

Strategic Beach Management Plan:
Panhandle Gulf Coast Region

Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

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Panama City Beaches Shore Protection Project under construction (near R39) in February 2022. Photo courtesy of Lisa Armbruster with Bay County. See additional [construction photos](#) of beach nourishment projects.

Introduction – Panhandle

The **Panhandle Gulf Coast Region** has a total of 237 miles of beaches of which 82.7 miles are critically eroded, and 46.3 miles are actively managed. There are also 12 inlets/passes within the Panhandle Gulf Coast Region and one of those passes has an [inlet management plan](#) - East Pass in Okaloosa County. To see additional inlet management and sand bypassing information, see the [Annual Inlet Report](#). For additional beach management or project information, see the current [Critically Eroded Beaches Report](#), the [joint coastal permits](#) by county or the [local government funding requests](#) by county web pages. Each subregion listed below will have the introductory paragraph listing miles of coastline and erosional events/ storms that have affected the subregion.

Each title within the subregion will list the coastal location, the county and the Department reference or range (R) monuments for the critical erosion area. For inlets, river entrances or passes; the title, the county and the adjacent range survey markers will be stated. In addition, there will be a subregion map highlighting the critical erosion areas and the managed project areas. Finally, references to coastal reports will be listed at the end of each subregion.

For additional information concerning projects or strategies along Florida’s coastline, see the following links for the other six coastal regions of Florida and for background information, see the Strategic Beach Management Plan’s Introduction.

[Strategic Beach Management Plan’s Introduction](#)

[Northeast Atlantic Coast Region](#)

[Central Atlantic Coast Region](#)

[Southeast Atlantic Coast Region](#)

[Florida Keys Region](#)

[Southwest Gulf Coast Region](#)

[Big Bend Gulf Coast Region](#)

For additional information pertaining to beach and ocean conditions, coastal associations, educational institutions or government agencies, see these [related coastal sites](#).

The State of Florida was significantly impacted by Hurricane Michael (2018) and Hurricane Sally (2020). To see additional information for strategies and funding to address recovery for the beaches and dunes due to Hurricane Michael in 2018, see the “[Hurricane Michael Post-Storm Report](#)” and

“[Hurricane Michael Recovery Plan](#).” For all other material on [hurricane information](#) or [post-storm reports](#), see the Department’s web page.

Western Barriers

There are 67.8 miles of beaches in the **Western Barriers** subregion, which extends from the Florida-Alabama state line in Escambia County to the Okaloosa-Walton County line, as shown on Figure 1. There is a total of 21.8 miles of critically eroded beaches in this subregion (11.2 miles in Escambia County, 4.1 miles in Santa Rosa County, and 6.5 miles in Okaloosa County), of which 15.6 miles have been restored.

Erosion is attributed to tropical storms, hurricanes, and the effects of the inlets, including Pensacola Pass and East Pass (Choctawhatchee Bay Entrance). The most erosive storms in recent years were Hurricane Frederic (1979), Hurricane Elena and Tropical Storm Juan (1985), Hurricanes Erin and Opal (1995), Hurricane Georges (1998), Tropical Storm Isidore (2002), Hurricane Ivan (2004), Hurricanes Dennis (2005), Hurricane Katrina (2005), Hurricane Rita (2005), Tropical Storm Ida (2009), Hurricane Gustav (2008), Tropical Storm Debby (2012), Hurricane Isaac (2012), Hurricane Nate (2017), and Hurricane Sally (2020).

In 1995, Hurricane Opal caused extensive erosion throughout northwest Florida. Using federal and state disaster funds, a program of assisted recovery for the beach and dune system was conducted where upland developed property was left vulnerable to storms. Sand was trucked from upland borrow sites, placed in an alongshore berm configuration, and stabilized with wood slat sand fence and plantings of sea oats. However, the beach and dunes had not fully recovered when Hurricane Georges impacted the area in 1998, causing additional damage that required a second phase of assisted recovery of the most eroded developed areas.

In 2004, Hurricane Ivan caused extensive erosion throughout northwest Florida. In Escambia County, this erosion was even more severe than that caused by Opal. In 2005, Hurricanes Dennis, Katrina, and Rita exacerbated erosion conditions throughout northwest Florida. As is described below, recovery efforts like those implemented after Opal have been completed.

Strategies for Inlets and Critically Eroded Beaches

Perdido Key, Escambia County, R19-R34

This is a 3.0-mile segment of critically eroded beach on Perdido Key. Assisted recovery of the beach and dune system was conducted following Hurricanes Opal, Georges, Ivan, and Dennis. Following the effects of the 2004 hurricane season, emergency protective berms were constructed using funds from FEMA. A dune restoration project to supplement these emergency protective berms with additional sand and vegetation was performed in 2005-2006. A feasibility study to determine the appropriate beach management strategy for this area was initiated in 2005 and completed in 2006, along with a sand search study. The feasibility study recommended beach restoration. The **Perdido Key Beach and Dune Restoration Project** proposed to place approximately 1.25 million cubic yards (mcy) of beach quality sand in three different segments from an offshore borrow site. The first segment is 2.4 miles long (R1-R12.5) and construction would provide a dune restoration project with vegetation that will provide critical habitat for the Perdido Key beach mouse. The second segment is 1.1-mile long (R12.5-R19) and construction would provide a protective berm within the Perdido Key State Park. The third segment is three miles long (R19-R34) and construction would provide both beach and dune restoration. Currently, it is expected that only the third segment will be constructed once easements are obtained for the placement of approximately 1.05 million cy between R-19 and R-34. The construction schedule for the Perdido Key Beach Project is to be determined.

As a separate component though, the Perdido Key Dune Restoration Project was listed as an early restoration project in the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill: Programmatic and Phase III Early Restoration Plan and Early Restoration Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. The project was selected by the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Trustees for implementation. The Perdido Key Dune Restoration project is designed to restore dune vegetation to 16.4 acres of beach dune habitat encompassing 6 miles of the primary dune line between R 1 and R31.8. The dune planting project was completed in April 2018.

Strategy: Conduct beach and dune restoration; monitor.

Pensacola Pass, Escambia County, R67-R68

Pensacola Pass, separating Perdido Key and Santa Rosa Island, includes the federal **Pensacola Harbor Navigation Project** and provides access to the Pensacola Naval Air Station, the Port of

Pensacola, and the federal Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. In 1881, the authorized channel was dredged to a depth of - 24 ft (MLW). It was incrementally deepened to -35 ft (MLW) by 1958. Maintenance dredged material was placed in an offshore disposal site. In 1959, the navigation channel was widened and deepened to -37 ft MLW, with placement of the dredged material on Santa Rosa Island. Subsequently, maintenance dredged material was placed in an offshore disposal site and once on Perdido Key (1985).

