

POTENTIAL DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL RESTORATION PROJECTS: PROVIDING INFORMATION TO ASSIST WITH PROJECT ASSESSMENT

To help you propose projects to the State of Florida's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), we developed this project submission form. You are not required to complete this form to submit a project. However, completion of the form will help DEP gather the information required to completely and accurately evaluate a project against the selection and evaluation criteria. Where appropriate in the form, please provide references to any additional supporting information.

Project Name: *(Include project number from DEP's existing list of submitted projects, if applicable.)*

Pensacola Beach Dune Walkovers

Contact Information: Santa Rosa Island Authority

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Location for Project Implementation: *(For example, city and county, GIS coordinates if known.)*

Pensacola Beach, Florida 30.333 -87.132

Brief Project Narrative: *(Describe what the project will do.)*

Dune Walkover facilities on Pensacola Beach provide an opportunity for the general public to access the Gulf of Mexico for recreation and general use. Public benefits include increased access to the Gulf, protection of the dunes and the associated storm protection provided a healthy dune, as well as increased tourism for Pensacola Beach and Escambia County. Due to the incident and the staging of BP clean-up contractors and their equipment, public use of the facilities was compromised during the incident and the clean-up period.

The project will allow for replacement of the existing public dune walkovers with walkovers that are elevated above the primary dunes.

This project is justified due to the following impacts:

- 1) Non-actionable product remains on and within the supertidal, intertidal, and subtidal zones
- 2) Product is expected to remain within the beach system in excess of five years
- 3) Response activities have been ongoing since May 2010 and are expected to continue for the foreseeable future. These necessary activities consisting of manual labor, beach manipulation with heavy equipment, and high vehicular traffic have compromised natural beach morphological changes in the supertidal zone and negatively impacted public perception of the overall condition and safety of going to the beach resulting in a decrease in public beach utilization.

Construction of dune crossovers will have the following benefits:

- 1) Enhance public access to Gulf beaches
- 2) Mitigate for the presence of non-actionable product
- 3) Mitigate for losses of Human utilization of public beaches
- 4) Protect habitat for sea turtles and shorebirds.
- 5) Mitigate for continual beach driving that prevented formation of dunelets and pioneer dune species from establishing seaward of the primary dune
- 6) Compliment the ongoing dune restoration project by providing protection for recent plantings.

Estimated Project Costs: *(Describe the costs of the project, including any assumptions for contingency and ongoing operations and maintenance. Identify other available funding sources such as matching funds, in kind contributions or state or federal dollars. If possible, attach a schedule of anticipated costs, by year, over the anticipated project life.)*

Construction \$1,319,000 Design/CEI \$197,850 Maintenance \$155,000

Estimated Project cost = \$1,671,850

Anticipated Project Outcome with Respect to Screening Criteria

S1. Technically and administratively feasible: *(Briefly describe the critical technologies involved and any relevant past experience with similar projects.)*

Replacement of the existing dune walkovers will be under the direction of a Structural engineer registered in the State of Florida and will meet all Local, State, and Federal guidelines for coastal construction. The Santa Rosa Island Authority and their Consulting engineer have over twenty years experience with the design, modification, construction, and repair of dune walkovers at Pensacola Beach. That experience will prove invaluable in the implementation of this project.

S2. Provides environmental benefits: *(Briefly describe the nature, magnitude, and timing of any environmental benefits attributable to the project and any potential environmental costs associated with implementing or maintaining the project, e.g., loss of a habitat or conversion of habitat from one type to another during implementation.)*

The Dune Walkover Project will enhance the public access to the beach and reduce the presence of foot traffic across the dune system. In addition, the project will compliment the ongoing dune restoration project by providing protection for recent plantings and protection of shorebird nesting habitat. There are no expected environmental costs associated with the project.

S3. Does not conflict with any ongoing or planned response or remediation work: *(Briefly describe ongoing response activities in the project implementation area, if any, and why the project does or does not interfere with that work.)*

The project will not conflict with any ongoing or scheduled response or remediation work related to the Deep Water Horizon Incident. In fact, the project will compliment the ongoing dune restoration project by providing protection for recent plantings and elevating the walkover above the primary dunes.

