

State of Florida

Pensacola Bay Watershed Restoration

The Pensacola Bay Watershed headwaters are in southern Alabama, and the bay itself lies in northwestern Florida, in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties and adjacent to the State of Alabama and the City of Pensacola. The Pensacola Bay estuary covers 144 square miles and comprises five interconnected arms or large embayments: Pensacola Bay, Escambia Bay, Blackwater Bay, East Bay, and Santa Rosa Sound. Tidal fluctuations and flushing of the estuary are limited. Railroad and highway bridges also limit mixing between the waters of the upper and lower parts of the bay. Water exits the estuary through a narrow pass at the mouth of Pensacola Bay. This proposal would improve water quality and restore habitats in the watershed. The five projects are:

1. Pensacola East Bay Living Shoreline Project – Phase I (\$4,884,750)
2. Pensacola Bay Living Shoreline – Phase I (\$1,795,950)
3. Pensacola Beach Reclaimed Water System (\$2,925,000)
4. Beach Haven – Joint Stormwater & Wastewater Improvement Project - Phase II (\$5,967,000)
5. Bayou Chico Contaminated Sediment Removal - Planning, Design, and Permitting (\$356,850)

There are two living shoreline projects to restore lost oyster habitat. The wastewater reuse project would eventually make hundreds of thousands of gallons of reclaimed water available every day for irrigation on Santa Rosa Island. Each gallon of reclaimed water results in a corresponding reduction of the wastewater discharge into the Santa Rosa Sound. Continued expansion of this reclaimed water system will remove one of the last remaining point source wastewater discharges in the watershed and, at the same time, conserve potable water resources. The proposal also includes two projects in the heavily impacted Bayou Chico watershed, a combination stormwater/septic tank replacement project and an aggressive plan to remove contaminated sediment. All these projects would advance the goals in a variety of restoration plans already adopted for the Pensacola Bay watershed. This proposal leverages and builds upon the more than \$30 million in projects currently funded by the *Deepwater Horizon* Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) funding sources that address water quality and habitat restoration in this watershed. It also leverages more than \$25 million in local funds invested in Bayou Chico. Requested funding amount: \$15,929,550.