



PASCO COUNTY, FLORIDA

"Bringing Opportunities Home"

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District 1 - Ted Schrader
District 2 - Pat Mulieri, Ed.D.
District 3 - Kathryn Starkey
District 4 - Henry Wilson
District 5 - Jack Mariano

October 27, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in support of the project known as the Coastal Ocean Monitoring and Prediction System (COMPS): A comprehensive observing and modeling program for Florida's West Coast using proven capabilities and building on existing infrastructure.

COMPS is a University of South Florida project that provides ocean observations and predictions for the Gulf of Mexico. This project works in conjunction with the Southeast Coastal Ocean Regional Association as part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System. It furnishes valuable, real-time data to researchers to provide insight into how the Gulf of Mexico functions as a system. COMPS was used during the Deep Water Horizon accident in 2010 to accurately predict where the oil spill would move and come ashore. Data from COMPS has supported fisheries research in the past, including gag grouper recruitment and tracking harmful algae blooms. This is truly a useful tool for a wide variety of industries.

COMPS currently has a large amount of equipment that has been purchased, but because of cost restraints, has been put out of service. This project would fund the deployment of that equipment and restore the capabilities to nearly 100 percent. This is vital to the health of the Gulf of Mexico and therefore to the economy and environmental well-being of the State of Florida.

I strongly encourage your support in this worthwhile project. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding my support for this project.

Sincerely,

Jack Mariano
Chairman

JM/MLB/CF/wpdata/el/compssupport_ltr

cc: Board of County Commissioners
Michele L. Baker, M.B.A., County Administrator
Curtis Franklin, RESTORE Coordinator