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*Managing fish and wildlife
resources for their long-term
well-being and the benefit
of people.*

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March 4, 2014

Chasidy Hobbs, Chair
Environmental Advisory Board
City of Pensacola
222 West Main Street
Pensacola, FL 32502

Ms. Hobbs,

Thank you for the opportunity to present our proposal for the NRDA Early Restoration project "Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Enhancement Center" to the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB). As you know, the project has generated a considerable amount of interest in the area, and hopefully the presentation and subsequent discussion clarified our goals for the project and the substantial benefits to the Gulf of Mexico and the City of Pensacola (City).

The state and federal Trustees have formulated and proposed the project consistent with the terms of the legal framework agreement that guides NRDA Early Restoration planning. While the goals of the project focus on restoring lost human use in the forms of lost recreational fishing opportunity, we have framed the project as an asset to the community as well. Specifically, as part of the project we are committed to:

- Entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City that will establish a Planning Coordination Committee (PCC) and a Technical Coordination Committee (TCC) to guide the planning, design, and operation of the facility. This MOU will be in addition to the lease for the property. The PCC will serve as the forum for discussion of facility design, site and building aesthetics, and integration of the Center with adjacent and nearby community assets. The TCC will serve to advise the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) on the species to be cultured in the Center, stocking strategies and protocols and complementary conservation and education programming associated with the center. Both of these committees will be comprised of appointees from FWC as well as appointees from the City to ensure that local preferences are considered.
- Cleaning up and improving the site which is littered with construction debris and non-native exotic vegetation including Chinese tallow (*Triadica sebifera*), common lantana (*Lantana camara*), Chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*), and wetland nightshade (*Solanum tampicense*).
- Including recreational, public access improvements and cultural/historical elements in our site planning efforts. These improvements may include walking trails or boardwalks, environmental education kiosks or signage, and fishing opportunities associated with the ponds to be built on site as part of the project.

- Exploring the feasibility of a canoe/kayak launch with potential partners as this non-motorized boating access is not specifically a component of the NRDA proposal.
- Working with representatives of the community to include cultural education elements that inform the public on the role of the Bruce Dry Docks in maritime history and Bruce Beach as a recreational area during the era of segregated beaches.

When we first formulated this project back in summer of 2011, we were convinced that it addressed not only the requirement to restore lost recreational opportunity due to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, but also had the potential to become a major community asset and economic driver for the City as well as for Northwest Florida. As we have had the opportunity to interact with the local community, anglers and environmentalists, our commitment to the project has grown even stronger. If you or any of the EAB members have additional questions or information needs relative to the project feel free to contact me directly at 727-896-8626.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. McRae". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Gil McRae

Cc: Jennifer Fitzwater
Eric Olsen
Council President Jewel Canada-Wynn
Mimi Drew
Nick Wiley