While the federally authorized dimensions of the channel are presently set at -35 ft by 500 ft, the channel was widened and deepened to -48 ft to accommodate a Navy aircraft carrier in 1991. The dredged material was placed on Perdido Key. The channel fills with sand at a rate of approximately 300,000 cubic yards (cy) annually, but still maintained a depth of -40 ft in 1997. Maintenance dredging was completed in 2002 with material being placed in the nearshore. In 2006, a beneficial use plan was developed by Escambia County and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Department or DEP) for the material dredged from Pensacola Pass. The plan included an evaluation of the adjacent shorelines, sediment quality, and sediment placement alternatives. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) developed a plan in August of 2013 with a similar beneficial use program. The USACE plans to perform maintenance dredging for the U.S. Navy to a depth of - 48 ft when federal funding is available. The strategy listed below is based in part on an inlet management study that was completed in 1999 and the need for more current data and an updated plan. The USACE has dredged the Navy Channel in March 2000 (143,000 cy), October 2003 (236,000 cy) and September 2005 (275,000 cy) and placed this material in the Perdido Key nearshore/ ebb shoal. Pensacola Pass was dredged again in the winter of 2011/ 2012 placing approximately 514,000 cy on the eastern most portion of Perdido Key within the Gulf Islands National Seashore. The Lower Pensacola Harbor Maintenance Dredging project concluded in December 2016 by placing approximately 239,000 cy of civil channel/ harbor material in the nearshore between R32 to R64 of Perdido Key. The Pensacola Harbor Lower Federal Navigation Channel pilot dredging project was conducted with approximately 195,000 cy in 2018 and 186,000 cy in 2020 of material being dredged and disposed in the channel.

Pensacola Pass began dredging in April 2022 and completed placement of 140,000 cy of material in the Gulf Islands National Seashore Park on eastern Perdido Key at the breach locations (R60 to R63) caused by Hurricane Sally (2020). The USACE is expected to dredge the pass channels again in the winter of 2023/2024 and place approximately 1 million to 2 million cy onto Perdido Key

within the Gulf Islands National Seashore Park.

An inlet management study was initiated by the county in 2021 and the study was completed in the summer 2023. The Department will finalize an inlet management plan, once the review of the inlet study is completed.

Strategy: Update the sediment budget and adopt an inlet management plan.

Pensacola Beach, Escambia County, R107-R151

This is an 8.2-mile segment of critically eroded beach at Pensacola Beach on Santa Rosa Island. Assisted recovery of the beach and dune system was conducted following Hurricanes Opal in 1995 and Georges in 1998. Initial construction of the **Pensacola Beach Restoration Project (R107–R151)** was completed in September 2003 using 4.2 million cy of sand from a borrow site located about 3.5 miles offshore. The project length spanned the full 8.2 miles with an average post-construction beach width of 191 ft. The project design consists of a beach berm elevation of +8 ft to +6 ft NAVD 88 with a Gulfward slope at 1:15 into the water to protect the existing dune and upland development. The project incorporates a marine turtle friendly design with an 8-year nourishment interval. See project history in Table 1.

This area was severely impacted by Hurricane Ivan in 2004 and further impacted by Hurricanes Dennis and Katrina in 2005. The 8.2-mile beach nourishment project was completed February 2006, with dune restoration completed in April 2006 that included vegetation. Approximately 2,909,300 cy of fill material (2,348,000 cy by dredge and 561,300 cy of recovered storm overwash material) was placed between R107 and R151 in 2006 with FEMA cost sharing in these efforts. The Pensacola Dune Restoration Project that was completed in 2012 consisted of planting dune vegetation and sand fencing for 4.2 miles, beginning 7.5 miles east of Pensacola Pass. This was an early restoration project listed in the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Phase I Early Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment and was selected by the Deepwater Horizon NRDA Trustees for implementation. Pensacola Beach was nourished again in summer of 2016 with placement of approximately 1,855,100 cy of offshore material between R-107.5 and R-150.5. Dune restoration also occurred as part of the beach nourishment project with the installation of 113,840 salt tolerant plants and sand fencing along the nourished shoreline, with installation completed in 2017. The dune feature was damaged by Hurricane Sally in September 2020. Post-Sally dune and beach restoration and revegetation is proposed to be conducted in 2023/2024.

Table 1. Pensacola Beach Nourishment Project history.

Year	Volume (cy)	Sand Source	Project Location (by R monument)	Length (mi.)
September 2003	4,200,000	Offshore	R107-R151	8.2
April 2006	2,909,300	Offshore	R107-R151	8.2
September 2016	1,855,100	Offshore	R107.5-R150.5	8.1

Strategy: Maintain the project through monitoring and nourishment.

Navarre Beach, Santa Rosa County, R192.5-R213.5

This is a 4.1-mile segment of critically eroded shoreline at Navarre Beach on Santa Rosa Island. Assisted recovery of the beach and dune system was conducted following Hurricanes Opal and Erin in 1995, and Georges in 1998. This area was severely impacted by Hurricane Ivan in 2004, and further impacted by Hurricanes Dennis and Katrina in 2005.

Initial construction of the **Navarre Beach Restoration Project** began in late March 2006 and was completed in November 2006. The initial sand placement along 4.1 miles or 21,668 ft of shoreline between R192.5 and R214 included approximately 2,952,899 cy of material to construct the beach and dune. The project also included a dune feature that consisted of additional sand and dune vegetation. The borrow area is located about four miles offshore. The project included replacement of emergency protective berms that were funded by FEMA.

A small truck haul project in April 2010 was constructed to partially address spreading losses on the west end of the project site. The 2010 interim truck haul project repaired a portion of the dune which was damaged by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008, by placement of approximately 11,881 cy of beach quality material from an upland borrow site between R192.5 and R194.3. The project design did not include a typical fill taper when a construction easement was not granted for sand placement on the adjacent Gulf Islands National Seashore.

Beach nourishment was completed in July 2016, placing approximately 1,311,961 cy of material from the offshore borrow site along 4.1 miles between R-192 and R-213. FEMA cost shared on this beach nourishment project in response to damages sustained during Tropical Storm Debby (2012) and Hurricane Isaac (2012). In response to damage sustained by Hurricane Sally in September 2020, partial beach and dune restoration, including placement of approximately 1,250,000 cy of material, is proposed for 2023/2024.

Table 2. Navarre Beach Nourishment Project history.

Year	Volume (cy)	Sand Source	Project Location (by R monument)	Length (mi.)
November 2006	2,952,899	Offshore	R192.5-R214	4.1
April 2010	11,881	Upland	R192.5-R194.3	0.3
July 2016	1,311,961	Offshore	R192-R213	4.1

Strategy: Maintain the project through monitoring and nourishment.

