

RESTORE Act Ecosystem Restoration Project Proposals
for consideration in the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council's Comprehensive Plan
2012

Contact Information: Stephanie T. Powers, Staff Environmental Scientist, Southwest Florida Water Management District Stephanie.Powers@swfwmd.state.fl.us				Date of Submittal: 10/11/2012			
Name of Project: Alligator Creek Habitat Restoration Project Phase III in Punta Gorda, Florida				Org and Rank:			
Project Description: This overall project consists of the hydrologic restoration of approximately 677 acres of freshwater and saltwater wetland and saltern areas critical to early life stages of many commercially-important fishes in Charlotte Harbor. The Alligator Creek project is located on a 1,600-acre site that is owned by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and is located south of Punta Gorda abutting Charlotte Harbor. The restoration activities are being performed in phases based on available funds. The current phase, Phase III, includes construction of Projects 5, 6, 8, 13 and 14, which were identified in an overall site feasibility study completed in 2000. The current project phase will restore approximately 77 acres of coastal ecosystems through hydrologic restoration of mosquito ditches and removal of exotic plant species.							
Project Location: Charlotte County, 1,600-acre parcel owned by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, part of the Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park							
Responsible Party: SWFWMD				Partners: This project has support from SWFWMD and FDEP			
NEP: CHNEP		Project Cost: \$1,300,500			Dollars Needed: \$500,000		
Start: September 2009				Completion: December 2013			
Status of Project Design and Permitting: This project is in the final design and permitting phase. Exotic removal areas have already been identified and restoration efforts in these areas could begin immediately. The remaining components will be ready to construct in ~3 months.							
What Date or Year could Construction Feasibly Begin: January 2013							
Your Proposed Timing of Funding (given permits, phasing, staging, etc.)							
FY	Previous	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Total
	\$800,500	\$0	\$500,000				\$1,300,500
Quantify Environmental Results and How to Measure Them:							
Economic Benefits (including ecosystem services): The value of ecosystems service improvements has not been estimated yet.							
Estimated number of Jobs Created or Preserved: 20							
How much Habitat will be restored and conserved?: 77 acres							
Quantify pollutant reductions: This phase will provide some pollutant load reductions, though they have not yet been quantified.							
What living coastal/marine resources will be improved and by how much?: Arthropod and fish abundance and diversity will be improved with resulting increase in bird abundance and diversity.							
How will community resilience be enhanced? Filling of mosquito control ditches and re-contouring of existing upland cut canals will reduce the effects of sea-level rise and improve resilience of the park.							

Additional Justification: Charlotte Harbor is a Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) water body that was designated an estuary of national significance by the U.S. Congress in 1995. The Harbor is generally viewed as one of the most productive estuarine systems in Southwest Florida. Although it is appropriately considered a healthy system, hydrologic alterations, water quality degradation, and habitat loss have impacted the Harbor. The SWIM Plan for Charlotte Harbor focuses on management strategies for the Peace and Myakka Rivers. The plan outlines goals to restore hydrology, habitat, and reduce pollutants entering the Harbor. The objectives of this project are consistent with these goals. Funding for the overall project design and permitting has been included in the District's budget for FY11. The District does not have sufficient funds to complete construction at this time. This project is estimated to cost \$1.3 million.

Add any photos or maps that explain the project:

