

Hidden Harbor Park - Fisheries Habitat Enhancement with Upland Restoration and Recreation Trails

A Vision for Manatee County

Manatee County is requesting to update the RESTORE ACT Direct Component Multiyear Plan to add the **Hidden Harbor Park - Fisheries Habitat Enhancement with Upland Restoration and Recreation Trails** project. This project best aligns with the following Direct Component project eligibility category: *Restoration and protection of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Region.*

A Legacy of Conservation

Acquired by Manatee County in 2004, Hidden Harbor Park has been set aside as a special place for conservation, outdoor recreation, and wildlife protection. Thanks to **Florida Communities Trust (FCT)**, a portion of the land was secured for restoration and enhancement, ensuring this land is forever protected for future generations. The FCT portion of the park is safeguarded by a **Declaration of Restrictive Covenants**, guaranteeing it will only be managed for **natural resource conservation, historical protection, and passive, nature-based public recreation.**

A Diamond in the Rough along the Manatee River

Spanning **229 acres** along the **Manatee River**, **Hidden Harbor Park** is one of the few remaining undeveloped parcels in the area. Located in a rapidly developing part of the county, **Hidden Harbor Park** offers a **unique opportunity** to create a vibrant, nature-focused public space that balances recreation with ecosystem restoration.

"A Future Robinson Preserve of East County"

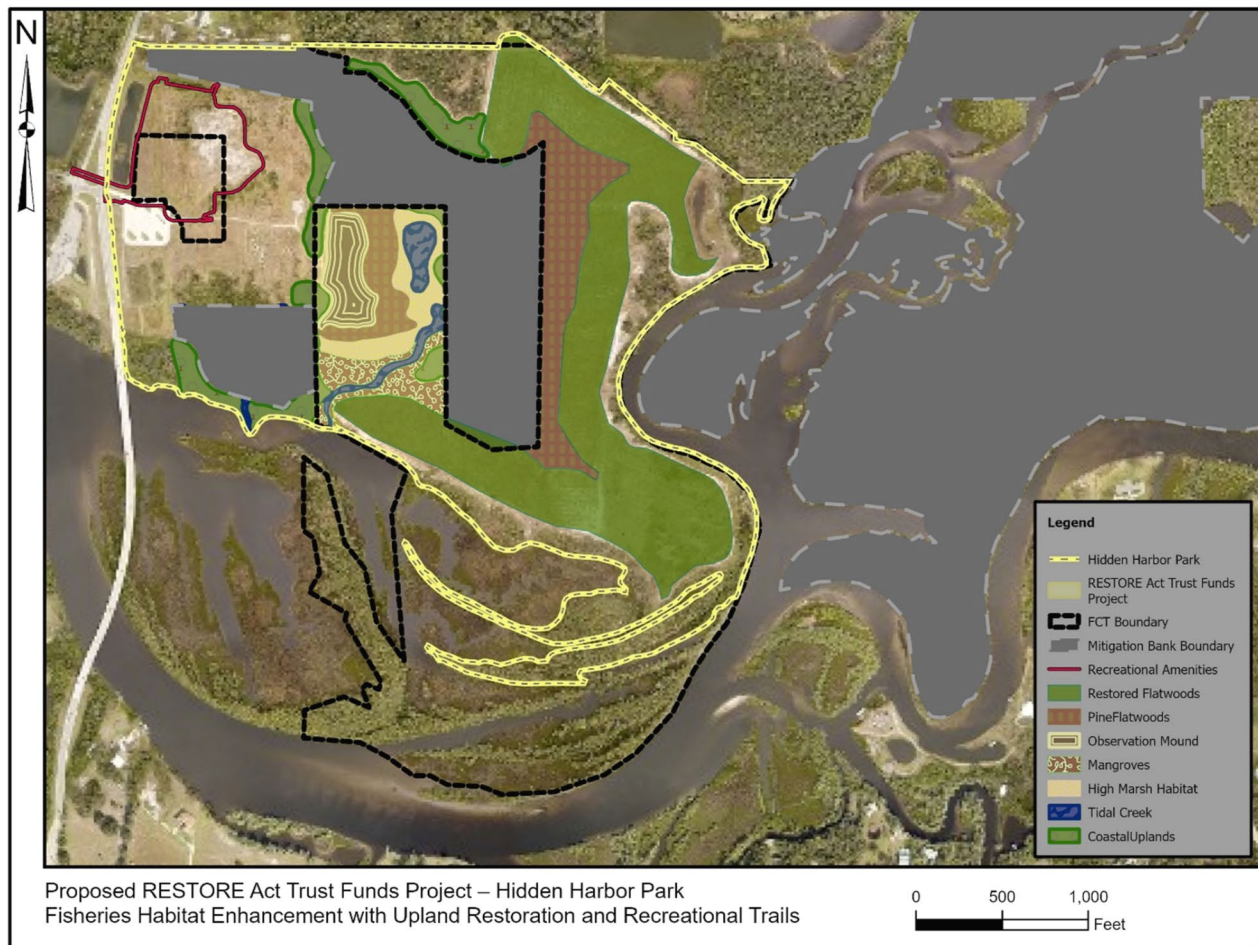
Some call it the **"Robinson Preserve of East County"**—a place where visitors can connect with nature, explore pristine ecosystems, and enjoy outdoor activities.

