



28 February 2023

Andrea Scott
Editor, Marine Corps Times
901 N. Glebe Road, 5th floor
Arlington, VA 22203

Dear Ms. Scott:

Marines are made through adversity. From the freezing cold of the Chosin Reservoir to the sands of Iraq, the United States Marine Corps has made a habit of adapting to and overcoming innumerable challenges. When sensationalists and naysayers try to cast doubt on one of the pillars of the Marine Corps, where, every year 19,000 young men and women earn the privilege of wearing the eagle, globe, and anchor, we call foul.

The *Marine Corps Times* article from 23 February 2023 titled “Here’s how the Marine Corps plans to overhaul its 25 installations” rehashes an old narrative and links to previously published articles speculating about Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) Parris Island’s demise.

While conjecture about its vulnerability may drive clicks, the story of MCRD Parris Island is not a story of extreme flooding or buildings crumbling into the ocean. Instead, Parris Island is a shining model of resiliency and adaptation, and its story can inform and inspire the dozens of military bases and thousands of communities impacted by sea level rise.

Just like Marines are trained to do, Parris Island is blazing a trail within the Department of Defense by tackling sea level rise head-on. A wide variety of resiliency projects have already been completed, from building oyster-shell beds to protect against erosion, expanding stormwater capacity and promoting healthy marshes as a buffer to tidal and storm events.

All told, more than \$135 million has been spent in the past three years to enhance Parris Island’s resiliency, and more investments will be made as evidence and circumstances warrant. Only installations with a long horizon make these kinds of investments.

These efforts have not gone unnoticed. MCRD Parris Island won the 2021 Secretary of the Navy’s Environmental Award for, “excellence in integrating environmental and operational sustainability efforts and mitigating impacts from storm surge and sea level rise through 2065.” When Naval Facilities Command developed a handbook for adapting to climate change, Parris Island was chosen as the pilot location to implement the plan.

Furthermore, Parris Island has robust community support. Locally, citizens and governments in the Beaufort-Port Royal region have upgraded stormwater systems, invested in transportation infrastructure, and safeguarded critical lands to prevent incompatible development and make sure resiliency in the surrounding community supports mission on base.

South Carolina's federal delegation recently cemented their support for the installation by introducing a bill to prohibit federal funds from being used to close or relocate Parris Island. Armed with the facts about Parris Island's innovative work, these officials understand that sensational comments aren't real policies.

Since 1915, Marines have been forged in the crucible called Parris Island. This tradition is important to the U.S. Marine Corps, not out of sentimental nostalgia, but because lessons of past sacrifice are critical to shaping future Marines. It is absurd to suggest that Parris Island, bearing witness over a century of these lessons and traditions, is unable to meet the challenges before it, especially with effective investments already made and plans for more on the way.

As long as this country calls on Marines to be first in and last out of every armed conflict, Parris Island will adapt and overcome any challenges and continue making Marines.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Tuckwiller
Chair, Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce



Col. Neal Pugliese, USCM-ret.
Chair, Military Enhancement Committee