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Coastal Article Report

Almost every day the coast has to deal with issues affecting the health of the shoreline yet these issues are often overlooked. Some common coastal issues the coast is confronted with would be sedimentation, shoreline erosion, global climate change, toxic effects, etc. These issues are affecting many parts of the world and Alligator Point, Florida is no stranger to it.

Located in Franklin County, Florida, Alligator Point is a small beach community that runs alongside the Gulf of Mexico. This beach is mainly impacted by the coastal issue erosion. Being located in Florida, Alligator Point is often hit with tropical storms such as hurricanes. One couple from the article shares the story of Hurricane Hermine and how it destroyed the road behind their house and shortened the amount of land from sea. These tropical storms have often caused shoreline erosion because of the high winds and high wave heights they bring. Professor Jaap Neinhuis from Florida State University identified Alligator Point as a barrier island. Professor Neinhuis explained that barrier islands are on narrow strips of land which makes them high targets during storms. Because the land is so narrow, storms can easily overtake them which results in an increase in erosion. Unfortunately, these storms aren’t isolated to Alligator Point, but hit many beaches in Florida such as Big Bend.

Along with the storms, these beaches usually have smaller, finer grained sand than typical beaches which negatively affects them. Having finely grained sand allows for the waves to wash it away with ease, taking some of the land out to sea. Another factor increasing erosion would-be sea-level rise. As glaciers and ice melts in Antarctic as a result of climate change, sea-level is slowly rising everywhere. Professor Neinhuis reports that although the sea-level rise rate has been recorded at 2 to 3 mm per year, it has the potential to grow higher in the future. Furthermore, human structures such as jetties and sea walls increase erosion on Alligator Point’s shoreline. Although these structures are built to help the environment, they can have negative effects. They can disturb the natural ocean drift and cause downdrift erosion. Also, sea walls often are not able to prevent erosion in front of the structure. These man-made structures don’t pose as much as a threat as the other issues specifically in Alligator Point, but they still have lasting effects.

These are some of the main issues that cause erosion in Alligator Point. Another issue would be the natural movement of the waves or rain moving sediment around. Ultimately, there are many factors that are causing erosion in this small beach community but the lack of repair from county officials is only increasing it. The community has many ideas on how to protect their shoreline but they need to take action soon to save it.

The article “Coastal Erosion is a problem in Franklin County, other Florida beaches” introduces the idea of coastal erosion and how it is caused in many aspects by humans. The author, Charles Roop, emphasizes the effect erosion is having on these beaches and how people need to quickly make a change. I think the article was well-written and a real eye-opener especially since it is relevant to me as frequent Florida visitor. It helped me further understand the factors that cause erosion and I think it can do the same for other readers. I believe this article would be a great source to incorporate in the classroom and a great way to introduce erosion. Overall, this article was a very informative read and discussed a very relevant coastal issue that can occur anywhere.

Source:

Roop, Charles. (2018, April 20). *Coastal Erosion is a problem in Franklin County, Other Florida beaches*. WCTV.tv. <https://www.wctv.tv/content/news/Coastal-erosion-is-a-problem-in-Franklin-County-other-Florida-beaches-480415033.html>

(Picture of Alligator Point, Florida)