With **Hidden Harbor Park**, the vision is to create a dynamic **ecosystem experience** that ties together both **restored habitats** and **recreational trails**. This project will engage visitors, while helping to **revitalize** the land and create valuable habitats for wildlife, including **juvenile fisheries**.

What's in Store for HHP?

On December 10, 2024, Manatee County's Board of County Commissioners **approved the appropriation of RESTORE Act Trust Funds** to restore 20 acres of disturbed habitat. To do this, Manatee County will utilize our **Multi-Year Planning – Direct Component Funds** totaling \$2,130,276 (as of Oct. 2024) to complete the following:

- **Transform 20 Acres:** By turning disturbed land into a thriving native ecosystem, the project will support productive fisheries habitats and boost biodiversity.
- **Enhance Public Access:** The project will include passive recreation trails, fishing platforms, and wildlife observation areas designed to enrich the visitor experience and promote passive outdoor recreation.
- **Restore Nature:** The goal is to reconnect this land to the Manatee River's tidal systems, creating marshes and mangrove habitats that help protect and enhance local wildlife, all while allowing the public to enjoy the beauty of these natural spaces.



A Conceptual Design of Future Restoration Plans and Amenities.

Why It Matters

This project is more than just an enhancement of the park—it's a commitment to the future. By transforming HHP into a thriving natural ecosystem and passive recreational space, we're protecting critical wildlife habitats, supporting local fisheries, and offering the community a place to experience nature at its best. **Hidden Harbor Park** will become a destination for visitors and a testament to successful conservation efforts in a rapidly growing community.

We Want to Hear from You

As we work together as a community to bring the vision of **Hidden Harbor Park - Fisheries Habitat Enhancement with Upland Restoration and Recreation Trails** project to life, your feedback is essential.

Please **share your thoughts** via the following email to help us create not just a park, but a legacy for all to enjoy.

hnp.restoration@mymanatee.org

RESTORE ACT Direct Component Multiyear Implementation Plan Narrative

Department of the Treasury

OMB Approval
No. 1505-0250

Directions: Use this form for the Initial Multiyear Implementation Plan and any subsequent amendments to an accepted Multiyear Implementation Plan. For amendments, include only new and/or materially modified activities.

Multiyear Implementation Plan Version (Initial or Amendment Number):	Amendment #2
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Eligible Entity Name:	Manatee County Government
Name and Contact Information of the Person to be contacted (POC) on matters concerning this Multiyear Implementation Plan:	
POC Name:	Sherri Swanson
POC Title:	Ecological & Marine Resources Division Manager
POC Email:	Sherri.swanson@mymanatee.org
POC Phone:	941-290-8029

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION:
<p>1. Please provide the following for EACH proposed activity (i.e. project or program) listed in the matrix:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Description of the proposed activity (i.e. project or program);- If the activity includes third-party funding, describe the amount and current status of funding (e.g., for another grant, whether the funds have been requested or awarded; if requested, where they are in the approval process) from other sources and provide a description of the specific portion of the project to be funded by the RESTORE Act Direct Component;- Need (i.e., What is the problem this activity seeks to address, or the anticipated benefit to the community?);-Purpose and objective(s) (i.e., How will the proposed activity address the need? What are the desired outcomes?);-Anticipated milestones (i.e. What are key phases and milestones by which the entity will monitor progress towards completion?);-Milestones for each activity-Criteria applicant will use to evaluate the success of each activity (project or program), (i.e., How will the entity determine that the activity achieved its objectives and solved or ameliorated the problem the activity(project or

program) sought to address or provided the anticipated benefits? Note that this does not need to be at the level of proposed performance metrics, which will be negotiated with Treasury at the time of application for an award.) Please also provide **either** a) an individual map of each and every proposed activity listed on the matrix, clearly showing the location of the activity or b) a single map showing all proposed activities listed on the matrix. Note that all proposed activities must be carried out in the Gulf Coast Region, as defined by 31 C.F.R. 34.2 and pursuant to 31 CFR 34.201, except activities designed for the promotion of tourism in the Gulf Coast Region, including promotion of recreational fishing; the promotion of the consumption of seafood harvested from the Gulf Coast Region; and planning assistance.

