



Town of Caswell Beach

1100 Caswell Beach Road • Caswell Beach, NC 28465
(910) 278-5471 • Fax: (910) 278-5490 • Website: www.caswellbeach.org

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF CASWELL BEACH, 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 WITHIN THE CORPORATE
BOUNDARIES AND BEACHES OF CASWELL BEACH AND TO PROVIDE
FOR ERADICATION AND RESTORATION.**

WHEREAS, the beach strand of Caswell Beach represents one of its most valuable natural resources, providing areas for public recreation, attraction of tourists and other visitors, and providing a major boost to the area economy; and

WHEREAS, there are two known species on the Federal Endangered List (loggerhead sea turtles and seabeach amaranth) which would be severely threatened by the flora know as Vitex Rotundifolia (hereinafter Beach Vitex); and

WHEREAS, there are other species including, but not limited to Sea Oats, Bitter Panicum, Seashore Elder, and American Beachgrass that are severely threatened by the invasive growth of the vitex plant; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Agricultural Extension office has informed Town personnel and citizens that Beach Vitex destroys the above described plants which protect our dunes, and further, Beach Vitex provides little if any protection for dunes, therefore significantly increasing the likelihood of damage to the dunes, the beaches, and therefore Town infrastructure and State passageways; and

WHEREAS, Beach Vitex, a plant species that is not native to this country much less Oak Island, has been found growing in many places within Caswell Beach, 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 Caswell Beach by the Constitution of the State of North Carolina and the powers granted by the General Assembly of the State through General Statute, it is hereby ordained and enacted that:

1. Declaration of Public Nuisance.

That Ordinance 95.15 Entitled “Certain Conditions Prohibited” shall be modified to add an additional subparagraph (E) that shall read as follows:

The plant known as Beach Vitex (*Vitex rotundifolia*) is hereby found and is declared to be a public nuisance due to the significant negative impacts this plant will have upon the public beaches and sand dunes, loggerhead turtles and native vegetative such as Sea Oats,

Bitter Panicum, Seashore Elder, and American Beachgrass. It shall be unlawful for any person to plant or cause to be planted Beach Vitex (*Vitex rotundifolia*) on any property located within the municipal town limits of the Town of Caswell Beach.

2. That Ordinance 95.17 entitled "Notice to Abate Nuisance" shall be amended to add the following:

In cooperation with the following organizations, said list not being exhaustive, the 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 municipal limits. Upon identification of any Beach vitex plant, the property owner shall be ordered to eradicate the plant from his property pursuant to an acceptable means of removal and disposal. As eradication precedes restoration, the plant must be removed from properties before the property is restored with native plants or other appropriate plants. As 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 Town shall be responsible for the collection of Vitex separately from other yard waste and will treat it appropriately. Beach Vitex clippings shall not be chipped and shredded into mulch and distributed to any yard waste disposal site. The Town shall cooperate with private landowners in this task to proceed with the eradication. The penalty for failure to comply with this ordinance shall be as prescribed in Section 10.99.

3. This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its passage and the Town Clerk shall place a copy of the ordinance in the ordinance book.

Adopted this the 13th day of October, 2005.

TOWN OF CASWELL BEACH

By: _____
Harry Q. Simmons, Jr., Mayor

ATTEST:

Linda C. Bethune, CMC, Town Clerk