



**Executive Committee Agenda  
February 25, 2016, 4:00 p.m. Eastern  
Florida Association of Counties  
100 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32301  
Dial-in Number: 1-888-670-3525  
Participant Passcode: 998 449 5298#**

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of January 27, 2016 Minutes
4. Update on Planning Grant Application  
Mike Langton  
Lisa King  
Langton Associates
5. Follow Up Discussion on the Revised FSEP Development Process  
Doug Robison  
Environmental Science Associates
6. Consortium Activity Report
7. New Business
8. Public Comment
9. Upcoming 2016 Meetings

**Executive Committee**  
Thursday, March 31, 2016, 4:00 pm, ET  
Florida Association of Counties  
Dial-In: 1-888-670-3525  
Participant Passcode: 998 449 5298#



**Executive Committee**

Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 4:00 pm, ET  
Florida Association of Counties  
Dial-In: 1-888-670-3525  
Participant Passcode: 998 449 5298#

**Full Board of Directors**

Thursday, April 21, 2016, 2:00 pm, ET  
*Hillsborough County, Frederick Karl Center  
601 E. Kennedy Boulevard  
26<sup>th</sup> Floor, Conference Rooms A & B  
Tampa, Hillsborough County*

Tuesday, June 28, 2016, 1:00 pm, ET  
*Hyatt Regency Orlando, Orange County*

Tuesday, September 13, 2016, 3:00 pm, ET  
*Hutchinson Island, Martin County*

Friday, December 2, 2016, 10:00 am, ET  
*Buena Vista Palace, Orange County*

10. Adjourn

## Notice of Meeting/Workshop Hearing

### OTHER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

#### Gulf Consortium

The Gulf Consortium Executive Committee announces a telephone conference call to which all persons are invited.

DATE AND TIME: February 25, 2016 at 4:00 pm (ET)

PLACE: Dial in Number: 888-670-3525

Participant Passcode: 998 449 5298#

**GENERAL SUBJECT MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED:** The Executive Committee of the Gulf Consortium will conduct a briefing on the planning grant application; development of the state expenditure plan; and, conduct other business. In accordance with section 163.01, the location of the conference call is the Florida Association of Counties, 100 S. Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32301.

A copy of the agenda may be obtained by contacting: Ginger Delegal at 850-922-4300 or [gdelegal@fl-counties.com](mailto:gdelegal@fl-counties.com); or, see [www.FACRestore.com](http://www.FACRestore.com).

Pursuant to the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in this workshop/meeting is asked to advise the agency at least 3 days before the workshop/meeting by contacting: Ginger Delegal at 850-922-4300 or [gdelegal@fl-counties.com](mailto:gdelegal@fl-counties.com). If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the agency using the Florida Relay Service, 1-800-955-8771 (TDD) or 1-800-955-8770 (Voice). If any person decides to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at this meeting or hearing, he/she will need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence from which the appeal is to be issued.

For more information, you may contact Ginger Delegal at 850-922-4300 or [gdelegal@fl-counties.com](mailto:gdelegal@fl-counties.com); or, see [www.FACRestore.com](http://www.FACRestore.com).

Gulf Consortium Executive Committee Meeting  
February 25, 2016, 4:00 p.m., Eastern  
FAC Office - Conference Call



<u>County</u>	<u>Executive Committee Member</u>	<u>Present</u>
Escambia	Commissioner Grover Robinson	
Gulf	Warren Yeager	
Monroe	Commissioner George Neugent	
Walton	Commissioner Sara Comander	

**Gulf Consortium Executive Committee  
February 25, 2016**

**Agenda Item 3  
Approval of January 27, 2016 Executive Committee Minutes**

**Statement of Issue:**

This agenda item proposes approval of the January 27, 2016 Executive Committee meeting minutes.

**Options:**

- (1) Approve the January 27, 2016 Executive Committee minutes, as presented;  
or
- (2) Amend and then approve the January 27, 2016 Executive Committee minutes.

**Recommendation:**

Motion to approve the January 27, 2016 Executive Committee meeting minutes, as presented.

**Prepared by:**

Ginger Delegal  
Florida Association of Counties  
Interim Manager  
On: February 18, 2016

**Attachment:**

Draft 1/27/16 Minutes

**Action Taken:**

Motion to: \_\_\_\_\_, Made by: \_\_\_\_\_;

Seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_.

Approved\_\_\_\_; Approved as amended\_\_\_\_; Defeated\_\_\_\_\_.

**Gulf Consortium Executive Committee Meeting**  
**January 27, 2016, 4:00 p.m. (Eastern)**  
**Florida Association of Counties**  
**Leon County, Tallahassee, Florida**

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**Officers in Attendance Telephonically:** Commissioner Sara Comander (Walton), Susan Latvala (Pinellas), Commissioner George Neugent (Monroe), Commissioner Grover Robinson (Escambia) and Warren Yeager (Gulf).

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**Agenda Item #1 – Call to Order**

Chairman Grover Robinson (Escambia) called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm (ET).

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**Agenda Item #2 – Public Comment**

None.

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**Agenda Item #3 – Approval of Minutes from November 12, 2015 Executive Committee Meeting**

Chairman Grover Robinson (Escambia) presented the minutes from the November 12, 2015 Executive Committee meeting. A motion to approve the November 12, 2015 Executive Committee minutes was presented by Commissioner Sara Comander (Walton) and seconded by Susan Latvala (Pinellas).