Project: Hidden Harbor Park (HHP) - Fisheries Habitat Enhancement with Upland Restoration and Recreation Trails

Description: Manatee County's 229-acre HHP parcel represents one of a handful of large, undeveloped parcels along the tidal Manatee River. It is positioned within a rapidly developing part of Manatee County presenting a unique opportunity to restore natural ecosystems and enhance passive recreation for the public. By transforming 20 acres of disturbed land at the HHP site into a thriving ecosystem, the project will tie together an nature-based experience that not only engages visitors but supports juvenile fisheries habitat, foraging for state-listed wildlife (e.g., the gopher tortoise), refuge for federally listed wildlife (e.g., eastern black rail, wood stork, piping plover, smalltooth sawfish, and West Indian manatee), and a tidal migration corridor able to adapt to rising sea levels.

The project will include engineering design and permitting followed by construction. The design expands existing hydrologic connections with the Manatee River by transforming eroding agricultural drains and gullies into a backwater tidal creek, which will flow through estuarine habitats to an interior fish and wildlife refuge. The marsh boundaries will be buffered by coastal uplands planted to encourage wildlife nesting and strategically placed recreation trails that will dually function as fire breaks. Trails will lead to an observation mound showcasing coastal vegetation (e.g., forage grasses, pollinator plants, nesting substrates) designed to enhance habitat for the state threatened gopher tortoise.

Need: The existing site conditions consists of ruderal, unmanaged fallow farmland dominated by nuisance and invasive vegetation.

Utilizing Manatee County's Multi-Year Planning - Direct Component Funds - \$2,130,276.16 (as of Oct. 2024) for this project would enable Manatee County to create estuarine and fisheries enhancing habitat features surrounded by restored flatwoods with passive recreation trails, pedestrian bridges, and a viewing overlook all of which are expected to encourage visitor engagement.

Purpose and objective(s) (i.e., How will the proposed activity address the need? What are the desired outcomes?)

The project is proposed for ecological habitat improvements because of its landscape position along the tidal Manatee River, as well as its proximity to completed habitat restoration and a future County wetland mitigation bank. This goal of the HHP project will be to create a marine ecosystem to support productive fisheries buffered by coastal uplands by transforming 20 acres that enhance ecosystem diversity, provide a coastal migration corridor, and strengthen ecosystem resilience onsite and downstream along the Manatee River and into Tampa Bay, Sarasota Bay, and the Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve.

Public lands are important for supporting community resilience due to their role in enhancing well-being and influencing *sense of place*. With HHP, the purpose is to create a dynamic ecosystem experience that ties together both restored habitats and passive recreation. This project will enable visitor to engage with nature, while helping to revitalize disturbed land and create valuable habitats for wildlife, including juvenile fisheries. The desired outcomes follow:

- **Transform 20 Acres:** By turning disturbed land into a thriving native ecosystem, the project will support productive fisheries habitats and boost biodiversity.

- **Enhance Public Access:** The project will include passive recreation trails, fishing platforms, and wildlife observation areas designed to enrich the visitor experience and promote passive outdoor recreation.
- **Restore Nature:** The goal is to reconnect this land to the Manatee River's tidal systems, creating marshes and mangrove habitats that help protect and enhance local wildlife, all while allowing the public to enjoy the beauty of these natural spaces.

Anticipated milestones:

- Phase 1: Design and Permitting
- Phase 2: Construction

Milestones for each activity

The project will include engineering design and permitting (Phase 1) followed by on-the-ground implementation (Phase 2).

- Phase 1: Design and Permitting
 1. Certified Engineering Plans
 2. State and Federal Permits

Project methodology for **Hidden Harbor Park** will include contracting with a qualified science and engineering firm. The project will be managed by Manatee County Natural Resources. Manatee County will obtain permits for the proposed project, including from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Section 404), and the Statewide Environmental Resource Permit. Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will ensure that the federal-listed are protected. A final component of the project will be to develop the 100% construction engineering plans required to issue permits, and ultimately build the project, including an Opinion of Probable Cost to competitively bid construction.

The project is expected to receive state and federal permits within 12 to 18 months of notice to proceed followed by contractor bidding over three months and concluding with construction, which is expected to last nine months. The project duration from start to finish is anticipated to be three years (dependent on the summer rain and hurricane season).

