

ORDINANCE NO. 2005-014

AN ORDINANCE OF THE VILLAGE OF BALD HEAD ISLAND, NORTH CAROLINA TO DECLARE BEACH VITEX (VITEX ROTUNDIFOLIA) A HIGHLY INVASIVE PLANT AND THEREFORE A PUBLIC NUISANCE, AND TO MAKE IT UNLAWFUL TO PLANT BEACH VITEX ON BALD HEAD ISLAND AND OUTLINING A PROGRAM OF IRRADICATION AND RESTORATION.

WHEREAS, the beaches of Bald Head Island are among the Village's most valuable natural resources, providing areas for public recreation, attraction of tourists and other visitors, and providing a major boost to the Island's economy; and

WHEREAS, there are three species on the Federal Endangered List (loggerhead sea turtles, piping plovers, and seabeach amaranth) severely threatened by Beach Vitex; and

WHEREAS, there are other species including but not limited to Sea Oats, Bitter Panicum, Seashore Elder, and American Beachgrass that are also severely threatened; and

WHEREAS, Beach Vitex destroys these plants which protect dunes, and provides little if any protection for dunes, therefore significantly increasing the likelihood of damage to the dunes, the beaches, and therefore Island infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, Beach Vitex, a plant species that is not native to this country much less this Island, has been found growing in many places on this Island including the land side of beach dunes; and

WHEREAS, the spreading and persistence of Beach Vitex has caused harm and will continue to cause harm to native species;

NOW THEREFORE, by the power and authority granted to The Village of Bald Head Island Council by the Constitution of the State of North Carolina and the powers granted to the Village by the General Assembly of the State, it is ordained and enacted that:

1) Declaration of Public Nuisance.

The plant known as Beach Vitex (*Vitex rotundifolia*), is hereby found and declared to be a public nuisance due to the significant negative impacts this plant has upon the public beaches and sand dunes and loggerhead turtles, piping plovers, and native vegetative noted above. It is estimated that there are five acres of Beach Vitex on Bald Head Island located in at least thirty-two different locations.

2) Planting of Beach Vitex Prohibited.

It shall be unlawful for any person to plant or cause to be planted Beach Vitex (Vitex rotundifolia) on any property located on Bald Head Island in the County of Brunswick.

3) Eradication and Restoration.

In cooperation with the following organizations (others may be added) Bald Head Island Conservancy, US Fish and Wildlife Service, NC Cooperative Extension, South Carolina Beach Vitex Taskforce, North Carolina Beach Vitex Taskforce, NC State University, a program (s) will be developed to eradicate Beach Vitex from Bald Head Island. As eradication precedes restoration of these areas with native plants and other appropriate plants will be accomplished. The Village will cooperate with private land owners in this task but reserves the right to proceed with the eradication and restoration project even if the land owner objects.

4) Disposal.

Since Beach Vitex has the ability to generate new plants from seeds, stem sections and root sections, the proper disposal of plants and plant parts is important. The Village will collect separately from other yard waste and will treat appropriately. Beach Vitex clippings will not be chipped and shredded into mulch and distributed around the Island.

5) Financing of this project.

The Village of Bald Head Island will provide funding for this project with the expectation that grants will be made available at a later date to provide cost sharing and/or reimbursement for the cost of this project. It is anticipated that it will take three to five years to completely eradicate Beach Vitex from Bald Head Island. Estimated cost is \$5,000.00 per acre over this period of three to five years. It is recognized that future programs of education may be necessary and the Village may undertake such as the Council may from time to time approve.

6) This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its passage.

Adopted this 21<sup>st</sup> day October, 2005.

SIGNED:

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Larry Lammert, Mayor

ATTEST:

Amy R. Candler, Village Clerk