

## GULF COUNTY RESTORE ACT PROJECT PRE-PROPOSAL FORM

Project Name: Historical Recreation Project

Submitting Entity: Taunton Family Children's Home Inc

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

- Restoration and protection of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region.
- Mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife and natural resources.
- 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 the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.
- Infrastructure projects benefitting the economy or ecological resources, including port infrastructure.
- Coastal flood protection and related infrastructure.
- Planning assistance.
- Promotion of tourism 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.).

**Six years ago, Taunton Family Children's Home began construction of a multi-faceted historical-recreation project in Honeyville, Located on property originally deeded to the family (Jeremiah Roberts) by President Grover Cleveland. It will have as its centerpiece a 20 acre crystal clear lake fed by hundreds of springs.**

**This lake is being formed as one million plus cubic yards of sugar white sand is produced for area beach renourishment projects. It will have its own beach, along with approximately 1,000 feet of water slides, and a 5,000 seat amphitheater (partially built), water fall (built) and fountains.**

**Circling about the lake will be a one mile lighted, paved jogging-biking trail; a perfect setting for hosting triathlons, biking, running, swimming and other such events.**

**A center piece of the facility will be a highly mechanized, especially equipped, floating stage capable of hosting such performers as the “Gaither” Gospel singers, bluegrass music festivals and other major performances.**

**In addition to the lake, water park, and amphitheater, a replica of the historic old Fort Place will be constructed. Old timers place this fort, built during Andrew Jackson’s tenure as President (see attachment), at the present day Children’s Home site, near the lake.**

**Already under construction is the Heritage Putt-Putt Golf Course, comprised of 18 holes, meandering along a replica of the Flint River system fed by a beautiful waterfall.**

**Scenes along the river will include a model paddle-wheel steam boat, replicas of lola Landing, and old Cochran Landing, a miniature bee apiary, turpentine and moonshine stills, replica of Indian Mounds (actually Confederate cannon embankments), a primitive farm and fish house (Raffields), and a replica of Old Port St. Joe. Each scene will have a recording, which by pushing a button; will explain its role and significance in our local heritage.**

**A special feature of this project will be a reproduction of the lola railroad, complete with a depot, train and one mile track. Actually operational, this train will be used, among other things, for shuttling visitors to and from parking areas to the amphitheater.**

**Another feature planned for this project is a one-half mile walking nature trail that will extend out into the adjacent swamp, circle around a cluster of primitive cypress trees, including what is believed to be one of the largest remaining virgin cypress trees in the world, while at the same time, bringing attention to the existing vast Tupelo Forrest, home of our famous Tupelo honey, first commercially produced, where else, but “Honeyville”.**

**The Federal fish & Wildlife Commission has expressed an interest in assisting with this project, by helping make it a tool for educating visitors about the many animals native to this area. After all, it was possibly the abundance of fish and wildlife that attracted the first settlers to what is now Gulf County.**

**Concerts, festivals, youth camps, retreats, educational field trips and countless other events will be attracted to and facilitated by this one-of-a-kind facility. Only wholesome family oriented activities will be allowed.**

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

### **Funding Needs (Estimated)**

#### **WATERPARK - AMPHITHEATRE**

-Complete Construction of 20 acre Lake and beaches	\$75,000
-Completion of amphitheater seating (partially completed)	\$50,000
-Completion of historical scenes at Heritage Golf Course (Mostly complete)	\$40,000
-Completion of Sand Mountain and install approximately 1,000 feet of water slides along with water pumps (partially complete)	\$45,000
-Completion of jogging-biking trail, including paving and lighting \$25,000	
-Construct control center for lights, sound along with rest rooms and concession stand	\$200,000
-Construction and installation of highly mechanized floating stage	\$400,000
-Electrical and sound system for amphitheater	\$100,000

#### **OTHER**

-Construct replica of "Old Fort Place"	\$679,869
-Construct "Iola" Railroad Depot and track	\$300,000
-Purchase miniature train	\$100,000
-Construct nature trail (along with small bee apiary to go along with moonshine still (already built) and walk way.	<u>\$20,000</u>

**SUB-TOTAL** \$2,009,869

-Administrative fees (1.5%) 30,148

**TOTAL** \$2,040,017

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

Providing proper funding is made available, and considering that this project is well underway, a two year timeline for completion would seem reasonable. Permits are already in place for construction of the beautiful man-made lake. A permit to construct the nature walkway should be easily obtained. A considerable technical task would be presented by construction of the floating stage. This, however, would be a welcomed challenge.

- 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.).

Taunton Family Children's Home has assets of over 2 million dollars. It is virtually debt free. This project has long been envisioned by David Taunton, President and co-founder of the Home. Actual construction on a considerable portion of the project began in 2006, but has been delayed by the ongoing recession.

Once in place, this project, through admission fees, (concerts, performances) and donations would be largely self-supportive. However, additional grants (historical and recreational) would be sought after and welcomed.

By already having the land and much of the infrastructure in place, coupled with the established financial and administrative skills of Taunton Family Children's Home, the probability of economic feasibility and sustainability of the project would be excellent.