- Phase 2: Construction
 - Acres of habitat created by habitat type.

Please see Maps – All MYIP Direct Component Projects (location map) and Conceptual Design of Future Restoration Plans and Amenities

2. Please summarize the process for developing the draft multiyear implementation plan, including how projects were initially evaluated and prioritized, and how the entity made the draft multiyear implementation plan available for a minimum of 45 days for public review and comment, in a manner calculated to obtain broad-based participation from individuals, businesses, Indian tribes, and non-profit organizations, such as through public meetings, presentations in languages other than English, and postings on the Internet.

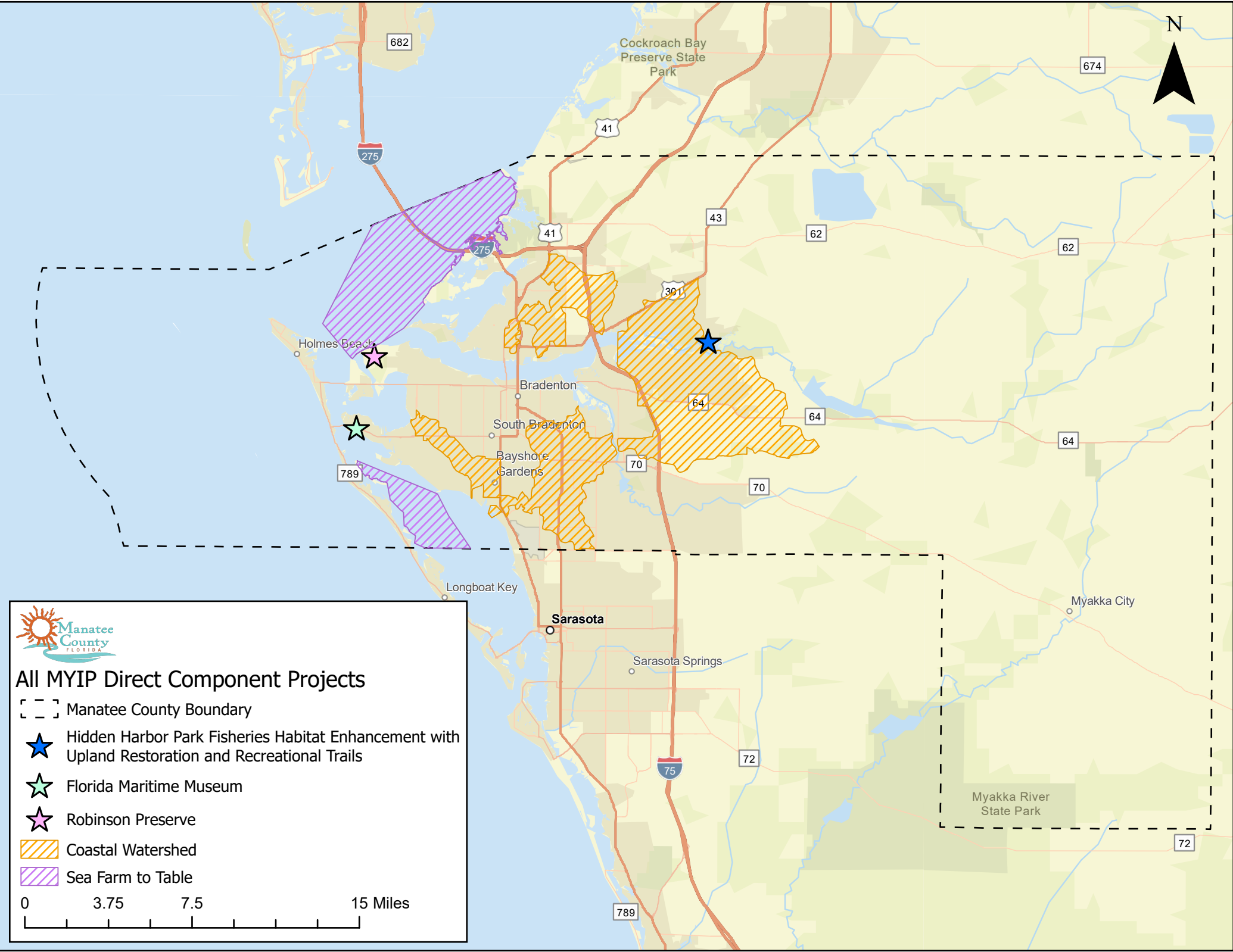
Attach:

- Documentation (e.g., a copy of public notices) to demonstrate that the entity made its multiyear implementation plan available to the public for at least 45 days;
- A copy of all meaningful public comments received (OGCR defines “meaningful” as all comments pertaining to the selection of each activity (projects and programs) or the approach to or design of any proposed activities (projects and program));
- Any responses provided to meaningful public comments;
- A list of changes made as a result of meaningful public comments. If critical comments were received but no changes were made, the entity should explain why incorporating these comments is infeasible or not in keeping with the public interest; and
- A letter from the applicant's leadership approving submission of the multiyear implementation plan to Treasury or a resolution approving the applicant's multiyear implementation plan.

