

## **GULF COUNTY RESTORE ACT COMMITTEE (R.A.C.)**

The Gulf County RESTORE Act Committee (R.A.C.) has been created to develop a structured plan for implementation of the RESTORE Act funds to be received by Gulf County. This includes establishing a pre-proposal, application, and scoring process for individuals seeking this funding assistance for projects that meet the ecological and economic restoration requirements. Eligible activities include the following:

- 1) Restoration and protection of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region.
- 2) Mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife and natural resources.
- 3) Implementation of a federally approved marine, coastal or comprehensive conservation management plan, including fisheries monitoring.
- 4) Workforce development and job creation.
- 5) Improvements to or on State parks located in coastal areas affected by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.
- 6) Infrastructure projects benefitting the economy or ecological resources, including port infrastructure.
- 7) Coastal flood protection and related infrastructure.
- 8) Planning assistance.
- 9) Administrative costs of complying with this section (cannot exceed 3%).
- 10) Promotion of tourism and seafood in the Gulf Coast region.

The criteria subcommittee categorized the allowable activities as pertaining to either "Economic", "Environmental" or both.

Under "Economic" allowable activities 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10 were included.

Under "Environmental" allowable activities 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 were included.

## **Suggested Process to Distribute the RESTORE Act Funding in Gulf County**

1. The funds will be distributed through a competitive process based on the vision and priorities for protecting the environment and growing the economy in Gulf County.

### **PRE-PROPOSAL**

2. Eligible groups will have the opportunity to submit a "pre proposal". The pre proposal will provide the basic information including purpose, timeline, results, budget and the qualifications/financial feasibility of the submitting entity. The pre proposal must also identify which of the allowable activities is being addressed. Applicants submitting a pre proposal by the deadline will receive feedback regarding the viability of their proposal.

### **APPLICATION**

3. In order to be considered for funding, a completed application must be submitted by the indicated due date.
4. A public informational session will be held within 7 days of the release of the application to answer any questions. This meeting will be held in the BOCC boardroom. Once the application is released, questions about the application will only be accepted in writing or by email. Both the questions and the answers will be posted on the Gulf County BOCC website in order that all interested parties will have the benefit of all information.
5. Applications received by the due date will be reviewed and scored by an independent body of evaluators. Applications will be ranked by the number of points received with the application receiving the highest number of points being identified as the #1 application. Applications will be funded until the funding allocation is depleted.

### **Decisions That Will Need to Be Made to Implement the Above Process**

1. There will be two different applications: one for preserving/protecting the environment and one for growing/diversifying the economy.
2. The dollars will be divided equally between environmental and economic (however, these amounts will be flexible based on the pre-proposals received).

3. Recipients will receive funding based on a negotiated contract and budget that includes specific deliverables.
4. Governmental entities, non-profits, and educational institutions would be considered an eligible applicant/recipient(able to apply for the funding). Eligible applicants must demonstrate the organizational capacity, financial stability and appropriate legal status in order to apply/receive funding.
5. The purpose of the pre-proposal is to obtain information regarding how many and what type of projects are being considered.

A pre-proposal must be submitted to be eligible to submit a full application. There will be more than one opportunity to submit pre-proposals.

The purpose of the pre-proposal is not to eliminate projects but rather to obtain information about proposed projects and to provide feedback to potential applicants.

6. The projected evaluation criteria are being developed by the Gulf County R.A.C. and Criteria Subcommittee.

The two applications will be developed by the Gulf County R.A.C. based on a list of priorities approved by the Gulf County BOCC and the requirements of the RESTORE Act distribution process.

There will be items that if they are not met will prohibit the application from being evaluated. One "fatal flaw" would be if the submitting entity did not meet the criteria to be an eligible applicant. Other items include not addressing the intent of the funding (environment or economy) or spending dollars on activities that are not allowable.

7. The Review Committee will be an independent body consisting of individuals with expertise in the areas of protecting the environment and diversification of the economy. Individuals conducting a specific review must be screened to insure there is not a conflict of interest. The Review Committee will be selected and approved by the Gulf County BOCC.
  
8. When the availability of funding is eminent, the Gulf County BOCC will hire separate staff with the appropriate expertise to administer the RESTORE funding/ grants which will include, but not be limited to, the development and implementation of a monitoring and auditing plan and process.
  
9. The process for obtaining the first round of pre-proposals will be implemented once the process is approved by the Gulf County BOCC. The application process will be "on hold" until additional information is received about federal/state requirements and the amount of funding. The R.A.C. and county staff will develop the pre-proposal for presentation to and approval by the Gulf County BOCC. Public hearings will be held by the BOCC to inform interested parties of the pre-proposal process.

# GULF COUNTY RESTORE ACT PROJECT PRE-PROPOSAL FORM

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Submitting Entity: \_\_\_\_\_

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 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.).

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

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

**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.).**

**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?**

**Submitted By:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Company Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Address**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Address**

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
**E-mail Address (if applicable)**