

Florida Gulf of Mexico

Natural Resource Restoration Plan

FWC Potential Projects

Proposed Project or Program: **Repair damage to Panhandle river systems; restore damaged river banks, restore natural flow patterns, and reduce erosion and sedimentation**

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1) Project description, including location

The Panhandle region of Florida is divided into six watersheds at the HUC8 level that contain 23 basins. Six of these basins have been identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan as high priority preservation basins that have a high occurrence of Species of Greatest Conservation Need and lower threat to urbanization. Freshwater systems and the uplands that surround them need to be properly managed to help preserve not only Florida's precious freshwater resources, but also the estuarine and marine systems into which they flow. This proposed project includes the assessment and restoration of river basins along the Gulf coast. These HUC-8 watersheds need enhanced riparian buffers, floodplain reconnection, bank stabilization and erosion reduction, sediment removal, exotic species removal and re-vegetation. Partnerships with other state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations and private citizens have been created to help implement these projects. Once identification of threats is complete, prioritization is required that should encompass willingness of landowners, degree of impact, and proximity to species that are designated to be threatened, endangered, and/or special concern or of greatest conservation need. Conducting these assessments followed by prioritized restoration projects will not only enhance habitat for fish and wildlife at the project site, but will also affect the ecosystem health throughout the basin.

2) Provide a range of costs and if necessary, break down into capital costs, operational, or monitoring

Watershed assessments: \$6-20 million,

Implementation projects for targeted basins: \$75-150 million

Monitoring for projects \$5-20 million.

➔ The total cost for the six conservation basins would be **\$86 -190 million**.

This project can be broken up into a multiple different phases (e.g. 1. Assessment, 2. Implementation, 3. Monitoring).

3) Duration of project or program

The duration of this program would be **15 years**.

4) Direct benefits to one of the following (pick the one that is the primary beneficiary)

a. Restore and Conserve Habitat

b. Restore Water Quality

c. Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources

d. Enhance Community Resilience

e. Restore and Revitalize the Gulf Economy