



(WEST PALM BEACH) --- In the second series of roundtable discussions with the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Congressman Allen West (R-FL) invited officials from Port Everglades, the Port of Palm Beach, elected officials, and staff from coastal communities stretching from Broward, Palm Beach, Martin and St. Lucie Counties to discuss the future of South Florida ports. Representatives from the Rybovich Superyacht Service Center in Riviera Beach were also in attendance. The discussion centered around dredging and maintenance of Port facilities, beach re-nourishment and the cumbersome federal permitting processes that municipalities and private businesses are facing. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection also attended the meeting.

"I am grateful for the participation we had today from the Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA Marine Fisheries, and the Florida DEP," West said. "It is important that we keep an open

dialogue between these three agencies and our coastal communities."

Carlos Vidueira, Vice President of Rybovich, attended the meeting to encourage the Corps to allow dredging near the Port of Palm Beach so he can proceed with building a new Rybovich facility, which is expected to bring hundreds of jobs to the Riviera Beach community.

"We have made a lot of progress and I am optimistic that something positive will come out of this discussion," Vidueira said. "I appreciate Congressman West making this meeting possible."

Martin County Commissioner Doug Smith attended the meeting with hopes of learning more about how the Corps may fund the St. Lucie Inlet dredging project and other projects the county is pursuing in the future.

"I have a huge responsibility to taxpayers to keep the inlet open and safe," Smith said. "Funding strategies have changed concerning the Corps of Engineers. There is a significant amount of work that needs to happen now because of these funding changes. I believe this meeting has helped us understand what the county needs to do next."

Among the actions that came out of the discussion, West committed to looking into legislative action to help South Florida's Ports.

"I have asked my staff to look at legislative solutions to ensure government regulations do not continue to block economic growth around our ports," West said. "We must find a way to resolve the issues our ports are facing. Hundreds of South Florida jobs depend on it."

For a photo gallery of the meeting, click [here](#).