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***Navarre Beach Wins America's Best Restored Beach
-Voters Select Navarre Beach as Best Community Beach-***

The American Shore and Beach Preservation Association announced today, May 1, that the Navarre Beach 2006 restoration project is a winner of its "Best of the Best" Restored Beaches contest. To celebrate 10 years of honoring Best Restored Beaches Across America, ASBPA asked anyone who loves the beach to pick the Best of the Best of Restored Beaches from a list of past award winners. In 2010, Navarre Beach was one of four beaches nationwide selected as a Best Restored Beach. This year, nominees were placed in one of three categories- Urban, Community and Park/Habitat beaches- and competed by region. Thanks to voters' support, Navarre Beach won the entire Best Community Beach category as well as garnering the highest overall vote total.

"We were overwhelmed by the positive turnout," said BRB chairman Lee Weishar, an ASBPA board member. "To bring in almost 27,000 votes in the Community Beach contest (and almost 24,000 in the Urban contest) shows the strong support from the various communities whose beaches were included in the online balloting and demonstrates the passion people have for THEIR beach. In reading the comments voters left, we were struck both by the devotion people have for their favorite beach and for beaches in general... how people could comment knowledgeably on a number of the beaches in the contest, having visited many of them regularly."

For over 40 years, beach restoration has been the preferred method of shore protection in coastal communities on the east, west and Gulf coasts. Beach restoration is the process of placing beach-quality sand on dwindling beaches to reverse or offset the effects of erosion. The purpose of the contest was to remind people that so many of this country's favorite beaches have been restored – some so successfully that the folks who visit them don't even know or remember it. It is ASBPA's way to highlight the importance of sound coastal management, as well as the need to maintain our coastal infrastructure to keep it healthy and wide for all users. The three main reasons for restoration are:

- Storm protection – a wide sandy beach helps separate storm waves from upland structures and infrastructure.
- Habitat restoration – numerous species rely on wide, healthy beaches as a place to live, feed and nest.
- Recreation – America's beaches have twice as many visitors annually as all of America's national parks combined. Every year, there are more than 2 billion visitors to America's beaches. In 2007, beaches contributed \$322 billion to the America's economy. More importantly, for every dollar the federal government spends on beach nourishment, it gets an estimated \$320 back in tax revenues.

The restoration project at Navarre Beach was designed to restore a critical protective buffer to the upland along approximately four miles of Gulf shoreline repeatedly damaged by multiple storms. The project was also designed to re-establish important recreational and economic benefits for the area, including 0.7 miles of beach and dune at the county's Navarre Beach Park. The project ultimately expanded the storm-damaged beach and residents saw the Gulf being "pushed" away from their properties, evacuation routes and other public.

The initial planning and permitting called for placement of 2.2 million cubic yards of sand to construct the design beach and dune and 240,000 cubic yards of material for advanced nourishment. The sand was transferred from a borrow area, located approximately four miles offshore in 60 to 70 feet of water, via hopper dredge and offloaded for beach fill placement via submerged pipelines. Construction began in March 2006 and was completed in mid-November 2006 with a final pay volume of almost three million cubic yards. The final fill volume placed was approximately 500,000 cubic yards more than the volume originally estimated and permitted. This was the result of erosional losses within the project from storms after the permit was issued but, before construction commenced. A vegetated dune feature was included in the design.

Santa Rosa County co-sponsored the project with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Beaches and Coastal Systems. Leaseholders and Santa Rosa County raised the local cost-share through the establishment of a Municipal Service Benefit Unit on the barrier island.

An independent panel of coastal managers and scientists selected Navarre Beach as one of four Best Restored Beach in the nation in 2010. Judging was based on three criteria: the economic and ecological benefits the beach brings to its community; the short- and long-term success of the restoration project; and the challenges each community overcame during the course of the project.

ABOUT ASBPA: Founded in 1926, the ASBPA promotes the integration of science, policies and actions that maintain, protect and enhance the coasts of America. For more information on ASBPA, go to www.asbpa.org, Facebook or www.twitter.com/asbpa or send an email to exdir@asbpa.org. A complete collection of Beach News Services articles is available for media access online at www.asbpa.org/news/newsroom_beachnews.htm.

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