

Draft Funded Priorities List 3b

Proposal Abstract

Sponsor: Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Proposal: Florida Gulf Coast Tributaries Hydrologic Restoration Program

Florida, through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), is requesting \$15M in Council-Selected Restoration Component funding for the proposed Florida Gulf Coast Tributaries Hydrologic Restoration Program (THRP). This would include \$3.75M in planning funds as FPL Category 1, as well as a separate \$11.25M implementation component as an FPL Category 2 priority for potential funding. The THRP would support the primary RESTORE Comprehensive Plan goal to restore water quality and quantity throughout the Florida Gulf Coast by underwriting a comprehensive suite of linked, high-priority hydrologic improvement projects. Examples include canal plugging, restoring natural dimensions of tidal passes/inlets, restoring/reconnecting wetlands, installing erosion control or water control structures, etc. Planning and implementation projects proposed in Florida watersheds that drain to the Gulf of Mexico would be considered under this program.

The THRP would improve flow regime dynamics, nutrient cycling, salinity gradients, wildlife habitat and biodiversity, recreational experiences, and may help reduce algal blooms and fish kills. The THRP framework would allow for administration of project funding that targets projects providing cumulative benefits to the Gulf and link environmental benefits between selected projects and other restoration projects in a watershed or region. Combining or leveraging projects within a geographic area contributes to large-scale water resource improvements while maximizing each dollar. Program duration is 10 years.