rate of 20 m/year during the period 1931-1988 (Task Force, 1988). The net southerly longshore transport is 0.5 to 1.0 million cubic meters per year (Inman and Dolan, 1989).

Present Situation

Since the bridge construction in 1960, the inlet has continued its relentless migration such that a spit has grown to the south under the northern part of the elevated bridge span. This migration has caused the channel to be dangerously close to the southern bridge abutment, where protection has been provided by revetment construction.

The Corps attempts to maintain the inlet navigable through hopper and sidecast dredging. From September, 1983 to February, 1988, an average of 550,000 cubic meters annually has been dredged from the inlet with the material placed south of the inlet in water depths exceeding 6 m. Due to this substantial depth, it is questionable whether this placement provides significant benefit to the downdrift (south) shoreline.

The Corps of Engineers (COE) has developed a plan to stabilize Oregon Inlet through the construction of two jetties with sand transfer accomplished by a floating pipeline dredge which would remove accumulated sand north of the north jetty and transfer this sand to the northern portions of Pea Island. The dredge would operate during the summer months with protection against waves provided by a "Sloping Floating Breakwater" (SFB), essentially a new and untried concept, see Figure 27. The COE plan was authorized in 1970 with an estimated construction cost of approximately $50 million. Since then the estimated cost has risen to in excess of $100 million with an annual maintenance and sand bypassing cost of approximately $7 to $8 million.

Present concern centers on three issues: (1) the erosional threat to the bridge, especially near the south abutment, (2) the erosional threat to the Coast Guard station south of the inlet as shown in Figure 26, and (3) the unstable and hazardous channel.

The National Park System and State of North Carolina Position on Oregon Inlet

NPS policy is to allow natural systems to remain in as near a natural condition as possible. This is consistent with the State of North Carolina