**ACTION: APPROVED**

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**Agenda Item #4 – Planning Grant Application Update**

Chairman Grover Robinson (Escambia) recognized Lisa King with Langton Associates who briefed the Committee on recent activity with regard to the Planning Grant Application to include an exchange of correspondence from the Restoration Council and the Consortium regarding the Planning Grant Application, including a letter dated January 26, 2016, from Chairman Robinson to Justin Ehrenwerth, Executive Director of the Restoration Council. There were no questions by the Committee and no action was required.

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**Agenda Item #5 – Revised FSEP Development Process and Recommended Next Steps**

Chairman Grover Robinson (Escambia) recognized Doug Robison with ESA who gave a detailed overview of the proposed revised FSEP development process pursuant to Board decisions made at the November 18, 2015 Gulf Consortium meeting. There was considerable Committee discussion and questions that were addressed by Mr. Robison and, a motion was made to circulate the proposed FSEP development plan to a group of Restore Act Coordinators for review and feedback by Susan Latvala (Pinellas) and seconded by Commissioner Sara Comander (Walton). The motion passed unanimously.

**ACTION: APPROVED**

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**Agenda Item #6 – County Collaboration and Committee Process**

Ginger Delegal, Interim Manager and Sarah Bleakley, General Counsel, gave an overview of this agenda item and went through the process by which county collaboration and committees could exist within the structure of the Gulf Consortium without violating the Sunshine Law. There were no questions by the Executive Committee and a motion was made for Gulf Consortium staff to engage with counties to initiate collaboration among the Gulf Coast counties through county staff within the guidelines discussed by Commissioner Sara Comander (Walton) and seconded by Susan Latvala (Pinellas). The motion was approved unanimously.

**ACTION: APPROVED**

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**Agenda Item #7 – Discussion of Officer Elections for 2016**

Sarah Bleakley, General Counsel, gave an overview of this agenda item which included the individuals who had self-nominated themselves for elected office in 2016. Chairman Robinson then offered the floor for candidates to speak. Commissioner Chris Constance (Charlotte) removed his name from consideration of the Chairman position and stated his intention to seek the position of Vice-Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer or appointed Officer. Chairman Grover Robinson stated his intention to seek re-election to the Chairman position. Commissioner George Neugent (Monroe) removed his name from consideration for the Vice-Chairman position and is seeking the Secretary/Treasurer position. Commissioner Jack Mariano (Pasco) removed his name from the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary/Treasurer position and is only seeking the position of Officer. Warren Yeager (Gulf) also removed his name from consideration for the Chairman position and is seeking the position of Vice-Chairman or Secretary/Treasurer. Commissioner Sara Comander (Walton) stated her intention to seek the position of appointed Officer. Chairman Robinson then asked Ms. Latvala to confirm that she will not be seeking reappointment as Vice-Chairman to which she confirmed. No action was required on this item.

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**Agenda Item #8 – FY 2014-2015 Independent Financial Audit Update**

Ms. Ginger Delegal, Interim Manager, recognized Angela Balent with Warren Averett who gave a brief overview of the status of the audit process to date to the Executive Committee and stated that a final report would be forthcoming before the April Gulf Consortium Board meeting. There were no questions by the Committee and no action was required on this item.

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**Agenda Item #9 – Consortium Activity Preview**

Ms. Ginger Delegal, Interim Manager, gave a detailed overview of this agenda item to the Committee which included detailed report on staff's activities as well as near future activities such as scheduling additional Executive Committee meetings before the April Gulf Consortium Board meeting. Chairman Robinson then suggested additional dates for Executive Committee meetings for February, March and April. No further action was taken on this item.

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**Agenda Item # 10 – New Business**

None.

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**Agenda Item # 11 – Public Comment**

None.

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**Agenda Item #12 – Upcoming Board Meetings**

The next meeting of the Consortium Board of Directors will be held on April 21, 2016 at 2:00 pm ET at the Hillsborough County Administrative Center in Hillsborough County.

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**Agenda Item #8 – Adjournment**

There being no further business, the Committee adjourned at 5:20 pm (ET).

Respectfully submitted,

Grover Robinson  
Chairman

**Gulf Consortium Executive Committee  
February 25, 2016**

**Agenda Item 4  
Planning Grant Application Update**

**Executive Summary:**

Update on the status of the Planning Grant Application submitted to the Restoration Council on September 24, 2015.

**Background:**

Langton Associates, a part of the ESA Consultant Team, has prepared the planning grant application for the Consortium's review and approval. The total request for the grant is \$4,851,525.00, over a planning horizon that extends back from August 22, 2014 (period for pre-award costs), forward two (2) years, to September 30, 2017.

Additional work and telephone conference calls occurred between Consortium staff, Langton Associates, Leon County Clerk of Court staff, and the Restoration Council as to the grant funded eligibility of certain tasks performed by the Gulf Consortium to develop the State Expenditure Plan. After exercising its delegated authority, on September 23, the Executive Committee approved the final grant applicability and it was submitted on September 24, 2015, to the Restoration Council.

Langton Associates contacted Council staff for comments on the Planning Grant application and on November 6, 2015, Council staff responded with five questions, labeled as "initial review". Those questions related to procurement, cost basis and budget. Lisa King of Langton Associates submitted a response to those questions to Council staff via email on December 10, 2015.

On December 7, 2015 Mary Pleffner, CFO of the Council sent a letter to Chair Robinson with 14 additional questions related to the Planning Grant application. Those questions related to Task 16 (Conceptual Design and Feasibility Studies) and differences between the budget and the consultant's BAFO. Chair Robinson replied to those questions, in writing, on December 22, 2015. Ms. Pleffner responded to Chair Robinson's letter on January 28, 2016 requesting additional revisions to the application (attached).

