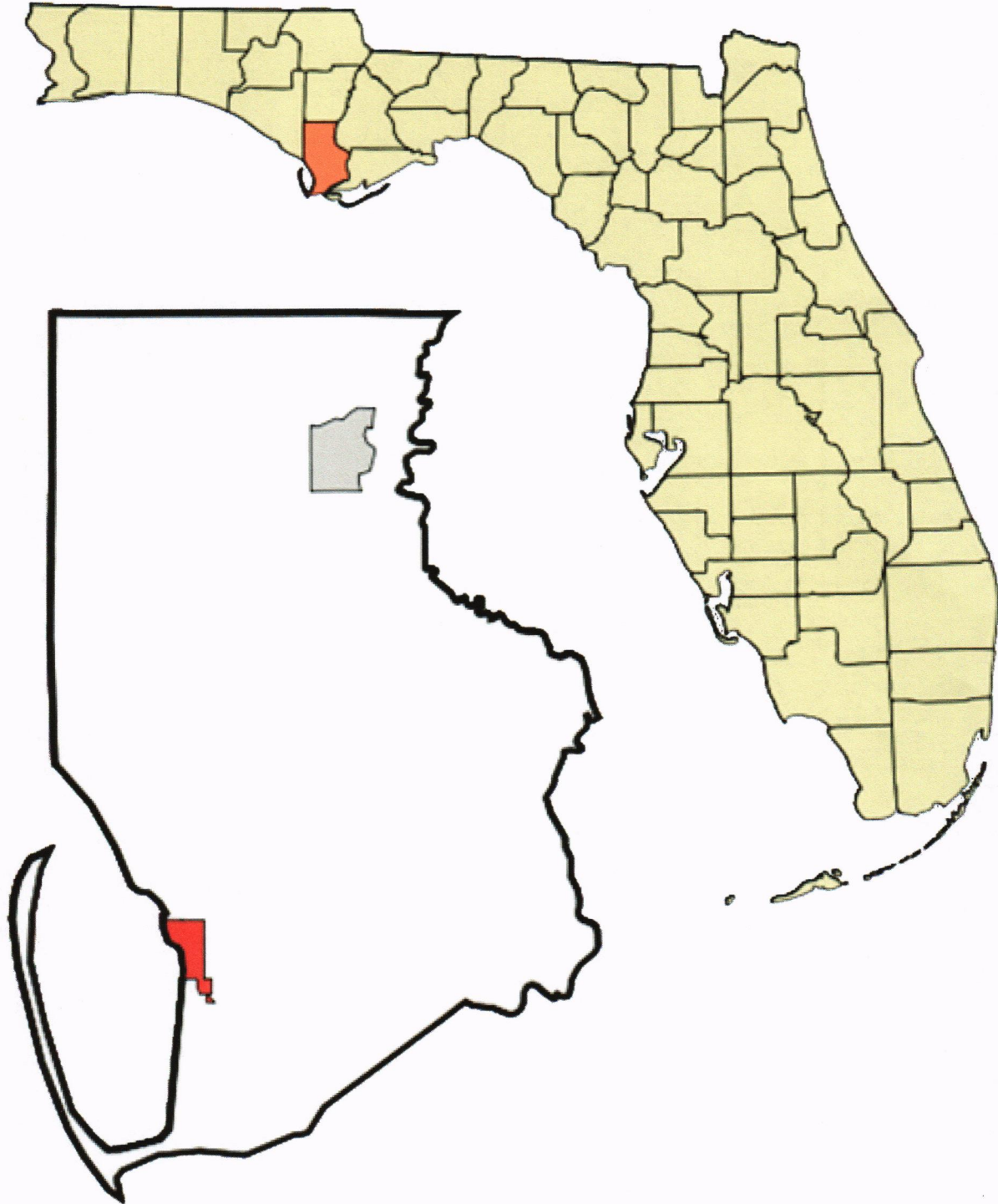


**NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT PROJECTS
FUNDING PRIORITIES
GULF COUNTY, FLORIDA**



NRDA Round One Funding Priorities

FDEP #G-8 & G-9:

Priority 1:

Boat Ramp Land Acquisition, Marine Biology Center and Seagrass Rehabilitation Project

Priority 2 (1-2):

Boat Ramp Rehabilitation – Highland View (2-1)

Boat Ramp Rehabilitation – Indian Pass (2-2)

Priority 3 (1-2):

Fishing Pier – Windmark Beach (3-1)

Fishing Pier – Beacon Hill Veterans' Memorial Park (3-2)

Priority 4 (1-3):

Land Acquisition – Intercoastal Waterway – Mooring Field & Shelter (4-1)

Land Acquisition – Highland View – Butler Bay Wayside Park (4-2)

Land Acquisition – Cape San Blas – Boat Ramp Construction (4-3)

FDEP #G-1:

Priority 5:

Sand Dune & Vegetation Project

FDEP #G-4:

Priority 6:

Artificial Reef Project

Priority 1:

