

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.)*

St. George Island Marine Park

Contact Information: Alan C. Pierce

Director of Administrative Services

34 Forbes Street, Suite 1

Apalachicola, Florida 32320

alanp@fairpoint.net 850-653-9783 x-161 fax 850-653-9799

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

Intersection of Franklin Boulevard and West Bay Shore Drive

St. George Island, Franklin County, Florida

29 degrees 39' 55" North, 84 degrees 52' 00" West

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

The purchase of approximately 20.5 acres of undeveloped property on the bay side of St. George Island will ensure permanent public access to the waterfront, restore past environmental damage, and protect Apalachicola Bay. The upland boat basin on the site does not meet current engineering standards. The project will modify the existing basin to create a state-of-the-art boat launch facility that meets Aquatic Preserve and Outstanding Florida Waters criteria. Problems with on and off-site runoff and erosion of fill placed along the shoreline will also be addressed. The salt marsh on the west side of the project has been impacted by past dredge and fill activity and is proposed for restoration.

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 total cost of the project is \$1,000,000. The cost of the land purchase is \$900,000. It is estimated that the cost of restoring the site is \$50,000 per year for two years. After that land management cost would be minimal.

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.)*

There are no critical technologies involved in this project. The project is technically and administratively feasible.

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.)*

Public purchase of this property will protect the existing Maritime Hammock, Pine Flatwoods and Salt Marsh communities on the site, and well as protecting the waters of Apalachicola Bay by providing a buffer between the pristine waters of the bay and the commercially developed areas of St. George Island. The western portion of the site is also within the primary protection zone for a bald eagle nest located on the adjacent property to the west. Degraded natural areas on the site will be restored.

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.)*

There are no ongoing response activities in the project implementation area.

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

This project complies with all relevant federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

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.)*

This project will preserve the last large parcel of undeveloped land along the bay side of St. George Island that is still in private ownership. This parcel provides a buffer between the commercial development on St. George Island and the waters of Apalachicola Bay, one of the most productive estuaries in North America and the source of 90% of Florida's oysters.

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).

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 property is located adjacent to the Apalachicola Bay, a water body which was impacted by the Deepwater Horizon spill.

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.)*

This project is a land purchase. The process for the purchase of the land can proceed as soon as funding is secured. Once the land is purchased, restoration of degraded natural areas can begin at the appropriate time of year once proper permits have been issued.

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.)*

The purchase of the property is the most cost effective method of providing a permanent buffer around Apalachicola Bay. The site is currently undeveloped, but zoned for commercial development. If the property is not purchased by a public entity for preservation eventually it will be developed, with a resulting degradation to the surrounding waters. The property owners are not interested in selling just the development rights on the property. This would provide no benefit to them, as the whole value of the land is in the development potential.

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 use of public ownership to preserve natural communities and provide buffering for the waters of the Apalachicola Bay has proven successful in the past.

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

Benefits should begin immediately after the purchase is complete.

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.)*

Franklin County has attempted twice in the past to purchase this property for preservation purposes. In 2003 the project was selected for funding by the Florida Communities Trust, but agreement could not be reached on a price. In 2011 the County applied again for a Florida Communities Trust grant, but it was not funded. In both applications were supported by the majority of residents on St. George Island since it would prevent development on a site that is adjacent to the causeway leading onto the island.

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:

Jessica Kanes
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Environmental Specialist I
(850) 670-7707
Jessica.Kanes@dep.state.fl.us
Apalachicola NERR/FDEP
108 Island Drive
Eastpoint, FL 32328

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").