

# **Florida Association of Counties**

## **Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill: Issues and Recommendations**

### **Background Summary**

In the aftermath of the explosion that occurred at the Deepwater Horizon oil well in the Gulf of Mexico, the State of Florida declared a state of emergency on April 29, 2010, listing Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Bay, Gulf and Franklin counties as the impacted counties.

To ensure their long-term interests are protected, these counties have formed a coalition and agreed that the following recommendations are in the long-term interests of both the panhandle region and the entire state.

### **Issues and Recommendation**

Florida Oil Spill Recovery Advocate – Currently, there is no single agency or person responsible for addressing either short- or long-term recovery issues for the state. The appointment of an advocate would ensure that public and private sector interests are protected, that Florida receives its fair share of any fine dollars paid by BP, and that future oil spill response protocols consider Florida's emergency management plan.

State Sales Tax - The seven counties endorse a plan to work with the State of Florida for recovery of lost sales tax revenues in each county and that the half-cent sales tax amount collected by the State will be provided to the respective counties.

Economic Recovery - The seven counties support and endorse legislative efforts that ensures that a majority of the economic recovery fine money be spent in the areas of the State that actually received direct petroleum impact and that the State assist the region in economic recovery.

State Recovery Plan - The seven counties support the creation of a State Recovery Plan, similar to one produced by the State of Alabama, and to be funded by BP.

Advertising - The seven counties endorse the \$25 million request of BP from the Northwest Florida Tourist Development Council coalition for spring and summer advertising monies.

Renourishment - The seven counties agree that within the State of Florida renourishment of impacted beaches should be the number one NRDA priority. Additionally, the counties support an immediate start from BP in Fall 2011.

Governmental Claims - The seven counties expect all expenses associated with operations performed with the consent of Unified Command be paid and the counties be made whole on these immediately.

Operations for Petroleum Recovery - The seven impacted counties want those areas that are experiencing submerged petroleum product be allowed to use vibracore sampling.

Research and Monitoring - The seven counties agree that research within the Florida near-shore waters and beaches should be conducted by local research institutions.

Multi-State Coalition - The seven counties agree that Florida should join with her sister states in the region to for a multi-state coalition to ensure that the Central Gulf Coast is restored.