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#150924-RESTORE

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Public Input Sought for RESTORE Act Projects

The Santa Rosa County Board of Commissioners has approved a draft multi-year implementation plan describing projects that could potentially be funded with RESTORE Act direct component funds available to Santa Rosa County as a result of the Transocean Settlement. The plan, developed based on recommendations made by the Santa Rosa County Local Restore Council, includes 15 projects totaling \$3.7 million. There will be a 45-day public review and comment period before the plan is sent to the U.S. Treasury Department for acceptance. Two meetings are scheduled to present the multi-year implementation plan and to solicit comments from the public:

- Monday, Oct. 19 at 6 p.m., Santa Rosa County Commission Meeting Room, 6495 Caroline St. in Milton
- Tuesday, Oct. 20 at 6 p.m., Woodlawn Beach Middle School Media Center, 1500 Woodlawn Way in Gulf Breeze

The RESTORE Act requires Santa Rosa County to create a multi-year implementation plan which is submitted to the U.S. Treasury Department for review and acceptance. Projects included in the plan must address one or more of the eligible activities defined in the RESTORE Act:

- Restoration and protection of natural resources
- Mitigation of damage to natural resources
- Implementation of a federally approved marine or coastal management plan
- Workforce development and job creation
- Improving state parks affected by the spill
- Infrastructure projects benefitting the economy or ecological resources
- Flood protection and infrastructure
- Promotion of tourism
- Promotion of Gulf seafood consumption

Residents can view the draft multi-year implementation plan at www.santarosa.fl.gov/restore under the Proposal Details tab. Hard copies are also available for review from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. in the commission office located in Suite M at 6495 Caroline St. in Milton or at each of the five public county libraries. In addition to providing comments at one of the public meetings, residents may submit written comments by emailing restore@santarosa.fl.gov or by mail to Santa Rosa County BOCC, RESTORE Act Coordinator, 6495 Caroline St. Suite H, Milton, FL 32570. All comments must be received by Nov. 16 at 4:30 p.m.

As of March 31, direct component funds available to Santa Rosa County are \$4,416,336. The funding to implement projects included in the multi-year implementation plan is just one of the many sources of funding associated with the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. It is anticipated that an additional \$24 million in direct component funds will be made available to Santa Rosa County over the next 15 years once litigation and Clean Water Act fines against BP are finalized.

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