



Working to protect Florida's precious water resources

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October 22, 2014

Governor Rick Scott
Governor's Office
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399

RE: RESTORE Project "**Restoration of Water Quality in the Impaired Waters of Charlotte Harbor**"

Dear Governor Scott:

This letter is provided in support of Charlotte County, Florida's request for \$5,610,000 from the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council toward Phase I of the County's multi-phased **Restoration of Water Quality in the Impaired Waters of Charlotte Harbor** project. This large scale project, estimated to cost in excess of \$320 million by completion, provides a comprehensive approach to address the causes of water quality impairments through the elimination of On Site Treatment and Disposal Systems (OSTDS, aka Septic Tanks), completion of stormwater Best Management Practice (BMP) restoration and improvements and providing public education on Florida Friendly landscaping and fertilizing in densely populated coastal areas.

By eliminating sources of pollutants entering the waterways, Charlotte County's project lays the foundation under which marine habitat restoration and rehabilitation can become effective. After reviewing the criteria provided by the Treasury Department, I believe that this project proposed by Charlotte County meets all four criteria to which the Council's three-year list must give highest priority.

Please consider these KEY points when choosing projects from Florida to present to the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council:

- In 1995, the Charlotte Harbor Estuary was designated as an "estuary of national significance" through the Clean Water Act and accepted into the National Estuary Program.
- Charlotte Harbor is the 2nd largest estuary in the State of Florida whose receiving waters are the Gulf of Mexico.

- There are five (5) designated Aquatic Preserves within Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program which are crucial for the sustainability of marine life.
- FDEP provided grant funds through the Section 319 and TMDL programs to assist in funding two (2) pilot sites for the overall Restoration of Water Quality in the Impaired Waters of Charlotte Harbor project.
- Reduction and elimination of nutrients and other pollutants identified in water bodies listed under the 303d verified impaired waters.

We strongly endorse and request your support of Charlotte County's **Restoration of Water Quality in the Impaired Waters of Charlotte Harbor** project.

Sincerely,

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