



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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The RESTORE Act, which was passed by Congress on June 29, 2012 and signed into law on July 6, 2012 by President Obama, provides a vehicle for civil and administrative Clean Water Act penalties from the Deepwater Horizon disaster, which occurred on April 20, 2010, to be shared across the Gulf. The Act provides that 80% of penalties collected as a result of the spill will be allocated to the five Gulf States in a variety of categories. In Florida, the 23 Gulf coastal counties have access to two categories, 35% directly to the counties; and 30% to a consortium of counties. A third category provides that 30% of the funds be used for projects of Gulf-wide significance, and will be allocated according to a Comprehensive Plan developed by the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council. Governor Scott represents Florida on the Council, and has asked the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to propose restoration projects to the Council for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan. There are two other categories of 2.5% each with one category providing monitoring and science support for NOAA and US Fish and Wildlife Service; and the other category providing funding to Centers of Excellence Research Grants. In Florida, the grants will be controlled by the Florida Institute of Oceanography.

Project submittals will be evaluated carefully by the Department in consultation with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and selected projects will ultimately be submitted to the Council by the Governor for consideration for inclusion in the comprehensive plan. Priority will be given to projects that address one of the following areas:

1. Stormwater / Wastewater infrastructure projects,
2. Community resilience / Living shorelines,
3. Water quality projects including those which achieve water quality benefits provided by the preservation of buffer lands around military bases,
4. Implementation of agriculture best management practices, or
5. Fish and wildlife habitat and management.

If projects are received that are determined to be better suited for one of the other categories of funding, the Department will ensure that those projects are transmitted to the appropriate management entity for that category.

I also want to share that your project submittal form has been reviewed by the Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration in reference to the proposed basin management action plan for Wakulla Springs. While the information that would result from the proposed monitoring system would not fulfill the BMAP monitoring strategy it would provide useful supplemental information. The Division would be most interested in receiving the monitoring information should your project be selected for funding through the RESTORE process.

Should you have questions about your project submittal to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill restoration efforts, please contact Phil Coram at (850) 245-2167. More information about Deepwater Horizon activities can be found at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/default.htm>.