Okaloosa Island, Okaloosa County, R1-R15

This is a 2.8-mile segment of critically eroded beach on Santa Rosa Island near the community of Ft Walton Beach. Assisted recovery of the beach and dune system was conducted following Hurricanes Opal and Georges. Following the effects of the 2004 hurricane season, emergency protective berms were constructed using funds from FEMA. A dune feature was constructed in May 2005 to supplement the emergency protective berms with additional sand and vegetation. A feasibility study from 2007 was accelerated following the 2004/ 2005 storms, and the County and Eglin Air Force Base developed a cooperative plan for beach restoration. The Department issued a Joint Coastal Permit (JCP) in February 2012 for construction of a restoration project using sand from an offshore borrow site located approximately 1.25 miles offshore of Santa Rosa Island and two miles west of East Pass. Following issuance of the JCP, the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners voted to withdraw their participation, and the project was not constructed. Okaloosa County has installed native dune vegetation and sand fencing to protect remaining dunes. On Okaloosa Island, a temporary porous net groin system (NuShore) was permitted by the Department in 2021 between R6.2 and R7.7 in Okaloosa County to determine erosion control benefits to the shoreline. The county sponsored and funded the net groin project without state cost share.

Strategy: Monitor.

East Pass (Choctawhatchee Bay Entrance), Okaloosa County, V622-R17

East Pass is the historical natural tidal connection between the Gulf of Mexico and Choctawhatchee Bay, between Santa Rosa Island and Moreno Point at the City of Destin. East Pass is periodically dredged to maintain the federal navigation project. Initial dredging of the navigation channel was completed in 1969 with two jetties. Maintenance dredging of the channel has been conducted about every 18 months. The material dredged from the channel near the seaward ends of the jetty is placed within the surf zone west of the inlet. The material dredged from the inlet throat has been placed at

several locations, including a scour hole near the spur on the east jetty, within protective sand dikes along the east and west jetties, on Norriego Point, and on the beach at Eglin Air Force Base. In May 2006, approximately 50,000 cy of maintenance dredged beach quality material were truck hauled to the adjacent Holiday Isle beach (R17-R22). Material dredged from the ebb shoal has been used as a borrow source for the post- storm Destin-Western Walton Beach Restoration Project that was completed in 2007. Between February and June 2020, a navigational maintenance dredging event placed ~203,100 cy of beach quality material within the swash zone of the Western Destin Beach Restoration project area (Reach I) between R17.5 and R20.5.

The Department adopted the East Pass Inlet Management Study Implementation Plan on June 8, 2000. This plan was based upon recommendations and supporting data compiled in the study report, Inlet Management Plan for East Pass to Choctawhatchee Bay (Taylor Engineering, Inc., 1999). The 2000 inlet management plan, which specified that all inlet dredge material be placed west of the inlet, did not provide for balancing the inlet sediment budget or extending the life of proximate beach restoration projects. The plan was not consistent with Section 161.142, Florida Statutes (adopted in 2008), because it did not ensure that the inlet dredge material was placed on adjacent eroding beaches. For these reasons, a new study cost-shared between the City of Destin and the Department was conducted in 2010 to develop an updated sediment budget.

The **Eglin Air Force Base Beach Restoration Project** two miles west of East Pass was completed in June 2010 by placing approximately 265,190 cy of fill material was placed in Reach 1 (V511-V514.5) and approximately 729,570 cy of fill material on the beach within Reach 3 (V604.5-V611.5). Additionally, bypass material of 181,141 cy from East Pass was placed in the nearshore between V611 to V619 in 2010.

The Department adopted the [East Pass Inlet Management Implementation Plan](#) on July 24, 2013. With adoption of the new inlet management plan (IMP), all future inlet management activities shall be consistent with the four strategies found in the updated inlet management plan.

Okaloosa County has conducted the following actions to implement the four strategies within the IMP.

1. Implement a comprehensive beach and inlet hydrographic monitoring program;
 - a. Okaloosa County has conducted bi-annual beach monitoring.
 - b. East Pass Inlet and ebb shoal have been surveyed in 2014, 2018, and 2020.

2. Modify the current inlet sand transfer protocol to permit the placement of inlet dredge material along the Gulf beaches both to the east and to the west of the inlet;
 - a. Okaloosa County and the City of Destin modified East Pass Navigation Dredging permits to allow for placement within three spoil areas including the adjacent beaches (east and west of the inlet) and on Norriego Point.
3. Complete the stabilization of Norriego Point;
 - a. Stabilization completed in 2018.
4. Investigate availability and feasibility of supplemental inlet sediment excavation.
 - a. Okaloosa County conducted a feasibility study of supplemental inlet sediment excavation that was completed 2021. The feasibility study employs advanced numerical models to evaluate the performance of various supplemental excavation areas within and adjacent to the East Pass federal navigation channel. Detailed data collection and field measurements provide the input data for model development, validation, and model boundary conditions to evaluate the feasibility and performance of these supplemental areas. Based on the results of these analyses and initiatives, supplemental sediment excavation within East Pass in the general areas identified can feasibly provide 1) increased volumes of beach-quality material to balance erosion on adjacent eroding beaches and extend the life of proximate beach restoration projects, and 2) extend the anticipated maintenance dredging interval to reduce potential impacts to the local economy. The proposed supplemental excavation provides a very cost-effective sand source to help mitigate erosion on the adjacent gulf-front beaches, greatly reducing local, State and potentially Federal costs for beach restoration. The extended maintenance dredging frequency of the federal navigation channel will also reduce local and federal maintenance dredging costs. The supplemental dredging will also reduce the potential for increased shoaling in the navigation channel and the associated hazardous navigation conditions, therefore reducing the costs to the local economy as well as impacts to Eglin AFB and USCG missions from these hazardous conditions.

Strategy: Implement a comprehensive beach and inlet hydrographic monitoring program; modify the current inlet sand transfer protocol to permit the placement of inlet dredge material along the Gulf beaches both to the east and to the west of the inlet; complete the stabilization of Norriego Point (completed); investigate availability and feasibility of supplemental inlet sediment excavation (completed).

Norriego Point, Okaloosa County, R17

This is a 0.8-mile segment of critically eroded inlet shoreline of East Pass. Bulkheads armor the southern portion of this shoreline and the undeveloped land on the north end has been maintained by the placement of material dredged from the navigation channel. Several T-groins were installed by private interests in 2004 to stabilize the shoreline on Norriego Point. Beach compatible sand was placed at Norriego Point in 2014. The City of Destin received a joint coastal permit in June 2013 to stabilize Norriego Point. The proposed stabilization project included repair and extension of the existing T-groins with sheet pile walls, construction of two additional T-groins with sheet pile walls, construction of approximately 500 linear feet of harbor side seawall, construction of approximately 400 ft of northwest end seawall and placement of beach compatible sand to create a vegetated dune feature. The project will also include recreational features to increase public access to Norriego Point. The Norriego Point Restoration and Recreation Project was an early restoration project that is listed in the *Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill: Programmatic and Phase III Early Restoration Plan and Early Restoration Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement* and was selected by the Deepwater Horizon NRDA Trustees for implementation. A modified joint coastal permit/notice to proceed was issued in September 2017 for planned structures at the north end of Norriego Point, with dredged material from the harbor channel placed as fill to extend the point to its previous length. Construction began in October 2017 and all of the [stabilization components listed](#) were completed in October 2018 (see the [oblique aerial photography](#) for the Norriego Point Stabilization Project).

