

#17

GULF COUNTY RESTORE ACT PROJECT PRE-PROPOSAL FORM

Project Name: St. Joseph Peninsula Turtle Patrol and coastal wildlife education program

Submitting entity: Florida Coastal Conservancy

I. Please select one or more eligible activity the project is classified under:

Restoration and protection of natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region.

X Mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife and natural resources

X Implementation of a federally approved marine, coastal or comprehensive conservation management plan, including fisheries monitoring

Workforce development and job creation

Improvements to or on state parks located in coastal areas affected by Deepwater Horizon oil spill

Infrastructure projects benefitting the economy or ecological resources, including port infrastructure

Coastal flood protection and related infrastructure

Planning assistance

X Promotion of tourism and seafood in the Gulf Coast region

II. Please provide an executive summary of the project. Describe/quantify the economic (jobs, infrastructure, tourism, etc) and environmental benefits (habitat, quality, knowledge, long-term sustainability, etc).

The Florida Coastal Conservancy was founded in 2011 to help provide environmental education and encourage natural resources volunteer activities on the St. Joseph Peninsula, Florida. The primary task is to support the St. Joseph Peninsula Turtle Patrol which consists of 12-20 volunteers who patrol the 6-mile length of beach between the Stump Hole and the southern boundary of St. Joseph State Park every morning from May 1 to October 31 each year. Although the SJP Turtle Patrol receives funding from Gulf County to accomplish their objectives, additional expenses are accrued that are beyond the scope of the Turtle Patrol's monitoring work, such as providing educational programs and conducting beach clean-up events.

Also, occasional one-time relatively large expenses arise such as the purchase of a new vehicle. The vehicle has a variety of uses. In addition to transporting volunteers while they conduct the morning surveys for turtle activity, the vehicle is used for transport during winter cold-stun events, site observations for beach scarp formation, stranding events, beach clean-up efforts and various other incidents that occur on the Peninsula. The current vehicle is 5-years old and was donated to the Turtle Patrol by the Friends of the St. Joseph Bay Buffer Preserve. It has extensive mechanical problems that will most likely preclude it's use at all during the 2013 nesting season. In addition, it is not very environmentally friendly. It is loud and has no catalytic converter. The fact that the Turtle Patrol, whose goal is to help monitor and conserve sea turtles and their habitat, is using such an un-environmentally friendly vehicle is mentioned frequently by tourists. Therefore, we are requesting funds to purchase a new, electric UTV that is quiet and non-polluting. While more environmentally friendly, this vehicle has the room and power to accomplish the many tasks undertaken by the volunteers. Because the Turtle Patrol monitors the County beach, they are often viewed as a representative of the County. By using this vehicle it will show tourists that the County is committed to conserving the natural resources that so many people come to enjoy.

Economic benefits

This project provides some of the only opportunities for people to get involved in natural resource activities in Gulf County. While these positions are non-paid, volunteer positions, many tourists and new residents select an area to visit or re-locate based on the availability of these opportunities. In addition, through our outreach activities, we spread the word and educate tourists about the amazing natural resources in Gulf County. Therefore, we believe the existence of the Florida Coastal Conservancy and the St. Joseph Peninsula Turtle Patrol contributes greatly to the growing tourist economy of Gulf County by providing this opportunity. Continued success of this organization will help continue this economic growth.

In addition, the St. Joseph Peninsula Turtle Patrol requires the services of many local businesses. We use vehicles that must be repaired, we purchase supplies each year and contribute to local events such as the Scallop Festival and Farmer's Markets.

Environmental benefits

The environmental benefits of this project are many. Through use of an environmentally friendly vehicle, we will be reducing pollution. The ability to continue providing educational information to beach-goers increases awareness of issues and results in long-term changes that benefit all aspects of the environment, such as a reduction in artificial lighting and beach debris. Because the mission of the

Florida Coastal Conservancy is to provide conservation and education, supporting this entity will assist in all aspects of this mission.

III. Please provide a cost summary/budget. Detail and matching/cooperative funds available for use, and any cooperative support from governmental or other agencies.

We are requesting \$35,200 for this 1-year project. This includes:

Equipment: \$18,000 for an electric UTV, GPS, computer, waterproof camera and projector for presentations

Supplies: \$14,000 for education supplies and web site development

Grand subtotal: \$32,000

FLCC Overhead (10%): \$3,200

Grand Total: \$35,200

IV. Please provide a timeline for project completion. Explain the technical and environmental feasibility (including any permitting considerations) of the project.

Estimated time of delivery for the UTV from placement of order is 45 days. The order will be placed immediately upon receipt of funds. Turtle Patrol surveys begin May 1 of each year.

Turtle Patrol activities are permitted by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission under Permit #094. In addition, Gulf County requires a beach driving permit that we will obtain before undertaking any activities.

V. Please provide the qualifications of the submitting entity, the financial feasibility/sustainability, and the economic feasibility and sustainability of the project (probability of success, etc).

