for as long as adequate funding is available. For further information about Long's presentation, contact the League's natural resources committee chair, Mar-

tha McKeon, at (252) 261-1657.

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

For information about the organization, contact co-presidents Jeannette Anderson, (252) 255-0035 or Nancy Birendelli, (252) 261-3915.