Strategy: Monitor and maintain the Norriego Point Stabilization Project.

West Destin, Okaloosa County, R17-R25.5

Following the 2005 hurricane season, the western 1.6 miles of Destin was designated as a critically eroded beach. In 2006, 50,000 cy of East Pass channel maintenance dredge material was placed between R17 and R22. A feasibility study that includes this area was completed in April 2003, and a sand search was completed in 2007 to identify a suitable source of beach quality material. As a result of severe erosion caused by Tropical Storm Ida, the West Destin Emergency Beach Nourishment Project was constructed in September 2010. Approximately 138,437 cy of fill material was placed between R17.2 and R19.8. Fill was obtained from an offshore borrow site.

The West Destin Beach Restoration Project was completed in February 2013. The project includes two segments with a total fill placement of 634,292 cy. The west segment extends from the East Pass

east jetty eastward to R20.7 with a fill placement of 487,003 cy. The West Destin Emergency Beach Nourishment Project area was located within this segment of the restoration project. The restoration project’s eastern segment extends from the west property line of Sandpiper Cove near R23.5 to R25.5 with a fill placement of 147,289 cy. There is a 2,900-foot gap between the segments, which includes 18 single-family lots and three condominiums. The monitoring control area includes the gap between fill segments and 4,900 ft east of the project. The next scheduled beach nourishment event is still to be determined.

Table 3. West Destin Beach Nourishment Project history.

Year	Volume (cy)	Sand Source	Project Location (by R monument)	Length (mi.)
2006	50,000	East Pass	R17-R22	1.6
September 2010	138,437	Offshore	R17.2-R19.8	0.5
February 2013	487,003	Offshore	East Jetty - R20.7	0.8
February 2013	147,289	Offshore	R23.5-25.5	0.4

Strategy: Maintain the project through nourishment and monitoring.

Destin, Okaloosa County, R39-R50

This is a 2.1-mile segment of critically eroded beach east of Henderson Beach State Park in Destin. This segment is contiguous to another segment of critically eroded beach in western Walton County.

Assisted recovery of the beach and dune system was conducted following Hurricanes Opal and Georges. Following the impact of Hurricane Ivan (2004) and Hurricane Dennis (2005), emergency protective berms were constructed in 2006 using funds from FEMA. A dune restoration project was constructed in 2006 to supplement the emergency protective berms with additional sand and vegetation.

A portion of the **Destin-Western Walton Beach Restoration Project** was constructed in 2006 and completed in January 2007 using sand from the ebb shoal of East Pass. The expected nourishment interval of the project is eight years. The project has a total length of 6.9 miles and extends from R39 in Okaloosa County through R22.8 in Walton County. The beach berm design is 210 ft wide. Approximately 1,900,000 cy of sand was placed in the Walton County segment of the project and 950,000 cy in the Destin segment. The next scheduled beach nourishment event is still to be

determined. A temporary porous net groin system (NuShore) was permitted by the department in November 2021 at the James Lee County Park between R45.9 and R47.5 in Okaloosa County to determine erosion control benefits to the shoreline. The county sponsored and funded the net groin project without state cost share.

Strategy: Maintain the project through nourishment and monitoring.

Regional Strategies for Beach and Inlet Management

Sponsors and Funding

This subregion contains the governmental entities of [Escambia](#), [Santa Rosa](#), and [Okaloosa](#) Counties; the Santa Rosa Island Authority (Pensacola Beach); the City of Destin; [Division of Recreation and Parks](#); the [USACE](#); the U.S. Department of the Interior (National Park Service); and the U.S. Air Force (Eglin Air Force Base). Participants with the Department as local sponsors of beach management projects include Santa Rosa and Okaloosa Counties, the [Santa Rosa Island Authority](#), and the [City of Destin](#).

Property on Santa Rosa Island is leased from the federal government and is subject to leaseholder agreements. The Gulf Islands National Seashore, managed by the National Park Service, occupies a large portion of Perdido Key and Santa Rosa Island. The Division of Recreation and Parks manages coastal property at Perdido Key State Park and Henderson Beach State Park. The U.S. Department of the Interior manages the Gulf Islands National Seashore, and the U.S. Air Force is responsible for coastal property within Eglin Air Force Base. Project cost estimates and schedules may be found in the [Beach Management Funding Assistance Program - Long Range Budget Plan](#).

The restoration projects listed below are early restoration projects selected by the [Deepwater Horizon](#) Oil Spill [Natural Resource Damage Assessment \(NRDA\) Trustees](#) for implementation. See the latest [NRDA latest updates](#) for the Deepwater Horizon projects (94 in Florida) and their [interactive maps](#).

- Perdido Key Dune Restoration, (Phase III)
- Pensacola Dune Restoration, (Phase I – completed in 2012)
- Norriego Point Restoration and Recreation Project, (Phase III)

Project Coordination

Regionalization is the funding and coordination of multiple nourishment and inlet management activities to take advantage of identifiable cost savings through economies of scale, reduced equipment mobilization and demobilization costs, and elimination of duplicative administrative tasks. The Destin – Western Walton Beach Restoration Project is an example of project coordination. Future opportunities include:

1. Placement of beach quality sand on adjacent beaches from maintenance of Pensacola Pass.
2. Placement of beach quality sand on adjacent beaches from maintenance of East Pass.
3. Combining nourishment projects in the subregion.

Environmental Protection

The protection of marine turtles, beach mice and shorebirds and their habitat are primary environmental concerns within this subregion. Sensitive areas for shorebirds include Pensacola Pass and East Pass. Sensitive areas for beach mice include Perdido Key State Park, Gulf Islands National Seashore (Johnson Beach, Ft. Pickens, east of Pensacola Beach, and Okaloosa), Navarre Beach Park, and Eglin Air Force Base. Within those sensitive areas, natural communities identified as primary and secondary dunes as well as scrub dunes, back dunes, coastal scrub and or coastal strand all provide essential habitat for beach mouse populations. Additionally, primary dunes and secondary dunes that occur on private lands are important for resilience of those developed lands and sustaining wildlife populations and should be maintained or restored. These areas can be subject to change as conditions change, and coordination with [FWC shorebird staff](#) and the FWC Regional Species Conversation Biologist for the FWC region where the project is occurring is encouraged during project development. The endangered Gulf sturgeon is also an environmental concern at Pensacola Pass and East Pass. The timing of construction activities has been restricted during the marine turtle nesting season of May 1 through October 31, though exceptions have been approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Project design and method of construction are restricted to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to the federally and state-listed species and their habitats. The [Fort Pickens Aquatic Preserve](#) is located within the boundaries of the [Gulf Islands National Seashore](#) on eastern Perdido Key and western Santa Rosa Island. Projects located within and near the Aquatic Preserve boundaries require additional protection, including more stringent water quality standards than in non-aquatic preserve waters, during permitting and construction to ensure preservation of the existing conditions.