S4. Complies with applicable and relevant federal, state, local, and tribal laws and regulations: *(No information is needed for this screening criteria.)*

Anticipated Project Outcome with Respect to Evaluation Criteria

E1. Will restore, rehabilitate, or replace a natural resource or service¹ believed/demonstrated to have been injured as a result of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill or associated response activities: *(Briefly describe the nature of any relationship between the new/improved resources or services and those adversely impacted by the oil spill.)*

The Pensacola Beach Dune Walkovers will replace the existing dune walkovers impacted by the Deep Water Horizon Incident. The dune walkovers were the primary access/egress points for the cleanup efforts on Pensacola Beach and the walkovers were impacted with product from the oil spill cleanup efforts creating loss of use by the public. This impact created an environment where the public bypassed the impacted walkovers and crossed the dune system. This action created deterioration of the primary dune system. The Dune Walkover Project will replace existing walkovers with walkovers that are elevated above the existing primary dune. This will provide better access to the beach for all members of the public.

E2. Is located in, or nearby, resources or services injured by the deepwater horizon spill: *(Briefly describe where the project would be implemented with respect to past/ongoing remediation work.)*

The Dune Walkovers are a direct access to Pensacola Beach. Pensacola Beach is located in Escambia County Florida. Escambia County is the western most county in Florida and received direct impact from the Deepwater Horizon Incident.

¹ In this form, "Services" (or "natural resource services") refers to the functions performed by a natural resource for the benefit of another natural resource and/or the public. Services can be "ecological services" – physical, chemical or biological functions that one natural resource provides for another (such as provision of food) – or "human services" – the use of natural resources used by humans that provide value to the public (such as hunting and fishing).

E3. Is ready for implementation, e.g., design, permitting, and necessary impacts assessments have been completed: *(Briefly describe where in the permitting process the project stands along with an estimated date of when the project can be implemented if it is not currently ready.)*

The project is not currently permitted or designed. However, upon award, it is anticipated that construction could commence within 150 days contingent upon peak tourist season and regulatory approval.

E4. Is cost effective: *(Briefly describe why you think the project is cost effective. Discuss whether this project is more cost effective than alternative projects which would provide similar resource or service benefits.)*

Replacing the existing dune walkovers with higher elevated walkovers is more cost effective than modification of the existing walkovers. The new walkovers will be constructed within the same geographical footprint of the existing walkovers. This will prevent impacts to the newly restored dunes and plantings. The walkovers provide a higher service benefit to the general public for beach access and reduce foot traffic across the primary dune system.

E5. Has a high potential for long-term success as demonstrated by incorporating established/reliable methods and technologies: *(Briefly describe if/how critical methods and technologies that will be used to implement the project could be considered reliable or proven.)*

The goal of the design and installation of dune walkovers is to protect the dune from foot traffic, and make the structure resistant to repetitive loss without a prohibitive price tag. The basic design has not changed much since the 1970's. But materials have.

Dunes move – they grow in good times, and occasionally are destroyed by storms. The walkovers should be built to cross the dune with the required clearance, be accessible to the extent practical, and be repaired without great expense. New materials such as composite decking, stainless connectors, and environmentally friendly pressure treated timbers are able to provide an easy access without splinters to bare feet and long-term durability. All at a cost that is comparable to lesser products of just 10 years ago.

So the design is about finding a balance. It should be safe and accessible to all, yet be cost effective and able to withstand some storms.

E6. Is likely to provide benefits rapidly following implementation: *(Briefly describe the anticipated change in benefits anticipated over time.)*

Replacing the dune walkovers will have an immediate positive impact and in time will allow the plantings to mature and the primary dune system to continue to accrete.

E7. Has a high likelihood of public acceptance: *(Briefly describe evidence to support the given answer based on surveys or results and assessments from past projects. Known or likely opposition to a project should be recognized.)*

Based on public comment and priority ranking in the Pensacola Beach Masterplan, it is anticipated that implementation of the Pensacola Beach Walkover Project will have a very positive public appeal. In addition to the added protection of the primary dune system, the removal of any remaining product from the oil spill, the walkovers will provide a better beach access for all members of the general public.

WE WANT YOUR INPUT!

Submit this form via email to Jessica Kanes at Jessica.Kanes@dep.state.fl.us . If you have any questions or concerns about the process for submitting a project, please contact:

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A current summary of projects is accessible through the Florida DEP's website at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/projects.htm> (click on "View the list of restoration project ideas").