

RESOLUTION R-13-201

BEAUTIFUL BEACHES AND BAYS

Restoring Our Environment Restores Our Economy: RESTORE Act Implementation in Florida

**WHEREAS**, Floridians cherish our shared coastal heritage and recognize that protecting and restoring coastal natural resources is essential to sustaining our state economy and our way of life; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Gulf coast generates more than \$8 billion in wildlife tourism spending every year and supports over 280,000 jobs by drawing visitors to our world famous birding and hunting areas, bountiful fishing grounds and enchanting coastal towns; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Gulf coast is home to robust commercial and recreational fishing that enriches coastal economies while providing Americans with access to fresh, safe seafood and world-class angling opportunities, including the Historic Village of Cortez recognized as a National Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida's 23 Gulf coastal counties are home to over 16,000 wildlife tourism-related businesses, and over 7.6 million wildlife tourists visit Florida every year; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida coastal communities are in the path of forecasted increasingly intense and longer lasting storms, putting our residents, visitors, and businesses at more risk, and

**WHEREAS**, local government, bordering the Gulf of Mexico can reduce these threats to our state's coastal ecosystem and the economic drivers it supports by prioritizing natural resource protection and restoration projects that include protecting our shorelines and beaches from erosion, restoring oyster reefs, improving coastal habitat, enhancing water resources including quality and quantity, investing in sustainable fisheries, protecting vulnerable and endangered marine species, and enhancing research and monitoring on critical ecosystems and species; and

**WHEREAS**, the RESTORE Act presents Florida and its eligible local governments with an unprecedented opportunity to protect, restore and sustain the Florida Gulf coast environment to ensure its economic vitality for current and future generations.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners that:

- We commit to making the protection and restoration of our valuable natural resources in the Florida Gulf Coast region a critical priority for the county's use of

RESTORE Act funds, including such sites as Robinson Preserve and other county owned coastal properties acquired for restoration and conservation.

- We commit to working with partners instrumental to implementation of the RESTORE Act including the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council, the Gulf Consortium, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Tampa Bay, Sarasota Bay and Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Programs, and related nonprofit environmental organizations such as, but not limited to the National Audubon Society, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation/Tampa Bay Environmental Fund, and the National Wildlife Federation.

ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of Manatee County, Florida, with a quorum present and voting this 22nd Day of October, 2013.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA



By: Lawrence Bustle  
Lawrence Bustle, Chairman

ATTEST: R.B. Shore  
Clerk of the Circuit Court

By: Robin Liberty, D.C.

**Summary of Manatee County 2012 RESTORE Act Ecosystem Restoration Projects  
and Estimated Costs for Near Term (3-5 year) Projects**

**RESTORE Act Applications by Goals**

(as outlined in 11/20/12 NEP memo)

**Restore and Conserve Habitat:**

1. Robinson Preserve II Restoration (candidate for regional bundling) .....	4,450,000
2. Manatee-Hillsborough Conservation Land Corridor Connection (candidate for regional bundling)	1,581,000
3. Manatee County Ecosystem Restoration Task Force .....	1,500,000 *
4. Duette Preserve Longleaf Pine Restoration through Silviculture (candidate for regional bundling)	1,375,896
5. Environmental Land Acquisition (potential long-term project).....	50,000,000
6. Manatee River Minimum Flow .....	<u>1,100,000</u>
Total Restore and Conserve Habitat .....	\$60,006,896

**Restore Water Quality:**

1. Restore Water Quality - Regional Water Quality Monitoring Program.....	2,138,608 *
(candidate for regional bundling)	
2. Restore Water Quality - Stream Gage Program (candidate for regional bundling) .....	304,986 *
3. Restore Water Quality - Stream Condition Index Program .....	359,987 *
4. Stormwater Basin Master Plan .....	1,250,000 *
5. Restore Water Quality - Air Quality Monitoring Program (candidate for regional bundling).....	300,181 *
6. Stormwater Retrofit, Washington Park Borrow Pit .....	<u>1,850,000</u>
Total Restore Water Quality .....	\$6,203,762

**Replenish and Protect Living and Coastal and Marine Resources:**

1. Larry Borden Artificial Reef Habitat Enhancement (candidate for regional bundling).....	500,000
2. Robinson Preserve Oyster Bars and Nesting areas (candidate for regional bundling).....	285,000
3. Restore and Conserve Habitat – Sarasota Bay Seagrass Monitoring Program .....	<u>107,182</u> *
(candidate for regional bundling)	
Total Replenish and Protect Living/Coastal/Marine Resources.....	892,182

**Enhance Community Resilience:**

1. Monitoring of Petroleum Tanks and Hazardous Waste Storage.....	439,050 *
2. Green Bridge Fishing Pier Restoration .....	<u>1,100,000</u>
Total Enhance Community Resilience .....	\$1,539,050

**GRAND TOTAL..... \$68,641,890**

\* Denotes projects with recurring annualized cost. For purposes of estimating, total cost based on 5 years of continuous activity.