This area of coastline along Perdido Key and Santa Rosa Island has been impacted by tar balls from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill of 2010.

Sand Sources

Offshore sand sources sufficient to meet the expected needs of future projects in this subregion over the next 15 years have been identified for Pensacola Beach and Navarre Beach, but the rest of the subregion's projects has not identified sufficient sand resources. Some upland dredged material storage sites adjacent to the Intracoastal Waterway may contain potentially usable beach quality sand. Most of these upland sites are in Bay and Gulf Counties and would have to be transported by barge or truck. It is recommended by the Department that an offshore sand search be conducted for this subregion for the purpose of beach nourishment. For additional information on sand sources, the Department manages a database titled the [Regional Offshore Sand Source Inventory \(ROSSI\)](#).

Innovative Projects

A porous (net) groin system was installed as an experiment on a segment of beach on Eglin Air Force Base in November 2001. A third-party peer review of the results of this test program indicated that this system did not fully meet the performance expectations and was not cost effective.

Additional Information

The introduction of the state's Strategic Beach Management Plan provides additional background information on the Department's Beach Management Programs and includes overviews of:

- The principles and statutes followed to help guide the state's management strategies
- Comprehensive list of Florida's inlets
- The miles of critically eroded beaches under active management
- Statewide sand source studies
- Statewide monitoring programs
- Innovative technologies examined
- Basic suggestions for emergency response plans
- Beaches, Economics and Tourism

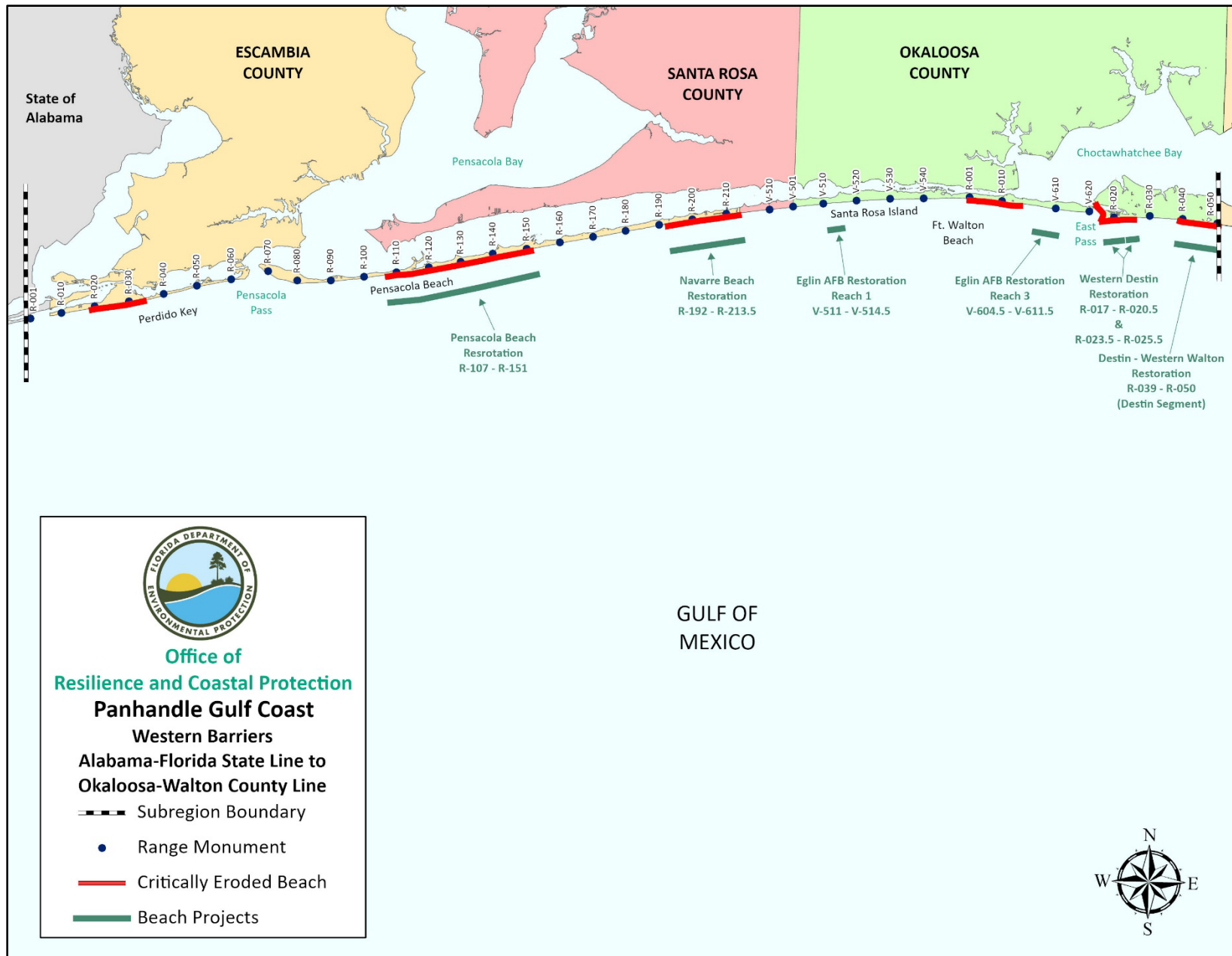


Figure 1. The Western Barriers subregion of the Panhandle region of Florida. View an [interactive map](#) or [COASTS imagery](#).

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Pleistocene Mainland

There are 25.6 miles of beaches in the **Pleistocene Mainland** subregion, which extends from the Okaloosa-Walton County line east to the Walton-Bay County line as shown on Figure 2. There are 18.8 miles of critically eroded beaches in this subregion, of which 4.8 miles have been restored and maintained.

Erosion is attributed primarily to tropical storms and hurricanes. The most erosive storms in recent years were Hurricane Eloise (1975), Hurricane Opal (1995), Hurricane Georges (1998), Tropical Storm Isidore (2002), Hurricane Ivan (2004), Hurricanes Dennis and Katrina (2005), and Hurricane Sally (2020).

In 1995, Hurricane Opal caused extensive erosion throughout the northwest Florida coast. Using federal and state disaster funds, a program of assisted recovery of the beach and dune system was conducted where upland developed property had been left vulnerable to future storms. Sand was trucked from upland borrow sites, placed in an alongshore berm configuration, and stabilized with wood slat sand fence and plantings of sea oats. However, the beach and dunes had not fully recovered when Hurricane Georges impacted the area in 1998 and caused additional damage that required a second phase of assisted recovery of the most eroded developed areas.