The Florida Coastal Conservancy was formed to support the efforts of the volunteers who contribute to the recovery of this threatened species and help maintain the health of Gulf County coastal habitat. While the Conservancy has only formally been in existence since 2011, the volunteers and biologists who make up this non-profit have been actively patrolling the beach on the Peninsula for a minimum of 7 years. The volunteers, while on patrol, also serve as roving ambassadors to the many beach visitors who want to learn more about nesting sea turtles. They teach visitors (and occasionally residents) the importance of turning off house lights, removing obstructions on the beach during nesting season to prevent disorientation and entanglements,

picking up garbage, staying off of the dunes and much more. The partnership between the Florida Coastal Conservancy volunteers and the University of Florida/US Geological Survey Biologists ensures that this will continue to be a successful cooperative effort and provides administrative support. In addition, one of the founding members of the FLCC holds the FWC permit to conduct sea turtle monitoring on this beach.

VI. Please provide the anticipated results of the project, and whether it is included in the City of Port St. Joe, City of Wewahitchka, or Gulf County Comprehensive and Mitigation Plan.

This eco-friendly vehicle will provide a quiet and clean means by which the Turtle Patrol Volunteers can survey, locate, and protect the nests of the sea turtles that may have been further threatened as a result of the Deep Horizon Oil Spill. It will illustrate this community's commitment to a clean environment and a sustainable ecosystem for our wildlife. In addition to providing brochures and information for beach-going families during their patrol, volunteers can also use the vehicle for periodic beach clean-up events which enhances the beauty of the beach and encourages visitors and tourists to return to our unspoiled beaches.

It will directly address several goals and objectives defined in the Gulf County Comprehensive Plan including:

Chapter 6

Goal 1: Protect, manage, and promote energy efficiency, greenhouse gas reduction and conserve the natural resources of Gulf County to ensure their continued best use for the current and future citizens of the County

Submitted By: John Ehrman, Co-Chairman



Signature

2-26-13

Date

Florida Coastal Conservancy (FLCC) Inc.

Company Name

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Address

Ocala, FL 34470

Address

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Telephone Number

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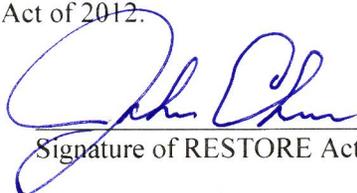
E-mail Address (if applicable)

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
GULF COUNTY, FLORIDA
RESTORE ACT COMMITTEE (R.A.C.)
1000 CECIL G. COSTIN SR. BLVD., ROOM 312, PORT ST. JOE, FLORIDA 32456
PHONE (850)229-6144 • FAX (850) 229-9252 • EMAIL: tkopinsky@gulfcounty-fl.gov

**PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY AND PUBLIC ACCESS ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR
GULF COUNTY RESTORE ACT APPLICANTS**

I, JOHN EHRMAN the undersigned authority and/or representative of the entity FLORIDA COASTAL CONSERVANCY and or the individual who has submitted the Gulf County RESTORE Act Proposal/Pre-Proposal titled ST JOSEPH PENINSULA TURTLE PATROL AND COASTAL WILDLIFE EDUCATION PROGRAM hereby acknowledge, consent and accept the following representations that coincide with my/our submission for consideration, evaluation and possible recommendation and approval by the Gulf County Board of County Commissioners for funding from the RESTORE Act distribution that strictly complies with the guidelines and regulations set forth under the Restoration and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012:

1. I/We am the authorized representative of the application/pre-proposal referenced above.
2. I/We have thoroughly reviewed and familiarized myself and/or my entity on which I have submitted the application/pre-proposal on behalf of with the entirety of the Gulf County Public Records policy.
3. I/We have thoroughly reviewed and familiarized myself and/or my entity on which I have submitted the application/pre-proposal on behalf of with the entirety of the Florida Statute Chapter 119 which controls and permits public access to information.
4. I/We hereby acknowledge, consent and agree to the controlling policies and statutes above as well as the free and open exchange of any and all submissions provided hereunder this application/pre-proposal and all information exchanged hereafter including but not limited to further amendments to these proposals as well as surveys, studies, research, data production, books, drawings, property records, work papers, county owner lists, files, forms, reports, accounts, documents, manuals, handbooks, instructions, printouts relating in any manner for the production of the application. In addition, all papers, notes, data, reference material, documentation, programs, printouts, and all other media and forms of expression that in any way include, incorporate or reflect any confidential information of what ultimately shall become the Gulf County plans for use and application of the RESTORE Act funding.
5. I/We acknowledge, agree and fully consent to cooperate with the appointed Gulf County RESTORE ACT committee, county officials and staff as a continuing obligation and condition of final review for this RESTORE Act application/pre-proposal.
6. I/We have submitted this acknowledgment to Gulf County RESTORE Act Committee and the Gulf County Board of County Commissioners for the purpose and intent of receiving an evaluation, review and possible recommendations for anticipated funding from the Restoration and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012.



Signature of RESTORE Act Applicant

Date: 2-28-2013

John Ehrman

Printed Name