On February 12, 2016 Chair Robinson, FAC staff and the consultant team met with Justin Ehrenwerth, Executive Director of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration County, Ms. Pleffner and others of his staff, and Mimi Drew and others from DEP to discuss clarification of several issues related to the administrative grant.

The Council staff gave direction to the Consortium at the February 12 meeting on outstanding issues including:

- Change in project selection process originally recommended in the PSEP to a county-by-county basis. The Council has asked for a revised scope of work

and budget narrative that reflects this change as well as the changes to the ESA scope since the BAFO.

- The Council requested a single-source procurement justification for Task 16.
- Council has adopted the ESA Consultant Team's suggested definition of "conceptual plans and feasibility studies".
- Council requested a re-work of the grant budget to include all pre-award costs (The ESA's team Phase 1 activities) to reflect the time lapse since the submission of the application in September 2015.
- Council requested more in-depth justification for blended hourly wage rates for consultant fixed fee contracts.

The ESA team is working to prepare the revised application for submission by February 28, 2016.

**Fiscal Impact:**

Under Task Order 1, ESA agreed to develop the PSEP and the preparation of a grant application for planning funds. Task Order 1 provides that payment to ESA is contingent upon the receipt of federal planning grant monies. Upon receipt of those funds, ESA will be paid \$15,000 for its services for the planning grant application preparation, and \$35,980 when the Council approves the grant, for a total of \$50,980.

**Attachments:**

(1) Chairman Robinson's letter to Restoration Council, dated January 26, 2016.

**Recommendation:**

For information only.

**Prepared by:**

Lisa King  
Langton Associates  
On: February 18, 2016



VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL [Justin.Ehrenwerth@RestoreTheGulf.gov](mailto:Justin.Ehrenwerth@RestoreTheGulf.gov)  
AND U.S. MAIL

January 26, 2016

Mr. Justin R. Ehrenwerth  
Executive Director  
Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council  
Hale Boggs Federal Building  
500 Poydras Street  
Suite 1117  
New Orleans, LA 70119

Re: Submitted Gulf Consortium Planning Grant Application

Dear Mr. Ehrenwerth:

Four months ago the Gulf Consortium submitted its planning grant application to the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council. Since that time, members of our State Expenditure Plan (SEP) development team, Langton Associates have been in correspondence with members of your team to answer any and all review questions regarding the grant application. Unfortunately, during that time there has been little indication on when the grant application review would be completed and a decision made to the Gulf Consortium.

As chair of the Gulf Consortium, no one knows more than I the uncharted waters you and I find ourselves in as leaders of groundbreaking and history making work. Yet the delay in the grant approval process leaves the Consortium unable to complete its Congressional charge of developing a SEP. Given the unique situation we find ourselves in I thought perhaps it be best if you and I along with our teams meet to discuss any questions that may remain with your team along with a plan going forward so that both of us can continue to meet the responsibilities we've been given.

In April, it will be one year since the Planning SEP was delivered to the Council and the 23 elected officials charged with running the Gulf Consortium are anxious to continue forward with their work. Please see below a timeline of the Planning SEP and grant application process.

April 2, 2015	Planning SEP submitted to Restoration Council through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)
May 21, 2015	Council notified Ms. Mimi Drew with FDEP of approval of Florida's Planning SEP
July 1, 2015	Council agrees on process of Consortium's planning grant application and recognizes the mutual intent of finalizing the application and

July 17, 2015	approval expeditiously and enters into an iterative process. Consortium begins sharing extensive documentation in response to questions and requests made by Council staff. This process of the back and forth sharing of information lasted approximately 60 days.
September 24, 2015	Consortium submits its planning grant application to the Restoration Council.
November 6, 2015	Consortium staff, Langton Associates, reaches out to Council for comments/feedback on grant application and receive five questions, labeled 'initial review'
December 7, 2015	Council sends formal request with 14 additional questions related to the planning grant application
December 10, 2015	Langton Associates, on behalf of the Consortium responds to the first five questions from the Council related to procurement, cost basis and budget.
December 22, 2015	Consortium responds to December 10 questions related to Task 16 (Conceptual Design & Feasibility Studies) and differences between the budget and the consultant's BAFO.

As you can see, it has been more than a month since the Consortium responded to the Council's inquiry and we are still awaiting word on our grant application. While our directors are anxious to move forward, we also understand that this is a process that is under development and ensuring that it meets with all of the requirements under a complex federal grant process can be daunting. This is why I think a face to face meeting of our teams as soon as possible may help us to understand each other's goals and objectives so they can be met and we can move forward in Florida with full economic and environmental recovery.

Sincerely,



Grover C. Robinson, IV  
Escambia County Commissioner  
Chair, Gulf Consortium

cc: Mary Pleffner, Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council CFO/Director of Administration  
Mimi Drew, Designee of the Governor of Florida to the Gulf Coast Restoration Council  
Gulf Consortium Executive Committee  
R. Scott Shalley, Gulf Consortium Interim Manager  
Ginger Delegal, Gulf Consortium Interim Manager  
Sarah Bleakley, Gulf Consortium General Counsel  
Julia Espy, Governor's Office