Tropical Storm Isidore (2002) and Hurricane Ivan (2004) caused additional extensive erosion throughout Walton County's beaches and dunes. In 2005, Hurricanes Dennis, Katrina, and Rita exacerbated erosion conditions throughout Northwest Florida.

Strategies for Inlets and Critically Eroded Beaches

Area Wide Studies and Projects

The USACE initiated a county-wide federal feasibility study in 2004 to determine the appropriate beach management strategy. This work was supplemented by Walton County and the Department, and Walton County completed a state and local feasibility study in 2006. The USACE Civil Works Review Board reviewed the federal draft study in December 2012. The project reached a major milestone in July of 2013 with completion and approval of the feasibility study. The **Walton County Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Project** was authorized by Congress in 2014. Within the authorized project template, there are five designated critically eroded areas in Walton County that total 18.8 miles. The preliminary engineering and design (PED) were completed in January 2015 and

construction was planned for 2016/2017.

Area wide strategy: Facilitate completion of the federal design and permitting activities; construct beach restoration project; perform a coastal geomorphology study of the coastal lakes and peat formations for implications in future beach management measures.

Western Walton County (Reach 1), R1-R23.6

This is a 5.2-mile segment of critically eroded beach that includes unincorporated Miramar Beach, Tang-O-Mar Beach, Gulf Pines, Sandestin, and Four Mile Village. This segment adjoins a segment of critically eroded beach in Okaloosa County. This segment is the first reach of the **Walton County Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Project**. Assisted recovery of the beach and dune system within the most eroded developed areas was conducted following Hurricanes Opal and Georges.

Following Hurricane Ivan in 2004, emergency protective berms were constructed using funds from FEMA. A dune restoration project was also completed in 2005 to supplement the emergency protective berms with additional sand and vegetation. The **Destin - Walton County Beach Restoration Project (R1-R22.8)** was completed in January 2007 using 1,900,000 cy of sand obtained from the ebb shoal of East Pass, along with additional placement of 950,000 cy in the Destin segment in Okaloosa County. The next scheduled beach nourishment event is still to be determined.

Strategy: Maintain the project through nourishment and monitoring.

C30A Corridor Beaches, Walton County (Reaches 2-5), R41-R127.4

Beach Highlands to Blue Mountain Beach (Reach 2), R41-R64

Beach Highlands to Blue Mountain Beach is a 4.5-mile segment of critically eroded beach that includes unincorporated Beach Highlands, Dune Allen Beach, and Blue Mountain Beach and forms the western reach of the **Walton County Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Project (5 Reaches)**.

The segment between R54.5 and R58 is designated critical for the design integrity of the Walton County Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Project. The east end between R63 and R64 is designated critical for the construction of a dune taper only to maintain design integrity of the Walton County Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Project. Assisted recovery of the beach and dune

system within the most eroded developed areas was conducted following Hurricanes Opal and Georges.

Following the impact of Hurricane Ivan, emergency protective berms were constructed using funds from FEMA. A dune restoration project was also completed in 2005 to supplement the emergency protective berms with additional sand and vegetation.

Gulf Trace to Grayton Beach, Walton County (Reach 3), R67-R72

Gulf Trace to Grayton Beach is a 1.0-mile segment of critically eroded beach that includes unincorporated Gulf Trace and a 0.1-mile segment of Grayton Beach, where development is threatened by erosion. An additional 1,900-ft gap between the threatened areas, which contains undeveloped park lands, has been added for continuity of management of the coastal system following federal project authorization. Additionally, two segments (300 ft to the west and 500 ft to the east), where no development exists seaward of the Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL), has been added for continuity of management of the coastal system following federal project authorization. Assisted recovery of the beach and dune system within the most eroded developed areas was conducted following Hurricanes Opal and Georges. This area was also heavily impacted by Hurricane Ivan in 2004.

WaterColor to Deer Lake, Walton County (Reach 4), R78-R98

WaterColor is a 3.9-mile segment of designated critically eroded beach that includes unincorporated Seagrove Beach. Critical erosion along 3.1 miles of Seagrove Beach (R82-R98) threatens development. Along the western 4,000 ft of the segment, the developments of WaterColor and Seaside have been designated critically eroded for continuity of management of the coastal system following federal project authorization, even though most of the development is behind the CCCL. Assisted recovery of the beach and dune system within the most eroded developed areas was conducted following Hurricanes Opal and Georges. This area was also heavily impacted by Hurricane Ivan in 2004.

Seacrest Beach to Inlet Beach, Walton County (Reach 5), R105.5-R127.4

Seacrest Beach to Inlet Beach is a 4.2-mile segment of designated critically eroded beach that includes unincorporated Seacrest Beach, a 1.8-mile segment (R105.5-R114.7) where development is threatened by erosion of the bluff. To the east at Inlet Beach is a 1.0-mile segment (R122-R127), including a portion where development is threatened by erosion between R122 and R124, and another

portion between R124 and R127 that was designated critical for the design integrity of the beach restoration project. Between R114.7 and R122 is a 1.4-mile gap between threatened areas where nearly all of the development is completely landward of the CCCL. This area and a 400-ft segment at the east end, where there is currently no development seaward of the CCCL, were added for continuity of management of the coastal system following federal project authorization.

Assisted recovery of the beach and dune system within the most eroded developed areas was conducted following Hurricanes Opal and Georges. Following the impact of Hurricane Ivan in 2004, emergency protective berms were constructed using funds from FEMA; a dune restoration project was also completed in 2005 to supplement the emergency protective berms with additional sand and vegetation. The County and upland property owners in 2015/2016 elected not to proceed with the **Walton County Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Project (Reaches 1 through 5)**.

Strategy: Facilitate completion of the federal design and permitting activities for the Walton County Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Project; construct a beach restoration project with appropriately designed dune tapers to allow continuance of outlet flows at coastal dune lakes; maintain project through nourishment and monitoring.

Regional Strategies for Beach and Inlet Management

Sponsors and Funding

This subregion contains the governmental entities of [Walton County](#) and the [USACE](#), which are both participants with the Department as sponsors of beach management projects. The [Division of Recreation and Parks](#) manages coastal property at Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, Deer Lake State Park, and Grayton Beach State Park. Project cost estimates and schedules may be found in the [Beach Management Funding Assistance Program - Long Range Budget Plan](#). The Restoration of Florida's Coastal Dune Lakes Project was selected for implementation in 2014 by the [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation \(NFWF\)](#).

Project Coordination

Regionalization is the funding and coordination of multiple nourishment and inlet management activities to take advantage of identifiable cost savings through economies of scale, reduced equipment mobilization and demobilization costs, and elimination of duplicative administrative tasks.