**Boat Ramp Land Acquisition, Marine Biology Center and Seagrass
Rehabilitation Project**

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.)*

G8 & G9: Recreation Projects – Boat Ramp Land Acquisition , Marine Biology Center and Seagrass Rehabilitation Project (Presnell's Marina)

PRIORITY #1

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

Gulf County

Lat. 29.747597

Long. -85.303548

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

This project will allow for the purchase of Presnell's Marina property (approximately 14 acres which will provide the only County-owned and maintained boating facility on St. Joseph Bay) and construction of a Marine Biology Center which will be utilized for testing and monitoring of water quality, marine species and seagrass beds. It will also include rehabilitation of the seagrass beds to repair the damage done by propeller scarring during the oil spill, and installation of a channel marker/buoy system in St. Joseph Bay. The boat launch will be renovated and other amenities will be added for use by residents and visitors to draw tourism back to Gulf County. Gulf County's boating and fishing industry (loss of human use) was detrimentally affected due to the threat of oil being disseminated through various marine species and due to inaccessibility of many boating facilities utilized by B.P.'s Vessels of Opportunity.

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.)*

The estimated cost of this project is \$10,000,000.00. This includes purchase of the property, construction of the center, monitoring and rehabilitation of the seagrass beds, installation of a new channel marker/buoy system, expansion of the boat launching area, and construction of a parking lot, restroom facilities and picnic facilities.

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.)*

The current owner of the property is a willing seller, he has a maintenance dredging permit for the channel and boat basin, and Gulf County has extensive experience with boating facility renovation projects. Contact will be made with agencies and universities who currently perform studies within the Bay for educational purposes regarding utilization of the Marine Biology Center as a satellite research area and as an education center for the public. Contact will also be made with all concerned agencies regarding installation of the channel marker and buoy system, which will provide boaters with the necessary mechanism for navigation in the Bay.

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 largest environmental benefit that will be created will be in restoring and protecting the grass beds and endangered species which reside in St. Joseph Bay, proving the public with the necessary tools for navigation, and providing County-owned public access to St. Joseph Bay. Tourists and locals who do not have boats will also have access to the bay, and will no longer have to stop along the side of the road and wade through the grass beds for scalloping, wade-fishing, etc. This will also protect the sensitive grass beds, as well as enhance the safety of the motorists traveling along the congested S.R. 30-A by supplying an option to parking vehicles on the right-of-way. The associated environmental costs will be the grass bed and water quality monitoring, and permitting of 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.)*

This project location is in an area east of B.P.'s previous staging site in Gulf County. They utilized the County's boat ramps in Highland View and Indian Pass, and staged in the Highland View area, so boaters and fishermen were deterred from utilizing those ramps. This project will provide the County with a launching area that directly accesses St. Joseph Bay, and it is several miles from the staging area. This project will not conflict with any response or remediation work. Monitoring of the water quality and seagrass beds will assist in the ongoing response and remediation work.

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.)

During the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, B.P.'s Vessels of Opportunity utilized the only public boat ramps owned by the County that have direct access to St. Joseph Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. This heavy amount of traffic in St. Joseph Bay resulted in damage to the seagrass beds. The Bay is one of the County's (and State's) major environmental assets and is heavily utilized by tourists and locals for food and recreation. It is located within the State's Aquatic Preserve. This project will refurbish the damaged seagrass beds, provide ongoing monitoring and research, provide a navigation system within the Bay and educational materials to the public, and provide the County with another boat launching facility (with amenities) near the head of the bay which can be promoted by the T.D.C. to restore the loss of human use of the only 2 County-owned ramps on the coast.

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.)

This project is located adjacent to St. Joseph Bay on S.R. 30-A, approximately 6 miles from the Highland View boat ramp where the B.P. staging area was located. All areas of St. Joseph Bay, Cape San Blas and Indian Pass were heavily monitored during the oil spill, and boom was placed across the mouth of the Bay where it intersects with the Gulf of Mexico at the tip of the Peninsula. The facility is located near the head of St. Joseph Bay, which is a prime location for every project that is planned for this site. It is also within 2 miles of the State's Buffer Preserve.

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 owner of this property has the necessary maintenance dredging permits for the boat basin and channel. The County will need to obtain appraisals and negotiate purchase of the property. The property can be utilized "as-is" until we obtain the necessary permits to renovate the launch lanes and construct the restrooms and picnic facilities. The County will contact the necessary agencies for the monitoring, restoration, and navigation marker projects, and obtain the permits required for all projects. We can begin the negotiation for the property, water quality and seagrass monitoring, and implementation of the channel mark and buoy system up receipt of funding. Once the property is acquired and the permits are received, construction of the Marine Biology Center and renovation of the boating facility will begin.

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).