## Summary of Manatee County 2012 RESTORE Act Ecosystem Restoration Projects

### Restore and Conserve Habitat:

1. Robinson Preserve II Restoration (\$ 4,450,000)

The Robinson Preserve Phase II Restoration project consists of converting 150 acres neighboring Robinson Preserve from mostly improved pasture to native wetland and upland habitats. This will be done by re-contouring the land, followed by planting with native vegetation and intensive maintenance.

2. Manatee-Hillsborough Conservation Land Corridor Connection (\$ 1,581,000)

Connect 8,500 acres of conservation lands in Hillsborough County to over 3,000 acres in Manatee County through the acquisition of 186 acres of mutually adjacent agricultural land within the Little Manatee River watershed. Project includes funding for longleaf pine ecosystem restoration on land currently used for row crops.

3. Manatee County Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (\$1,500,000)

A five person adaptive management task force will be contracted to perform broad restoration efforts with particular emphasis on invasive-exotic plant species removal, but may include native plant installations, hydrological restoration, mechanical vegetative fuel reduction, monitoring or other restoration activities as directed by the County. Primary work areas would be Preserves located in the west side of the County.

4. Duette Preserve Longleaf Pine Restoration through Silviculture (\$ 1,375,896)

Afforest and restore 2,595 acres of former agricultural land within the Lake Manatee watershed to longleaf pine ecosystem via phased, single generation silvicultural operation. Establish 1,883,970 longleaf seedlings in plantation form (726 trees per acre) over two years. Utilize yields from forest product harvest to fund subsequent restoration goals and objectives over 50 years to include thinning longleaf timber to natural densities, ground cover restoration, purchase of restoration and vegetation management equipment and contracted services.

5. Environmental Land Acquisition(\$ 50,000,000)

The purpose of this project is to provide funds to acquire property in Manatee County to restore and conserve habitat and the ecological integrity of the regional landscape, protect water quality and provide community resilience in addition to increasing public appreciation and access to natural areas. Public acquisition in fee simple or by conservation easement will be accomplished with full public participation and disclosure as approved by the Board of County Commissioners in open meetings and workshops, with input from the County's standing advisory committee, Environmental Lands Management Acquisition and Advisory Committee (ELMAC).

6. Manatee River Minimum Flow(\$ 1,100,000)  
 Manatee County will increase freshwater releases from the Lake Manatee Reservoir during the non-rainy season to preserve and/or enhance low salinity habitat in the Manatee River. To offset the decrease in safe yield and reliability of the reservoir to provide drinking water to Manatee County customers caused by the increased freshwater releases, improvements to the water intake structures will be required. Lowering of the intakes will allow continued withdrawal at the lower reservoir levels that will result from the increased freshwater release schedule.

Total Restore and Conserve Habitat ..... \$60,006,896

**Restore Water Quality:**

1. Restore Water Quality - Regional Water Quality Monitoring Program (\$2,138,608)  
 High-quality ambient water quality data is required by almost all investigations of environmental impacts to freshwater, coastal, and near shore marine resources. Support for the operation of MCNRD’s 81-station ambient water quality monitoring program within Manatee County’s streams, rivers, bays and coastal waters will help ensure that this service remains intact for use in adaptive management of these resources, evaluation of impairments, compliance with established water quality criteria, and promotion of healthy natural resources management.
  
2. Restore Water Quality - Stream Gage Program (\$304,986)  
 A significant data gap in MCNRD ongoing water quality monitoring is the inability to accurately compute watershed pollutant loading rates without discharge measurements from a companion stream gage network. Stream gage stations in five selected, and monitored, subwatersheds will allow for the calculation of pollutant loads in the gaged subwatersheds and improve estimates of loads from similar un-gaged subwatersheds.
  
3. Restore Water Quality - Stream Condition Index Program (\$359,987)  
 Assessments of freshwater streams using purely physical and chemical measurements may not unequivocally identify the waterbody as “healthy” or “unhealthy”. This proposal funds the implementation of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s biological assessment measure, chiefly the Stream Condition Index (SCI), within selected Manatee County freshwater streams. Stream quality is essential for protecting downstream lakes, tributaries, estuaries and coastal ecosystems.
  
4. Stormwater Basin Master Plan (\$1,250,000)  
 The purpose of this project is to determine the benefit and feasibility of retrofitting stormwater management systems put in to place prior to water quality standards being put into place. This study would be similar in scope to one conducted in Sarasota County for the Indian River and Sapphire Shores neighborhoods but cover a larger area.
  