Opportunities in this subregion include coupling the contracting of beach and dune nourishment in

Okaloosa County, including Destin, and Walton County to reduce equipment mobilization costs.

Environmental Protection

The protection of marine turtles, beach mice and shorebirds and their habitat are primary environmental concerns within this subregion. There are 15 named [coastal dune lakes](#) in Walton County along 26 miles of coastline. Beach nourishment activities must mitigate the potential for closure or redirection of the freshwater lake flushing outlets to avoid potential flooding and scour of upland property, dune erosion and impacts to water quality in the coastal dune lakes. Sensitive areas for shorebirds include Deer Lake, Grayton Beach, and Inlet Beach for brood foraging areas near coastal dune lakes and outfalls. Sensitive areas for beach mice include Stallworth Lake Preserve, Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, Grayton Dunes Park, Grayton Beach State Park, and Deer Lake State Park. Within those sensitive areas, natural communities identified as primary and secondary dunes as well as scrub dunes, back dunes, coastal scrub and/or coastal strand all provide essential habitat for beach mouse populations. Additionally, primary dunes and secondary dunes that occur on private lands are important for the resilience of those developed lands and sustaining wildlife populations and should be maintained or restored. These areas can be subject to change as conditions change, and coordination with [FWC shorebird staff](#) and the FWC Regional Species Conversation Biologist for the FWC region where the project is occurring is encouraged during project development. The timing of construction activities has been restricted during the marine turtle nesting season of May 1 through October 31. Project design and method of construction are restricted to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to federally and state-listed species and their habitats.

Sand Sources

Offshore sand sources sufficient to meet the expected needs of future projects in this subregion over the next 50 years have been identified. Some upland dredged material storage sites adjacent to the Intracoastal Waterway may also contain potentially usable beach quality sand. Most of these upland sites are in Bay and Gulf Counties and material would have to be transported by barge or truck. For additional information on sand sources, the Department manages a database titled the [Regional Offshore Sand Source Inventory \(ROSSI\)](#).

Innovative Projects

A porous (net) groin system was installed as an experiment on Inlet Beach in November 2004 in an attempt to restore the beach. The groins were removed at the end of April 2005. An independent

performance evaluation determined that the project did not meet the expected performance (Wang, 2006).

Additional Information

The introduction of the state’s Strategic Beach Management Plan provides additional background information on the Department’s Beach Management Programs and includes overviews of:

- The principles and statutes followed to help guide the state’s management strategies
- A comprehensive list of Florida’s inlets
- The miles of critically eroded beaches under active management
- Statewide sand source studies
- Statewide monitoring programs
- Innovative technologies examined
- Basic suggestions for emergency response plans
- Beaches, Economics and Tourism



Figure 2. Pleistocene Mainland subregion of the Panhandle region of Florida. View an [interactive map](#) or [COASTS imagery](#).

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St. Andrews Reach

There are 19.8 miles of beaches in the **St. Andrews Reach** subregion, which extends from the Walton - Bay County line (R00A) to Shell Island just east of St. Andrews Inlet (R105) in Bay County, as shown on Figure 3. There are 18.6 miles of critically eroded beaches in this subregion, of which 18.6 have been restored and maintained.

Erosion is attributed to tropical storms, hurricanes and the effects of St. Andrews Inlet. The most erosive storms in recent years were Hurricane Eloise (1975), Hurricane Kate (1985), Hurricane Opal (1995), Hurricanes Earl and Georges (1998), Hurricane Ivan (2004), Hurricanes Dennis and Katrina (2005), Hurricane Michael (2018) and Hurricane Sally (2020).

In 1995, Hurricane Opal caused extensive erosion throughout the coast of northwest Florida. Opal severely impacted the Panama City beaches, eroding an estimated 2.9 million cy of sand above mean high water. Interim dune nourishment was not conducted in this area. As an alternative, design and construction of a beach and dune restoration project was accelerated using state and local funds to build the federally authorized project on a reimbursement basis. Post-storm repair of the beach and dunes of St. Andrews State Park and along Spyglass Drive used maintenance dredged material from St. Andrews Inlet. The beach restoration project was under construction when Hurricanes Earl and Georges impacted the area in September 1998. Additional fill sand was needed to compensate for erosion losses in the western part of the project area that was not yet restored. The restored beaches in the eastern part of the project performed well and did not require additional sand.

Hurricanes Ivan (2004) and Dennis (2005) caused storm tide and erosion conditions comparable to those of Opal. A reported 2.5 million cy of sand were eroded in the project area above the -20-ft contour due to Ivan. Post-2005 hurricane season surveys of the project show erosion losses of 2.96 million cy above the -18-ft contour. Most of this loss is attributed to Dennis and some (possibly as much as 20 percent) may be attributed to Hurricane Katrina. [Hurricane Michael](#) caused major beach and dune erosion throughout this subregion in October 2018.

Strategies for Inlets and Critically Eroded Beaches

Panama City Beaches, Bay County, R1-R97

This is an 18.6-mile segment of critically eroded beach, which includes the Panama City Beaches and St. Andrews State Park. The federal **Panama City Beaches Shore Protection Project** (R0.5-R92) extends from just east of the Walton-Bay County line eastward to the boundary of St. Andrews State Park. The project history for this segment of shoreline is described in Table 2. The project is authorized until 2048, with the Pinnacle Port and Carillon Beach portion authorized until 2061. Beach restoration was completed in 1999 along 17.7 miles of beach between R1 and the pier at St. Andrews State Park (R93) using 9,115,000 cy of sand obtained from multiple offshore borrow areas. The project was constructed on a federal reimbursement basis. The planned interval between beach nourishment events is five years. As a result of the erosion caused by Hurricane Ivan, the scheduled nourishment of the Panama City Beaches Shore Protection Project was accelerated, and construction was completed by the Corps with emergency funds in March 2006. The project involved placement of approximately 3,265,000 cy of sand along a 16.7-mile project shoreline between R5 and R93, using sand from seven offshore borrow areas. A dune restoration project involving the placement of approximately 17,000 cy of truck-hauled sand, obtained from an approved upland source, along a one-mile segment of Carillon Beach and Pinnacle Port (R1-R5) was completed in May 2006 using state, local, and FEMA funds.