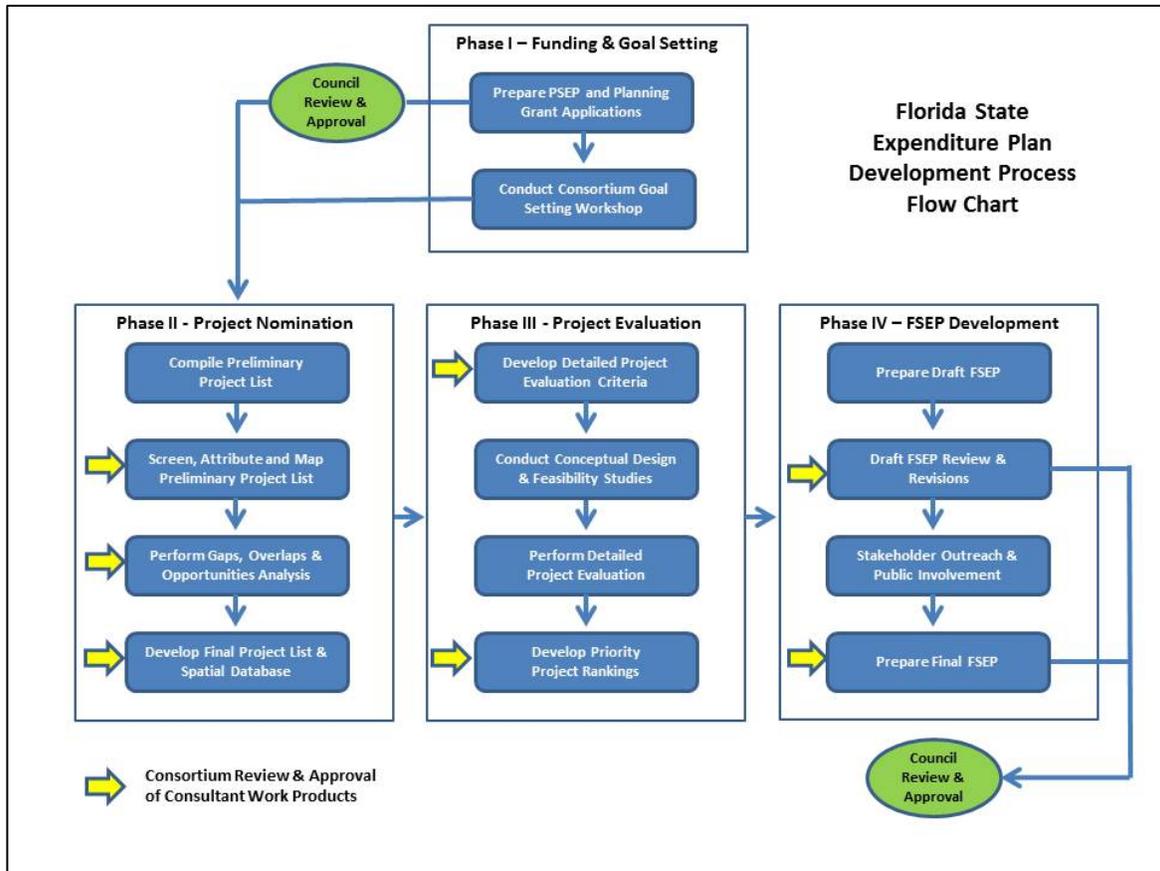
**Gulf Consortium Executive Committee  
February 25, 2016**

**Agenda Item #5**

**Follow-Up Discussion on Revised FSEP Development Process**

**Background**

At the January 27, 2016 Executive Committee meeting Doug Robison, project manager of the the ESA consultant team, presented an overview of proposed revisions to the FSEP development process graphically depicted in the process flow chart below.



Revisions to the originally proposed FSEP development process were necessary to accommodate the decision by the Gulf Consortium to establish a predetermined geographic allocation of Spill Impact Component funds pursuant to an “even-STEVEN” or equal distribution of funds among the 23 counties. This decision essentially changes the FSEP development approach from a “County-Independent” process to a “County-Driven” process. A County-driven FSEP

development process necessitates the following changes to the approach originally proposed by the ESA consultant team:

- Changes the starting point for identifying potential projects from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's online portal to the individual counties or to groups of counties working together and/or with other agencies (where it makes sense).
- Eliminates the need to develop a separate online portal to solicit new project concepts from stakeholders.
- Modifies the project evaluation process from detailed benefit/cost analysis of multiple projects to conceptual design and feasibility reviews of proposed county projects.
- Alters the priority project ranking process from the inclusion/exclusion of projects to the temporal sequencing of projects, based on grant-readiness, leveragability, and other factors.
- Reduces the level of effort and shifts the focus of the public involvement program primarily to the review of the draft FSEP, to be conducted in Phase IV (FSEP development).

With the submittal of the Planning Grant Application, and the completion of the Consortium Goal Setting Workshop, Phase I (Funding & Goal Setting) is now complete. Upon approval of the planning grant by the Council the FSEP development process will move into Phase II (Project Nomination).

Following the presentation of the proposed revisions to the FSEP development process at the January 27, 2016 meeting, the Executive Committee directed Consortium staff and the ESA consultant team to distribute the proposed revisions to County RESTORE Act Coordinators for review and feedback. Initial feedback regarding the proposed revisions has focused primarily on two tasks: 1) Compilation the Preliminary Project List; and 2) Development of Priority Project Rankings. These two tasks are discussed further below.

### **Compilation the Preliminary Project List**

With regard to the compilation of the Preliminary Project List, there are two steps to moving forward with this task, as described below.

1. **Prepare and Distribute a Standard Format Project Application Package.** The first step in compiling the preliminary project list is the development of a project application package for the counties to use in the preparation and submittal of their project concepts to the ESA Consultant Team. As specified in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) between the

Consortium and the Governor, the Consortium must consult with the FDEP in the development and approval a “standard format” for submitting projects, programs and activities; and that said standard format must be consistent with the Florida Gulf of Mexico Project Submittal Form utilized by the FDEP.

