



SMALL TOWN, BIG BEACH™

DATE: November 4, 2019

ISSUE: NFWF Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund – Bon Secour/Oyster Bay restoration work.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Accept an amendment to the funding agreement between the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the City of Gulf Shores to include an additional \$1,460,490 for the implementation of habitat restoration work as part of The Bon Secour/Oyster Bay Wetland Project. This amendment will add the restoration and management work for the acquired properties to the project budget and schedule. This amendment will allow the City of Gulf Shores to implement the Habitat Management Plan that was developed as part of the original scope for this project.

BACKGROUND: In early 2013, a U.S. District Court approved two plea agreements resolving certain criminal cases against BP and Transocean which arose from the 2010 Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill. The agreements direct a total of \$2.544 billion to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF) to fund projects benefiting the natural resources of the Gulf Coast that were impacted by the spill.

The City of Gulf Shores was selected by NFWF for funding to acquire and conserve 836 acres of natural habitat located within the city limits near the confluence of Oyster Bay and the Bon Secour River. The project included \$7,637,925.50 in acquisition funds and \$663,846.27 for due diligence and conservation plan development activities. The purpose of the project is to protect, restore, and preserve a large area of critical natural habitat, and provide for passive recreation and education opportunities such as nature trails, kayak launches, and wetland boardwalks. This conservation effort will also improve water quality in the Bon Secour and Mobile Bay watersheds. Additional funding was set aside by NFWF for habitat restoration activities to be part of a future funding agreement based on the final Management Plan.

The five-year habitat restoration/management work will enhance habitat to improve conditions and encourage habitat utilization by fish and wildlife, eliminate or control invasive species, and continue maintenance of the habitats through best management practices.

Methods will include timber thinning, native species plantings, prescribed burning, herbicide treatment, and mechanical clearing of invasive species. Adaptive management strategies will be used during implementation of the restoration/management project to achieve the best results. Monitoring will be conducted during implementation to record the progress of the restoration/management activities. This work will be completed by 12/31/2024.



SMALL TOWN, BIG BEACH™

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: Council approved the NFWF funding agreement at the regular Council meeting on June 12, 2017.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS: The additional (\$1,460,490) for contractual services will be **100% grant reimbursable** and booked as a receivable from NFWF for the period of performance ending 12/31/2024. Reimbursement requests will be paid within 30 days of receipt by NFWF.

ATTACHMENTS: NFWF Funding Agreement, Project Map

STAFF CONTACT: Daniel Bond