This section will be updated following the required public review and comment period.

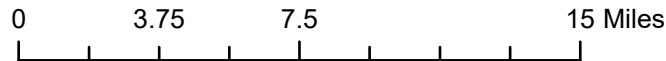
RESTORE ACT Direct Component Multiyear Plan Matrix — Department of the Treasury										OMB Approval No. 1505-0250
Applicant Name:		Manatee County								
1. MULTIYEAR PLAN VERSION (INITIAL OR AMENDMENT NUMBER):		Amendment #2		2a. DATE OF INITIAL MULTIYEAR PLAN ACCEPTANCE (mm/dd/yyyy):		12/11/2017		2b. DATE OF LAST MULTIYEAR PLAN ACCEPTANCE:		12/11/2017
3. CUMULATIVE DIRECT COMPONENT ALLOCATION AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION TO APPLICANT:				\$2,130,276.16		4. TOTAL ALLOCATIONS PLUS KNOWN FUNDS NOT YET DEPOSITED IN TRUST FUND FOR DIRECT COMPONENT:				\$6,346,255.28
5. Primary Direct Component Eligible Activity Further Described in Application (Static Field)	6. Activity Title (Static Field)	7. Location (Static Field)	8. Estimated Total Funding Contributions For Proposed Activity(ies)(refer to Instructions)				9. Proposed Start Date mm/dd/yyyy	10. Proposed End Date mm/dd/yyyy	11. Status (refer to Instructions)	
			8a. Direct Component Contribution	8b. Other RESTORE Act Contribution	8c. Other Third Party Contribution	8d. Total Contribution				
Restoration and protection of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast Region	Hidden Harbor Park (HHP) - Fisheries Habitat Enhancement with Upland Restoration and Recreational Trails	Hidden Harbor Park	\$2,130,276.16			\$2,130,276.16	6 months following MYIP amendment	4 years after NTP		
Restoration and protection of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast Region	Robinson Preserve Expansion Phase III	Robinson Preserve	\$600,000.00			\$600,000.00	09-2017	08-2022	Initial MYIP: Activity Funded	
Planning assistance	Coastal Watershed Program	Coastal tributary watersheds of Manatee County	\$620,309.00			\$620,309.00	01-2019	12-2025	Initial MYIP :Activity Funded	
Promotion of tourism in the Gulf Coast Region, including recreational fishing	Florida Maritime Museum Facility Enhancement	Cortez, Florida	\$225,000.00			\$225,000.00	12-2017	11-2018	Initial MYIP Activity Revised in Amendment #1	
Promotion of tourism in the Gulf Coast Region, including recreational fishing	Florida Maritime Museum Facility Enhancement	Cortez, Florida	\$166,000.00			\$166,000.00	01-2019	06-2023	MYIP Amendment #1: Project was included in the initial MYIP. Amendment #1 revises the project scope of work and increases the budget.	
Planning assistance	Gulf Shellfish Institute - Sea Farm to Table	Coastal waters of Manatee County	\$100,000.00			\$100,000.00	01-2019	06-2021	Initial MYIP: Activity Funded and in award Closeout period.	
12. ESTIMATED TOTAL FUNDING CONTRIBUTIONS FOR ACTIVITY(IES) (refer to Instructions)			\$3,841,585.16	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,841,585.16	Please note: Grant awards may reflect non-material changes in proposed dates and estimated funding.			

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1505-0250. Comments concerning the time required to complete this information collection, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information, should be directed to the Department of the Treasury, Office of Gulf Coast Restoration, 1500 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20220.



All MYIP Direct Component Projects

- Manatee County Boundary
- Hidden Harbor Park Fisheries Habitat Enhancement with Upland Restoration and Recreational Trails
- Florida Maritime Museum
- Robinson Preserve
- Coastal Watershed
- Sea Farm to Table





Proposed RESTORE Act Trust Funds Project – Hidden Harbor Park
Fisheries Habitat Enhancement with Upland Restoration and Recreational Trails

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