It is anticipated that the Project Submittal Form will specify general screening criteria such as: 1) conformance with the RESTORE Act list eligible of activities; and 2) consistency with adopted goals, objectives and guiding principles. However, depending on Consortium policy directives, as discussed below, the initial criteria could also include more subjective factors as: 1) regional benefits; and 2) leveragability.

2. **Assist Counties in the Development and Submittal of Project Concepts.** Once the standard format project application package is distributed to the counties, two alternative approaches are proposed for coordinating the development and submittal of project concepts by the counties.

- **Option 1** - Counties may complete the application package and submit it to the ESA consultant team within 90-days for compilation. However, counties that need assistance in identifying and describing appropriate project concepts for consideration may request a consultation with the ESA consultant team. Consultations would involve a one-day meeting with applicable county elected officials and staff (e.g., directors of public works, environmental, engineering, and planning departments, county consultants, etc.) to discuss and rank various project concepts for submittal, and to assist in the preparation of the application package.
- **Option 2** - To ensure a higher level of consistency in the project concept submittals from the counties the ESA consultant team will conduct one-day consultations with each of the 23 counties as described above. It is anticipated that the consultations and resulting project concept submittals would be completed within 90-days.

### **Development of Priority Project Rankings**

Some concerns have been expressed about the term “priority project rankings” in that it implies that some projects will be deemed to have greater “value” than others, thus deserving a higher priority in the 15-year payout. The alternative to ranking projects would be to simply develop a project sequencing schedule over

the 15-year payout without making any value judgments about the various projects proposed by the counties. Which approach is ultimately taken depends on a policy decision to be made by the Consortium, which can be summarized as follows:

- Should higher priority be given to projects that provide for greater regional benefits and/ or leveragability?

There are at least two good arguments for an affirmative policy decision on this matter. First, guidance from the Restoration Council and the Governor is clear that the FSEP should not simply be an extension of the Direct Component, but rather should endeavor to address regional coastal restoration issues in a meaningful way. Therefore, a FSEP that prioritizes projects that deliver regional benefits is more likely to receive expeditious support and approval. Second, projects that are able to attract leveraged funds from the Council Directed Component (Pot 2), Natural Resource Damage (NRDA) funds, and/or National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) funds increase the overall monetary value and beneficial impact of the FSEP for the citizens of Florida.

With regard to the 15-year payout, recent communications with the Restoration Council have confirmed that Spill Impact Component funds for project implementation will be disbursed via grants submitted through a single portal managed by the implementing entity of the Florida SEP, which at this time is presumed to be the Consortium. Our current understanding is that implementation grant applications will be project-specific. That is, a grant application will need to be submitted for each project in the approved FSEP for that project to receive implementation funding in a particular funding cycle. Implementation funding can be used for permitting, final engineering design, construction, and success monitoring. This process will also allow for multiple projects to be moving forward simultaneously, each project receiving funding allocations for its applicable phase of implementation.

**Recommendation:**

Information provided for discussion.

**Attachment:**

Draft Revised FSEP Development Process and Recommended Next Steps.

**Prepared by:**

Doug Robison

Environmental Science Associates

On: February 18, 2016

## **Revised FSEP Development Process and Recommended Next Steps**

### **Background**

At its November 17, 2015 meeting the Gulf Consortium formally voted on the three primary issues discussed at the August 26, 2015 goal setting workshop. With these votes, the Consortium formally approved the following:

- Adoption of the Restoration Council's Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives to serve as the framework for the Florida State Expenditure Plan (FSEP), with the addition of a new eighth objective for the FSEP specifically addressing economic recovery.
- Decision to not establish predetermined project type allocations of Spill Impact Component funds for environmental versus economic projects to be included in the FSEP.
- Decision to establish a predetermined geographic allocation of Spill Impact Component funds pursuant to an "even-stein" or equal distribution of funds among the 23 counties.

At this meeting the Consortium also discussed and adopted four guiding principles for the development of the FSEP:

- Put a plan together that the Governor will approve.
- Regionalization and/or bundling of projects that would otherwise meet the established criteria.
- Leverage of the money, when possible.
- Every county shall have the ability to propose its allocation be used for Gulf Restoration as established by the criteria and objectives established by the Consortium.

The decision regarding a predetermined geographic allocation of Spill Impact Component funds essentially changes the FSEP development approach from a "County-Independent" process to a "County-Driven" process. This change brings with it certain advantages, including:

- Ensuring that every Florida Gulf Coast county will actively participate in, and benefit from, the implementation of the FSEP by directing the use of its equal funding allocation towards county-proposed projects and/or county-supported projects proposed by other entities (e.g., National Estuary Programs; Water Management Districts, etc.).

- Providing more predictable programming and budgeting conditions for each county;
- Minimizing competition among counties and projects for funding, allowing counties to focus on plan development and to work more collaboratively; and
- Potentially streamlining the FSEP development process.