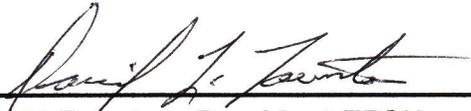
- VI. Please provide the anticipated results of the project, and whether it is included in a City of Port St. Joe, City of Wewahitchka or Gulf County Comprehensive and Mitigation Plan?

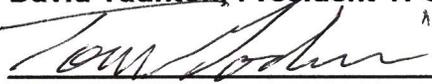
It is anticipated that this project will produce as many as 50 jobs through Upon completion approximately 15 full time and as many as 100 part time jobs will be generated.

Countless thousands of tourists, school children, spectators and activities participants (performers and athletes) will be attracted to this spectacular facility. It could easily become one of Gulf County's biggest attractions.

The site for this project is included in the Gulf County Comprehensive Plan Designated as "Institutional".

Submitted By:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**David Taunton, President TFCH**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Tom Godwin, Fort Place Project Consultant**

2/28/13  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

2/26/13  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Company Name**  
*Taunton Family Children's Home, Inc.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** *P.O. Box 870*  
*Wewahitchka, FL 32465*

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Address** *200 Taunton Family Road*  
*(850) 814-8931*

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Telephone Number**

*tauntona@taunton.com*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**E-mail Address (if applicable)**

**Fort Place Attachment - Costs**

Purchase of adjoining 2.5 acre tract	\$40,000
Log Kits	
Bathroom, Fort & Palisade	331,446
Septic Tank & Drain Field	4,840
Bathroom Tile	515
Bathroom Fixtures	4,418
900 Cubic Yards of #57 rock	15,255
Hauling of Rocks	13,500
Water Well & Tank	4,750
Website (Includes 3 Yr. Maintenance)	3,500
Exact Location of Original Fort	19,000
Marketing & Brochures	10,000
Corn Crib Logs 20' & Spikes	645
Land Clearing & Hauling	25,000
Fill dirt for Hill & Hauling	30,000
Labor	92,000
Architect	5,000
Seats for Amphitheatre (8x8's)	3,700
Fort Foundation(18 cubic yards)	2,100
Concrete Foundation (2 Bldg.)	1,800
Supplies & Furnishings for Fort	10,000
<i>(Replica weapons, lamps, hats, table, chairs, pie safe, etc.)</i>	
Fireplace (Brick & Stick Mortar)	5,000
Consulting & Site Restoration Supervisor	54,400
Landscaping	<u>3,000</u>
TOTAL	\$679,869

# Fort Place Project

*by Tom Godwin*

The Fort Place Project is included in the Taunton Family Children's Home, Inc. Historical-Recreation Project.

Once built the ongoing financial support of the Fort will be sustained by the Taunton Family Children's Home, fees charged for special events, souvenirs, rentals, and donations.

The Historical-Recreation Project has and will provide employment. Fort Place while preserving Gulf County's history will provide additional avenues for job creation and employment, a tourist destination, historical entertainment and a place for college bound students to perform their community service.

The Children's Home property encompasses the original "Fort Place". There is historical marker at the intersection of Robert's Cemetery Road and Highway 71. The fort was located inside a two acre Palisade. It was built to protect the frontier settlers west of the Chipola and Apalachicola River.

The fort known as "Fort Place" was built during the mid 1830's. It was never staffed by any government troops but defended by the local citizens. It was used during the First Seminole War (1835-1842) and was maintained as a fort through the third Seminole War (1835-1858). Three to four inch port holes in the fort wall allowed the defenders to shoot at the attackers.

The fort was attacked in 1838 by the Indians, T.L. Richards was killed during that attack.

The fort became home to many families, the Palisade was removed and the fort building modified. A family feud led to the fort being burnt to the ground in 1936.

The fort had two stories. The ground floor was 16'x32' with a two sided fireplace and the second story was 18'x34'. The Palisade was 8 to 10 feet high.

Over the years approximately 4 acres where the fort was believed to be has been set aside and protected. It is on this acreage that the Fort Place will be reconstructed. An additional two and one-half acre mobile home site will need to be purchased for a parking lot, bathroom and well system.

The fort will have to be located toward the West boundary of the 4 ½ acre parcel to preserve a burned area on the East boundary for later work by an archaeologist (See attachment #1.)

A pre-1900's corn crib was built behind the fort (a corn crib dating to that period has been donated for the project). Additional time period buildings may be placed on the 4 ½ acres. One, the historical homestead of Jeremiah Roberts has already been built. The corn crib will house antique tools and equipment of which many have already been purchased.

The fort will be open from 10 am to 6pm. Admission will be by donation. School children(classes) will be admitted free.

Re-enactments of the 1838 Indian Attack will be staged and an admission charged. Replica period weapons and clothing will be used. Children and parents will be encouraged to grab a weapon and charge the fort or they may elect to defend the fort. (On hand experience.)

The fort will be available to those wishing to celebrate a birthday, Sunday school classes, or any group wishing to use it.

A man made hill will be constructed outside the Palisade. A small amphitheatre will be constructed to provide seating for educational lectures, etc.

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, David L. Taunton the undersigned authority and/or representative of the entity Taunton Family Children's Home and or the individual who has submitted the Gulf County RESTORE Act Proposal/Pre-Proposal titled Historical Recreation Project 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: 2/28/13

David L. Taunton  
Printed Name