

## GULF COUNTY RESTORE ACT PROJECT PRE-PROPOSAL FORM

**Project Name:** Port Development Site Acquisition

**Submitting Entity:** Port St. Joe Port Authority

**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 benefiting the economy or ecological resources, including port infrastructure.
- Coastal flood protection and related infrastructure.
- Planning assistance.
- 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 Port Authority requests a grant of \$5 million to purchase and retain as a public asset for the deepwater seaport development a 68 acre property on the Gulf County Canal. The property is bounded by US Hwy 98, the Canal, the City's Wastewater Plant, and Industrial Road (CR 382).

While this is primarily an infrastructure project – securing improved support acreage for long term port development – it does present near term opportunities for job creation. The Port Authority has invested over \$1 million in funds from its own reserves and \$5 million from grants developing the waterfront of the property on the Canal as a public barge facility with a bulkhead and access road. The Authority has been and continues to pursue tenants for the site that will bring significant numbers of well paying jobs to the County, for example:

- Manufacturer of pre-cast concrete structures – 225 jobs (still active).

- Manufacturer of technologically advanced items for Tyndall Air Force Base – 220 jobs (still active).
- Ceramic tile manufacturer – 200 jobs.
- Bio-Chemical manufacturing company – 63 jobs.
- Manufacturer of stainless steel tubing for oil industry – 250 jobs.
- Wood chip exporter – 60 jobs.
- Environmentally responsible vessel salvage – 75 jobs.

The Port Authority will be able to continue to pursue tenant and job creation opportunities for this site IF it is retained as a public asset by receipt of the requested funds. Failure to act will likely result in foreclosure, sale at auction, and loss of the property as support acreage for the deepwater port and as the waterfront access for the Port’s other property, the former Arizona Chemical site.

The impact of land constraints on job creation at ports is evident in the comparison below.

<u>Port</u>	<u>Port Acreage</u>	<u>Direct Jobs</u>	<u>Total Jobs in County</u>
Pensacola (2012 verbal)	50	50	(not available)
Panama City (see note)	110	(awaiting information)	
Gulfport (2008 study)	204	2,100	4,200
Manatee (2006 study)	1,100	2,445	14,227

(Note: Port Panama City’s Economic Impact Study is underway; numbers not yet available.)

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

Capital City Bank (satisfaction of mortgage)	\$4, 856,000
Gulf County Loan (partial payment)	<u>\$ 144,000</u>
Total Grant Request	\$5,000,000

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

The task of paying all funds to secure the property will be accomplished within a month of grant award. Regarding technical and environmental considerations:

- The Port Authority holds a permit for completion of the bulkhead to the east property line.
- The wetlands have been delineated and the port area has been included in the Bear Creek Mitigation Bank which will facilitate mitigation.
- The property has received “clean” Phase 1 and 2 Environmental Site Assessments.

- No further permitting is needed until project specific work is required by future tenants.

**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 Port Authority was established in 1955 in Florida Statutes as a “...public agency for the development of commerce and the port” at Port St. Joe, Florida.

Ports are multi-generational assets around which communities/cities grow because of the benefits they bring: commercial activity, transportation, and, most importantly, jobs. Sustainability is affirmed by the fact that most major coastal cities thrived because they had a port: Mobile, New Orleans, Savannah, Tampa, etc.

Most mature ports are constrained as a result of encroaching community growth limiting available land. It is vital to secure the Canal property that is the subject of this grant request so that it remains a public asset available as support acreage for the deepwater seaport development and as a tenant site with public barge access.

In the early years after its establishment, the Port Authority facilitated cargo operations on private property; however, over time the Hess Terminal, the “City” Warehouse, and the Paper Mill were lost as port/cargo handling facilities. The last thirty plus years the Authority has been striving to establish port operations on land dedicated for that purpose. When finally given its opportunity to purchase land, it acquired the 68 acre Canal property as a first step in an incremental process. The requested grant will be used to pay the mortgage on that land and retain it for further port development and job creation.

The awarding of the grant will accomplish the goal of retaining the property as a public asset for port development. The greater interest is, of course, in the probability of successful port development and the creation of the jobs the community seeks. While in the past that has been uncertain, there has been a profound improvement in the prospect of success with the change in the past year of the position of The St. Joe Company. They are now actively pursuing port development on the mill site and related properties. They have (1) agreed with the Port Authority in an MOU to work together in the effort, (2) committed their lands for port development, (3) changed the mill site land use from Planned Unit Development (P.U.D.) to Port Industrial in the City’s Comprehensive Plan, (4) included their properties in the planning area of the new Port Master Plan now being drafted, (5) prepared marketing literature for the port, and (6) engaged the Bank of Montreal’s Infrastructure Group to market the port opportunity, seek private partners/investors, and prepare a financing plan to develop an operational seaport. The Port’s Canal property which is the subject of this pre-proposal is a vital component of the long range development plan.

**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?**

The acquisition and development of the property is included in the Port Master Plan and the City's Comprehensive Plan as is the larger port development of which this piece is a vital component.

The result of this project, specific to the grant request, will be the acquisition of the Port's Canal property to retain it as a public asset for the benefit of the greater plan of deepwater seaport development at Port St. Joe and for near term job creation by attracting tenants.

The result of the greater goal of deepwater seaport development, of which the property is a vital component for long term growth and sustainability, will be the creation of an economic engine that will bring balance to the economy of Gulf County and the region and, of course, jobs. Referencing the table in Item II above, the opportunity for job creation is a direct correlation to the port acreage.

**Submitted By:**

  
**Signature**

**Date: January 15, 2013**

**Port St. Joe Port Authority**

**Street: 406 Marina Dr., Port St. Joe, FL 32456**

**Mail: P. O. Box 745, Port St. Joe, FL 32457**

**Telephone Number: 850-229-5240**

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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, Tommy Pitts the undersigned authority and/or representative of the entity Port St. Joe Port Authority and or the individual who has submitted the Gulf County RESTORE Act Proposal/Pre-Proposal titled Port Development Site Acquisition 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.

Tommy Pitts  
Signature of RESTORE Act Applicant

Date: 1-16-13

Tommy Pitts  
Printed Name

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