In addition, by working together to develop an integrated FSEP that is tied together thematically and, where appropriate, regionally, the Consortium and 23 counties will be able to:

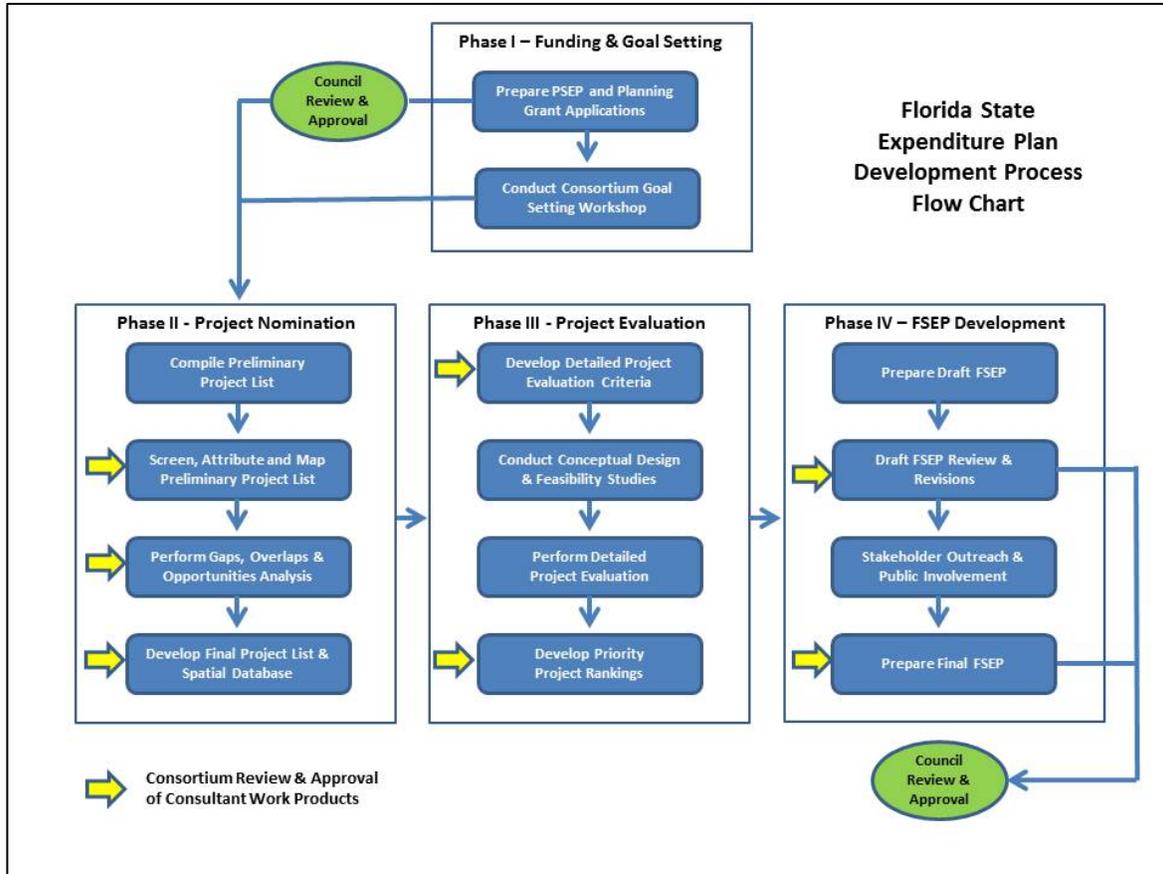
- Gain more rapid and comprehensive support and approval of the FSEP and individual projects from the Governor's Office and the Restoration Council; and
- Maximize the ability to attract leveraged funds from other applicable funding sources including the Council Selected Component (Pot 2), Florida Natural Resource Damages (NRD) funds, the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (NFWF), and others.

### **Revised FSEP Development Process**

A County-driven FSEP development process necessitates the following changes to the approach originally proposed by the ESA consultant team:

- Changes the starting point for identifying potential projects from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's online portal to the individual counties or to groups of counties working together and/or with other agencies (where it makes sense);
- Eliminates the need to develop a separate online portal to solicit new project concepts from stakeholders; and
- Modifies the project evaluation process from detailed benefit/cost analysis of multiple projects to conceptual design and feasibility reviews of proposed county projects.
- Alters the priority project ranking process from the inclusion/exclusion of projects to the temporal sequencing of projects, based on grant-readiness, leveragability, and other factors.
- Reduces the level of effort and shifts the focus of the public involvement program primarily to the review of the draft FSEP, to be conducted in Phase IV (FSEP development).

Accordingly, the process for the development of the FSEP has been revised to accommodate the new County-driven process. To provide a roadmap for the Consortium going forward, the revised process flow chart is shown below.



With the submittal of the Planning Grant Application, and the completion of the Consortium Goal Setting Workshop, Phase I (Funding & Goal Setting) has been completed. Upon approval of the planning grant by the Council the FSEP development process will move into Phase II (Project Nomination).

As stated above, the most significant change in the Project Nomination phase is the starting point for identifying potential projects for inclusion in the FSEP. In the previous County-independent process the starting point was the FDEP online project portal; whereas, in the new County-driven process the starting point is the individual counties. The revised FSEP development process also affects the tasks in Phase III (Project Evaluation), and Phase IV (FSEP Development). Each task in the remaining three phases of the revised FSEP development process is briefly described below.

1. **Compile the Preliminary Project List.** The ESA consultant team will prepare and distribute project screening criteria, a standard format

application form, and other guidance materials to each of the 23 counties to be utilized in development and submittal of their respective project concepts. Project concepts proposed by the individual counties could include:

- Projects identified in existing coastal resource and watershed management plans (e.g., National Estuary Program CCMPs; Water Management District SWIM Plans, etc.);
- Larger projects identified as part of county Direct Component activities and associated local RESTORE Act committees; and
- Applicable County projects identified in Capital Improvement Programs or other County initiatives.

If requested, the ESA consultant team will meet with individual counties to assist them in developing and prioritizing project concepts (see “Recommended Next Steps” below). Upon submittal of project concepts from each of the counties, the ESA consultant team will compile the preliminary project list which represents the first cut of project concepts for potential inclusion in the FSEP.