5. Restore Water Quality - Air Quality Monitoring Program (\$300,181)

Direct deposition to Gulf and coastal waters by nutrients and pollutants in the atmosphere – specifically nitrogen and sulfur oxides (NOX and SOX) - was identified in the Gulf of Mexico Regional Ecosystem Restoration Strategy (GMRERS) as a water quality issue of concern. Most Emissions of these pollutants are from hydrocarbon combustion. Support for the MCNRD monitoring program will help ensure that air quality data will be available for further, difficult, air and water policy development. Ambient ground-level ozone concentrations measured by MCNRD for Clean Air Act (CAA) compliance will follow regional trends in NOX and SOX emissions.

6. Stormwater Retrofit, Washington Park Borrow Pit (\$1,850,000)  
 The purpose of this project is to utilize an existing 90 acres borrow pit for a Regional Stormwater Management Facility for retrofitting untreated stormwater managements systems, provide water quality and pollution reduction within the Canal Road Drainage Basin. The 90 acres parcel was used as a borrow pit for the construction of US 41. Manatee County is the owner of this 90 acre parcel. The Canal Road Drainage Basin is a 900 acres watershed that drains into Terra Ceia Bay, an Outstanding Florida Water ( OFW), Manatee River and ultimately Tampa Bay. The water shed consist of mixed use of residential, industrial and agricultural land use. The 90 acres could provide multipurpose use as a Public Park site, Stormwater management facility, flood control project, Canal Road Public Safety improvement, wetland enhancement, wild life habitat, walking trails and educational uses .

Total Restore Water Quality ..... \$6,203,762

**Replenish and Protect Living and Coastal and Marine Resources:**

1. Larry Borden Artificial Reef Habitat Enhancement (\$500,000)  
 Artificial reef construction and habitat enhancement/creation.
2. Robinson Preserve Oyster Bars and Nesting areas (\$285,000)  
 This project consists of enhancing existing coastal habitat at Robinson Preserve by creating sea and shorebird nesting areas, and oyster bars. Preliminary goals are to create over 25,000 square feet of oyster beds, 3-4 suitable nesting sites.
3. Restore and Conserve Habitat – Sarasota Bay Seagrass Monitoring Program (\$107,182)  
 Create a coordinated seagrass monitoring program in northern Sarasota Bay, in cooperation with Sarasota County and SBEP, which is needed to improve knowledge and management of this critical habitat. Monitoring strategies will be consistent with that currently be conducted in other portions of Sarasota Bay.

Total Replenish and Protect Living/Coastal/Marine Resources ..... \$892,182

**Enhance Community Resilience:**

1. Monitoring of Petroleum Tanks and Hazardous Waste Storage(\$ 439,050)

The project is a substantial expansion of the unfunded hazardous waste program in Manatee County. Public outreach and education will be provided through detailed inspections at suspect properties/businesses. This field presence will allow for careful evaluation of potential sources of pollution, including hazardous materials, pollutant storage and septic tanks, water wells, inappropriate fertilizer management, and illicit stormwater discharges.

2. Green Bridge Fishing Pier Restoration (\$1,100,000)

This project will fund the rehabilitation of the Green Bridge Fishing Pier. This structure was transformed into the fishing pier with the construction of the new Green Bridge in ~1986. At that time the north 70 spans were left in place to function as a recreational pier of approximately 2,100 feet long reaching into the Manatee River from the north shore in Palmetto. This structure appears to date from 1927 as a predominately reinforced concrete cast in place structure. While this form of construction is not typical by today's standards it is durable. Hence the structure is still in use today. However it is in great need of repair soon or the repair efforts will be cost prohibitive as compared with demolition or replacement. Also the structure maybe closed to the public if determined structurally unsafe.

A detailed bridge inspection was conducted on the structure in early 2011 to determine its condition. The inspection revealed large scale concrete and reinforcing steel repair needs but no immediate structural issues. The salt water environment has penetrated most of the underside concrete and began corrosion of the reinforcing steel. In numerous locations on piers, pier caps, deck beams and bottom of bridge deck the steel corrosion has broken the concrete and exposed the steel. Without treatment and repair, the structure will continue to decay at an accelerated pace. The accelerated decay is because much of a concrete structure's life is from the time it takes the chlorides to migrate through the concrete to the reinforcing steel to begin corrosion. At this point the migration is complete and the corrosion process has already started.

The pier has been a mainstay of the Manatee River front for more than 20 years. It is currently seen as a community asset by the County and the City of Palmetto, in whose corporate limits it resides. Manatee County is responsible for operation and maintenance of the structure through final demolition of the structure as a condition of the lease agreement with the State of Florida who actually owns the structure. Its

continued use to access the Manatee River for fishing, bird and manatee watching, sightseeing, walking and other leisure activities remains critical to the entire area economy and quality of life.

Total Enhance Community Resilience ..... \$1,539,050

**GRAND TOTAL ..... \$68,641,890**