

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) hereby gives notice to the public of its intent to reimburse eligible applicants for eligible costs to repair or replace facilities damaged by **Hurricane Sally** occurring between **September 14, 2020, and September 28, 2020**. This notice applies to the Public Assistance (PA) project for the Okaloosa County proposed Western Destin Beach shoreline restoration project in Destin, Okaloosa County, Florida, implemented under the authority of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207.

Under a major disaster declaration, **FEMA-DR-4564-FL**, signed by President Trump on **September 23, 2020**, Okaloosa County was designated as adversely affected by the disaster and eligible for PA funding.

This public notice concerns activities pertaining to the Okaloosa County proposed Western Destin Beach shoreline restoration project. The proposed restoration activities would occur along approximately 1.2 miles of shoreline between GPS coordinates: (30.381458° N, -86.507235° W) to (30.383004° N, -86.494178° W), and (30.383237° N, -86.485312° W) to (30.383313° N, -86.478074° W).

The proposed project is to restore the shoreline of Western Destin Beach to the full engineered design beach template with the amount of sand lost from Hurricane Sally plus additional sand lost from background erosion. The beach-compatible sand for this project would be sourced from a permitted offshore borrow area. Approximately 150,600 cubic yards (CY) of beach-compatible sand and 46,500 dune plants would be placed at Western Destin Beach along approximately 1.2 miles of shoreline between GPS coordinates (30.381458° N, -86.507235° W) to (30.383004° N, -86.494178° W), and (30.383237° N, -86.485312° W) to (30.383313° N, -86.478074° W), with an additional 109,400 CY of beach-compatible sand would be installed to account for background erosion sand losses for a combined total of 260,000 CY. The background erosion sand loss would be placed at the same time as the disaster-related sand. This project would minimize the need for future renourishments since it would replace sand up to the full engineered design template.

FEMA has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA). An alternatives analysis was performed, which included the evaluation of the proposed action, repair to pre-disaster conditions, and the no action alternative. Further detailed descriptions of all alternatives may be reviewed in the EA conducted by FEMA or by contacting FEMA-R4EHP-FLORIDA@fema.dhs.gov for a copy. The draft EA is available for public comment and can be viewed on FEMA's and Okaloosa County's websites at the following locations:

FEMA WEBSITE LOCATION:

https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_western-destin-beach-dea_03062023.pdf

OKALOOSA COUNTY WEBSITE LOCATION:

<https://myokaloosa.com/sites/default/files/20230307%20PA%204564-00559%20PN%20166972%20DRAFT%20EA%20508.pdf>

A hardcopy of the EA is available for review at the Emerald Coast Convention & Visitors Bureau, during the following hours: every day of the week, 9AM until 5PM.

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) requires federal agencies to consult with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for effects to federally listed threatened and endangered species. Existing Programmatic Biological Opinions with USFWS and NMFS were utilized to minimize impacts to listed species by applying appropriate terms and conditions.

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires federal agencies to take into account the effect of their undertakings on historic properties. FEMA consulted with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and received concurrence for a determination of *No Historic Properties Effected*. Tribal consultation letters were submitted to eleven federally recognized tribes with vested interest in Okaloosa County, Florida. While no objections were received regarding the proposed work, two tribes requested additional conditions to be added to the project to minimize impacts to cultural and archeological resources potentially located in the area.

Presidential Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 require that all federal actions in or affecting the floodplain or wetlands be reviewed for opportunities to relocate and evaluated for social, economic, historical, environmental, legal, and safety considerations. Western Destin Beach is located within a special flood hazard area, per Okaloosa County Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) #12091C0469J and #12091C0488J, dated March 9, 2021. The engineered beach is a functionally dependent facility that provides open space uses for recreational and habitat for wildlife in addition to providing a higher level of protection to adjacent properties. If no action is taken to replenish the beach to maintain profile, Western Destin Beach would be vulnerable to higher wave action and erosion. In addition, the area would suffer economic and social losses.

This will serve as the final public notice regarding the above-described action funded by the FEMA PA program. Interested persons may obtain information about these actions by writing to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region 4, 3005 Chamblee Tucker Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30341, or by emailing [FEMA- R4EHP-FLORIDA@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-R4EHP-FLORIDA@fema.dhs.gov). Comments should be sent in writing with the subject line “PA 4564-00559, Western Destin Beach Restoration” at the above address within 30 days of the date of this notice.