2. **Screen, Attribute and Map the Preliminary Project List.** The ESA consultant team will apply the screening criteria to the preliminary project list which may eliminate some projects that are not eligible for RESTORE Act funding or otherwise inconsistent with the goals, objectives and guiding principles adopted by the Consortium. The remaining projects will be attributed and converted into a spatial (GIS) database. Attribution will include such parameters as: project type; area affected by the project; project benefits; project costs; leveraging potential; project partners; etc. In addition, the screened preliminary project list will be digitized (e.g., project type; area affected; project cost; etc.) so that the full range and scope of the preliminary project list can be visually depicted in a map series. The screened preliminary project list will be summarized and presented to the Consortium for discussion.
3. **Perform Gaps, Overlaps, and Opportunities Analysis.** The ESA consultant team will conduct an analysis of the preliminary project list to determine if there are substantial gaps in geographic coverage or project type focus. In addition, this analysis will explore opportunities to combine similar nearby projects into larger single projects to improve cost-effectiveness; as well as opportunities to modify or enhance projects in ways that will increase leveraging potential and streamline regulatory

approvals. Recommended revisions to the preliminary project list will be presented to the Consortium for discussion and approval.

4. **Develop Final Project List and Spatial Database.** Based on input from the Consortium, the ESA consultant team will revise and update the initial project list and develop the final project list and associated spatial database. The final project list will be summarized and presented to the Consortium for discussion and approval. Upon Consortium approval, the final project list will represent the universe of projects that will be taken into Phase III – Project Evaluation.
5. **Develop Detailed Project Evaluation Criteria.** Based on the range of projects represented in the final project list, the ESA consultant team will develop detailed project evaluation criteria to comparatively assess each project. Detailed evaluation criteria will focus on two key project attributes: technical basis and justification; and feasibility. Evaluating the technical basis of proposed actions will be based on best professional judgment. This attribute will be assessed in terms of whether or not proposed projects are based on the best available science and/or engineering, as required by the Council, and whether they have a clearly defined technical rationale and justification. In addition, this attribute addresses the relative benefits and risks associated with proposed actions. Evaluating the feasibility of proposed projects will essentially constitute a “reality check” also based largely on best professional judgment. The feasibility attribute will be assessed in terms of numerous factors including but not limited to: technical efficacy (e.g., both science and engineering) workability, permitability, constructability, cost-effectiveness, leveragability, and public acceptance. The detailed project evaluation criteria will be presented to the Consortium for review and approval.
6. **Conduct Conceptual Design & Feasibility Studies.** It is anticipated that many project concepts submitted by the counties will have significant information gaps, while other project submittals will be well-developed as conceptual or even final designs with accompanying feasibility, engineering and environmental studies. To fairly and objectively evaluate the various project concepts submitted by the counties, those that are lacking in basic details with regard to such factors as technical justification, project boundaries, anticipated benefits, technical approach, construction methods, cost estimates, etc. will need to be developed to a higher level of specificity. Therefore, this task will involve the ESA consultant team working with individual counties, as needed, to conduct conceptual design and feasibility studies to advance their projects to comparable levels of detail suitable for detailed project evaluation. If requested, project concepts

will be advanced to a level of design (~30%) suitable for subsequent environmental permitting, making them more “grant ready” for implementation funding.

7. **Perform Detailed Project Evaluation.** Utilizing the information developed in the previous task, the ESA consultant team will apply the approved project evaluation criteria to the final project list. It is anticipated that Tasks 6 and 7 will be conducted iteratively as information relevant to project evaluation (e.g., permitability, engineering feasibility, detailed cost estimates) is developed concurrently. Project evaluation will be conducted utilizing a quantitative scoring matrix developed in spreadsheet format. The scoring methodology and all associated assumptions and qualifiers will be thoroughly described, and the respective spreadsheet formulas will be readily transparent to reviewers.
8. **Develop Priority Project Rankings.** The detailed project evaluation conducted in the previous task will be used to develop priority project rankings. Given that the approximate funding levels available to each county are known, and that the Spill Impact Component funds will be paid out over a 15-year period, priority rankings will be based on both the relative merits and “grant readiness” of the various projects. As such, it is anticipated that the priority project rankings will recommend the sequencing of projects over the 15-year funding cycle, rather than the inclusion or exclusion of particular projects. The results of the detailed project evaluation and priority project rankings will be presented to the Consortium for review and approval. If requested by the Consortium, modifications will be made to the priority project rankings to accommodate new information or other factors. The final priority project rankings will serve as the basis for Phase IV - FSEP Development.
9. **Prepare Draft FSEP.** Using the results of the previous tasks and the priority project rankings, the ESA consultant team will prepare the draft FSEP document to comply with all informational requirements specified by the Council in applicable rules and guidance documents. Prior to release of the Draft FSEP for formal review and public comment, the consultant team will conduct a legal review of the document to ensure compliance and consistency with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and agreements. Revisions to the Draft FSEP will be made to address any legal noncompliance or inconsistencies.
10. **Draft FSEP Review and Revisions.** The Draft FSEP will be submitted to the Consortium for review and approval prior to distribution to other reviewing entities. Upon approval by the Consortium, the Draft FSEP will

be submitted to the FDEP, the Governor, the Council and other appropriate reviewing entities. The ESA consultant team will deliver summary presentations of the draft FSEP to the Consortium and other reviewing entities as requested, and will work closely with each of the reviewers to revise and amend the Draft FSEP document as appropriate to address any informational gaps, technical deficiencies, or other concerns. The review and revision process for the Draft FSEP will be an iterative process.

