

Phase V.2 Florida Coastal Access Project

FLORIDA RESTORATION AREA

Overview

The Florida Coastal Access Project was first proposed as part of Phase V of Deepwater Horizon Early Restoration (prior to the settlement of the DWH oil spill natural resource damage assessment), and was described, evaluated, and ultimately selected in the Final DWH Oil Spill Phase V Early Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment. The Florida Coastal Access Project is intended to enhance the public's access to the surrounding natural resources and increase recreational opportunities through the acquisition and/or enhancement of coastal parcels in the Florida Panhandle.

First Phase

In the first phase of the Florida Coastal Access Project, four locations in the Florida Panhandle were selected to be acquired and/or improved to increase recreational uses and coastal access. These locations included Innerarity Point Park in Escambia County, Captain Leonard Destin Park in Okaloosa County, Lynn Haven Bayou Park and Preserve in Bay County, and Island View Park in Franklin County. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, as the Phase V lead implementation trustee for the Florida Trustee Implementation Group (FL TIG), has obtained most of the required permits and anticipates beginning construction of the park amenities at each of these four sites in late 2017/early 2018.

Second Phase

The second phase of the Florida Coastal Access Project continues restoration planning begun during Early Restoration. The FL TIG prepared the Phase V.2 Restoration Plan/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (Phase V.2 RP/SEA) which describes and evaluates three proposed restoration alternatives: Alligator Point Park, Little Redfish Lake Addition to Grayton Beach State Park, and Salinas Park Addition. Each proposed alternative includes the acquisition of a coastal parcel, construction of various park amenities such as parking and restroom facilities, boardwalks, trails, and paddle-craft



Figure 1: The proposed Salinas Park addition site is outlined in orange and is adjacent to the current Salinas Park boundary.

launches, and ten years of funding for the operation and maintenance of the property as a public park.

Salinas Park Addition has been identified by the FL TIG as the preferred alternative based on the evaluation described in the Phase V.2 RP/SEA. Projects not identified for evaluation in this draft Phase V.2 RP/SEA may continue to be considered for inclusion in future restoration planning. Further, if any Florida Coastal Access Project funds remain after completion of this second phase, the FL TIG would determine how to allocate those funds and would complete any necessary restoration planning and comply with all applicable state and federal statutes and regulations.



Preferred Alternative: Salinas Park Addition

The proposed Salinas Park Addition alternative is an approximately six-acre undeveloped parcel on the south side of Saint Joseph Bay in Gulf County, Florida (Figure 1). The parcel is adjacent to the existing Salinas Park (Bayside) property. On the parcel for acquisition, the FL TIG proposes to construct three trail heads near the adjacent road, bike facilities, an elevated boardwalk with observation platforms, and a trail extension from the existing parking area to the trailhead (Figure 2). On existing Salinas Park property, the FL TIG proposes to construct a crosswalk to enhance public safety when accessing the new park extension, pickleball court features, and cultural and natural resource interpretive signage. The estimated cost for the Phase V.2, Salinas Park Addition is \$3.1 million.

For additional information, contact:

RACHEL HORNE

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

3900 Commonwealth Blvd
Tallahassee, FL 32399
Office Phone: 850-245-2107

Rachel.Horne@dep.state.fl.us

Public Involvement

The Draft Phase V.2 RP/SEA is available on the FL TIG website for a 30-day public comment period. The FL TIG is hosting a public meeting to discuss the Draft Phase V.2 RP/SEA on November 16 in Port St. Joe. Comments may be submitted during the public meeting (in writing or orally); or online at <http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov>. Please see Section 1.5 of the Draft Phase V.2 RP/SEA for additional details on public involvement and how to submit comments via U.S. Mail.



Figure 2: Proposed park amenities including elevated boardwalk and trail heads.



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