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.)*

This project is very cost effective in that it will provide restoration of a variety of losses the County suffered during the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. It will restore the seagrass beds, provide water quality and marine species testing and monitoring within the Bay, provide a navigation system to reduce future damage, provide a Center to be utilized for testing, monitoring and public education, and provide a County-owned public boat launch facility with direct access into St. Joseph Bay to offset the loss of human use. The boating facility is already in place and can be utilized until the County can obtain the necessary permits to add another launch lane. As it is already established as a boating facility, the County will not have the added expense of environmental studies which will have to be performed if we purchase property and construct a new launch facility. With the current economic conditions, property and materials can be obtained at a lower cost, and County employees can assist in the construction processes.

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.)*

Construction of the Marine Biology Center will provide the necessary avenue for long-term monitoring of the water quality and marine species in St. Joseph Bay. There is a desperate need for jobs in Gulf County, and with the Gulf Coast State College branch being located in Gulf County, there is the potential for students to enter the Marine Biology Field and not have to move away to find employment. Restoration of the seagrass beds and installation of the channel marker and buoy system will provide protection of the ecosystem in the Bay. Maintaining strategic long-term seagrass and water quality is crucial in sustaining the biological and ecological integrity of the bay system for future generations.

St. Joseph Bay is well known around the State and Country, and previous reports will show the staggering number of tourists that visited Gulf County during scallop seasons prior to the oil spill. As one of the few areas where scallops can be harvested, all boat ramps (State, City and Private) located on the Bay are packed to capacity during July and August. However, many of them do not have adequate parking and people must park blocks from the ramp after they launch. When completed, this project will provide ample boat launch facilities, parking areas, and other amenities to draw tourism back to Gulf County. This will be realized immediately upon purchase of the property, and will ensure that this now private facility will remain open for public use in the future.

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

Benefits to the County will be realized immediately upon receipt of this funding. The County will immediately begin working with various State, Federal and Environmental agencies to begin water quality testing, seagrass bed restoration, and installation of the channel marker and buoy system in St. Joseph Bay. Upon acquisition of the property, the County will obtain the necessary permits to construct the facility and renovate the boat launch facility. We will then work with other agencies to create a partnership for operation of the Center. Many universities have performed studies in St. Joseph Bay, and their research could potentially be obtained and placed at the center as an education mechanism for the public.

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.)*

Most residents of Gulf County are familiar with St. Joseph Bay and its wide variety of marine species. The oil spill placed fear in everyone's heart because the Gulf of Mexico and St. Joseph Bay are major attractions for tourists and a primary source of employment and food for the residents. This facility will ensure continued testing and monitoring of the water quality and marine species. Many of the residents were born and raised here, and have had to watch their children leave to find employment elsewhere. Creation of the Marine Biology Center would provide an additional source of employment, and potentially keep the children of Gulf County here, doing work they love.

Installation of the channel marker and buoy system will be beneficial to boaters who are unfamiliar with the Bay, as well as to those with larger boats that are subject to being stranded during low tide. It will also assist in protection of the valued seagrass beds scattered throughout the Bay.

Presnell's Marina is a currently utilized, privately-owned boating facility. At any time, the owner could close the ramp, change the use of the property, etc. If purchased by the County, it would be owned by the public and maintained as a boat launching facility for future generations. Many individuals do not currently use this ramp due to the launch fees, there being only one launch lane, and there being no amenities (restrooms, picnic facilities, etc.). Upon completion of the project, there would be additional launch lanes, more than adequate parking, and all of the amenities needed by locals and tourists who drive down for a day on the Bay or by those who are here for a lengthy stay. Installation of the channel marker and buoy system will be beneficial to boaters who are unfamiliar with the Bay, as well as to those with larger boats that are subject to being stranded during low tide.

There is no known opposition to this project.

WE WANT YOUR INPUT!

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

Rebecca Wintering
Environmental Specialist III
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 235
Tallahassee, FL 32399
Rebecca.Wintering@dep.state.fl.us

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*").



Presnell's Marina



Disclaimer- Gulf County GIS provides this GIS data as a public service. NO WARRANTY for the availability or accuracy is provided.

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Florida Department of Environmental Protection - DWH Restoration Projects

Project Title:

County, Municipality, or Agency:

DATE:

Cost Items	Cost Estimate
Planning	
Contracts Land Acquisition	7,500,000
Feasibility Grass Bed Study	100,000
Engineering & Design ¹ & Permitting	150,000
Planning Administration ²	
[other] Title Work, Closing Costs, etc.	100,000
Planning Subtotal	7,850,000
Construction	
Contracts ³ Buildings, Ramp Renovation, etc.	1,650,000
Construction Administration	100,000
[other] Park Amenities	300,000
Construction Subtotal	2,050,000
Monitoring	
Contracts Grass Beds	100,000
Monitoring Administration	
[other]	
Monitoring Subtotal	100,000
Project Cost	
TOTAL	10,000,000

¹ includes data collection, design, permitting, landrights, bid documentation prep, etc. necessary to bring a project to contract readiness

² Administration costs for each section include overhead and indirect costs to conduct that portion of project implementation

³ Should include construction cost detail such as projected unit costs for each construction item, mob/demob, plantings, and any corrective actions (if applicable)