**11. Stakeholder Outreach and Public Involvement.** The ESA consultant team will develop and implement a Stakeholder Outreach and Public Involvement program to facilitate stakeholder review and solicit public comments on the Draft FSEP. This program will be tailored to meet the requirements of the Consortium, the Governor, and the Council, and may include the following:

- Facilitation of advertised public meetings with the various affected stakeholder and citizen groups;
- Development of an online website and portal for the submittal and documentation of public comments; and
- Appointment and coordination of a Technical Advisory Committee and an Economic Advisory Committee to provide independent expert reviews of the Draft FSEP.

**12. Prepare Final FSEP.** The ESA consultant team will produce a Final FSEP document that incorporates all accepted revisions and amendments proposed by the Consortium, other reviewing entities, and the public. The ESA consultant team will deliver a presentation of the Final FSEP document to the Consortium summarizing the comments received, and the revisions and amendments made to the Draft FSEP. Upon approval by the Consortium, the Final FSEP document will be prepared for formal submittal to the Governor and the Council.

Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding between the State of Florida and the Gulf Consortium, the project submittal and consideration process for the development of the FSEP must include the following elements at a minimum:

- A review for consistency with the applicable laws and rules;
- Prioritization based on criteria established by the Consortium;
- Consideration of public comments; and

- Approval by an affirmative vote of at least a majority of the Directors present at a duly noticed public meeting of the Consortium.

The revised FSEP development process described above is clearly consistent with these minimum requirements. In addition, this comprehensive scope of work should better facilitate the expeditious approval of the FSEP by the FDEP, the Governor, and the Council; as well as increase the overall leveragability of the FSEP to increase the potential benefits of the Spill Impact Component.

It should also be noted that in its planning grant rule the Council explicitly allows grant funds to be used for conceptual design and feasibility studies. Therefore, as part of the FSEP development process there is the opportunity for the ESA consultant team to assist interested counties in advancing their respective project concepts to a level of design (~30%) suitable for subsequent environmental permitting, making them more “grant ready” for implementation funding. In addition, the ESA consultant team is prepared to assist interested counties in identifying the most appropriate leveraging opportunities to potentially maximize the funding available for individual county projects.

### **Recommended Next Steps**

As described above, the next task in the FSEP development process is to compile the preliminary project list; and in the new County-driven process the starting point for identifying project concepts is the individual counties. There are two steps to moving forward with this task, as described below.

- 1. Prepare and Distribute a Standard Format Project Application Package.** The first step in compiling the preliminary project list is the development of a project application package for the counties to use in the preparation and submittal of their project concepts to the ESA consultant team. As specified in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) between the Consortium and the Governor, the Consortium must consult with the FDEP in the development and approval a “standard format” for submitting projects, programs and activities; and that said standard format must be consistent with the Florida Gulf of Mexico Project Submittal Form utilized by the FDEP.
- 2. Assist Counties in the Development and Submittal of Project Concepts.** Once the standard format project application package is distributed to the counties, two alternative approaches are proposed for coordinating the development and submittal of project concepts by the counties.

- **Option 1** - Counties may complete the application package and submit it to the ESA consultant team within 90-days for compilation. However, counties that need assistance in identifying and describing appropriate project concepts for consideration may request a consultation with the ESA consultant team. Consultations would involve a one-day meeting with applicable county elected officials and staff (e.g., directors of public works, environmental, engineering, and planning departments, county consultants, etc.) to discuss and rank various project concepts for submittal, and to assist in the preparation of the application package.
- **Option 2** - To ensure a higher level of consistency in the project concept submittals from the counties the ESA consultant team will conduct one-day consultations with each of the 23 counties as described above. It is anticipated that the consultations and resulting project concept submittals would be completed within 90-days.

DRAFT

**Gulf Consortium Executive Committee  
February 25, 2016**

**Agenda Item 6  
Consortium Activity Report**

**Executive Summary:**

Presentation of Gulf Consortium activity.

**Report:**

- Continue weekly internal Consortium staff meetings.
- Continue weekly ESA Consultant Team/Consultant staff meetings.
- Attended and participated in a meeting among Consortium staff, ESA Consultant Team, and DEP staff (including Mimi Drew, Phil Coram, and Gareth Leonard) on Friday, January 29<sup>th</sup> to discuss the development of the FSEP.
- Attended and participated in a meeting among Chairman Robinson, Consortium staff, ESA Consultant Team members, Restoration Council staff and DEP staff on February 12, 2016 to discuss the Consortium's Planning Grant Application.
- Board communications plan has been developed and is being implemented by Consortium staff between now and the April 21 Board meeting. The first update newsletter was drafted and transmitted to all Board members on February 10, 2016.
- Continued Consortium staff guidance to the ESA Consultant Team on the development of the FSEP.
- Continued targeted county visits by Consortium staff.
- Scheduled and publicized three Executive Committee meetings between February 1 and April 21.
- Participated in recent in person meetings with members of Florida's congressional delegation and US Treasury staff during February 20-24.
- Draft and transmit a letter, under Chairman Robinson's signature to US Treasury, outlining concerns over the question of whether RESTORE Act fines can be used to pledge against debt to finance the projects, programs and activities of the State Expenditure Plan.

- Schedule and prepare for a Consortium staff one-on-one briefing with the newly appointed Pinellas County Director of the Gulf Consortium Board, Commissioner John Morrioni.
- Schedule and prepare for a RESTORE Act Coordinator's meeting in Pinellas County in March.
- Continued work with Warren Averett, the CPA firm conducting the FY 14-15 independent audit. The audit is on schedule for Board review in April.

**Recommendation:**

Provide direction to Consortium staff on these items.

**Attachment:**

None.

**Prepared by:**

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Florida Association of Counties  
Interim General Manager  
On: February 18, 2016