The initial federal restoration of Pinnacle Port and Carillon Beach project was completed in December 2011, using 453,260 cy of sand from two offshore borrow areas, located approximately 3.5 miles offshore of Panama City Beach. The Western Reach or Reach B (R5.5 – R29) was nourished with 636,234 cy. The Eastern Reach, Reach C (R81-R92) was nourished with 281,142 cy of material. The total volume for this 2011 beach nourishment project was 1,370,636 cy. Bay County received a new state permit in 2013 for the shore protection project and completed construction in May 2017 by placing 948,978 cy over approximately four miles of shoreline in four reaches ROC to R3 (157,068 cy), R34 to R40 (267,240 cy), R52 to R57 (295,804 cy) and R87 to R91 (228,866 cy). Hurricane Michael (2018) caused extensive beach and dune erosion along the eastern end of Panama City Beach adjacent, and within St. Andrews State Park. Additional erosion occurred in St. Andrews State Park due to Hurricane Sally (2020) that caused a breach near R97 and the west jetty. Ultimately, repair work needed to be done to both jetties at St. Andrew inlet and to restore the breach between R97 and the west jetty. The work was completed in May 2021 by the USACE with the placement of 166,806 cy

of material between R97 and the west jetty. Additional responses to the hurricane erosion at Panama City Beach developed the next beach nourishment that completed construction in May 2022 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Mobile District, with the placement of 2,314,989 cy of sandy material along 13.7 miles of Bay County shoreline between R1 to R41 and R62 to R91. Additional beach nourishment is expected in the fall of 2023 within the St. Andrews State Park with approximately 800,000 cy to be placed between R92 and R96.

Table 2. Panama City Beaches Shore Protection Project history.

Year	Volume (cy)	Sand Source	Project Location (by R monument)	Length (mi.)
1999	9,115,000	Offshore Borrow Sites I, II, III, V, VI, VII and VIII	R1-R93	17.7
2006	3,265,000	Offshore Borrow Sites I, III, VII, IX, inlet Borrow Sites 5c and 10	R5-R93	16.7
2006	17,000	Upland	R1-R5	1.0
2011	1,370,636	Offshore Borrow Sites 02 and 03	R0.5-R5, R5.5-R29 & R81-R92	7.5
May 2017	948,978	Offshore Borrow Sites BA O3 & inlet Borrow Site BA 11	*ROC-R3, R34-R40, R52-R57 & R87-R91	4.0
May 2021	166,806	Inlet	R97 to west jetty	0.1
May 2022	2,314,989	Offshore Borrow Sites S1A*, and inlet Borrow Sites 5C, 10 and 11	R1-R41 and R62-R91	13.7

*ROC is a survey monument east of Philips Inlet of Powell Lake and west of R1.

Strategy: Maintain the Panama City Beaches project through monitoring and nourishment; design and construct the initial beach restoration project within St. Andrews State Park and incorporate its maintenance with the larger Panama City Beaches project moving forward.

St. Andrews Inlet, Bay County, R97-R98

St. Andrews Inlet includes the federal **Panama City Harbor Navigation Project** that is periodically maintained for navigation to the Port of Panama City. Beach compatible dredge material is deposited on beach and littoral areas along [St. Andrews State Park](#) and the Gator Lake beach placement area.

The inlet was cut through the coastal barrier in 1934 and jetties were constructed. Maintenance dredging has been conducted every 18 to 24 months. Dredged material has been placed on the downdrift beach west of the inlet in 1972, 1982, and for all maintenance events since 1984.

Previously, dredged material was placed in an offshore disposal area, which was later used as a

borrow area for the beach restoration project completed in 1999. A harbor deepening project was conducted in 2000, with material placed in nearshore areas along the Gulf beach of St. Andrews State Park.

Maintenance dredged material has also been placed along the west inlet shoreline to protect the state park near Gator Lake. Additionally, material dredged from the federal navigation channel in Grand Lagoon has been placed on the state park inlet shoreline at Gator Lake. An inlet management study was completed in 2000. This area includes a 0.2-mile segment of critically eroded inlet shoreline on the west side of St. Andrews Inlet fronting Gator Lake. A harbor deepening project was conducted in 2000; this material was placed in nearshore areas along the Gulf beach of St. Andrews State Park. A feasibility study was conducted to identify management alternatives for stabilizing the west inlet shoreline that would meet the Florida Park Service's objectives for land use while enabling the bypassing of more dredged material to downdrift Gulf beaches. The study recommended construction of four detached segmented breakwaters to provide protection to the shoreline fronting Gator Lake. Construction of the breakwaters and terminal groin was completed in December 2015. The four 100-foot-long stone mound breakwaters were spaced 50 ft apart, with crest widths of 5 ft, and crest elevations of +4 ft Mean Low Lower Water (MLLW). The Florida Park Service wanted the construction of the terminal groin to prevent sand from migrating back into the Grand Lagoon channel. Maintenance dredging occurred in 2015, with 47,000 cy of material placed at Gator Lake and 130,000 cy of material placed at the State Park Gulf beach. Due to Hurricane Sally (2020), additional erosion occurred in St. Andrews State Park that caused a breach between R97 and the west jetty. Repair work to both jetties at St. Andrew inlet and repairing the breach was completed in May 2021 by the USACE with 166,806 cy of material placement between R97 and the west jetty.

Strategy: Bypass beach compatible material from maintenance dredging to the downdrift shoreline west of the inlet; conduct a comprehensive inlet monitoring program, including an assessment of the performance of the Gator Lake erosion control structures.

Regional Strategies for Beach and Inlet Management

Sponsors and Funding

This subregion contains the governmental entities of [Bay County](#), the city of Panama City Beach and the [USACE](#). The [Bay County Tourist Development Council](#) is the local sponsor of the federal beach restoration project. The [Division of Recreation and Parks](#) manages coastal property at St. Andrews

State Park. Project cost estimates and schedules may be found in the [Beach Management Funding Assistance Program - Long Range Budget Plan](#).

Project Coordination

Regionalization is the funding and coordination of multiple nourishment and inlet management activities to take advantage of identifiable cost savings through economies of scale, reduced equipment mobilization and demobilization costs, and elimination of duplicative administrative tasks.

Opportunities in this subregion include coordinating the maintenance of the eastern end of the restoration project with the maintenance dredging of the Panama City Harbor Navigation Project and the federal Grand Lagoon navigational channel.

Environmental Protection

The protection of marine turtles, beach mice, Gulf sturgeon, seagrasses, and shorebirds and their habitat are primary environmental concerns within this subregion. Sensitive areas for beach mice include Camp Helen State Park and St. Andrews State Park (west unit and Shell Island). Within those sensitive areas, natural communities identified as primary and secondary dunes as well as scrub dunes, back dunes, coastal scrub and or coastal strand all provide essential habitat for beach mouse populations. Additionally, primary dunes and secondary dunes that occur on private lands are important for resilience of those developed lands and sustaining wildlife populations and should be maintained or restored. These areas can be subject to change as conditions change, and coordination with the FWC Regional Species Conservation Biologist for the FWC region where the project is occurring is encouraged during project development. The timing of construction activities has been restricted during the marine turtle nesting season of May 1 through October 31. Project design and method of construction are restricted to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to the federally and state-listed species and their habitats. St. Andrews State Park and Inlet are located within the boundaries of the [St. Andrews State Park Aquatic Preserve](#). Projects located within and near the Aquatic Preserve boundaries require additional protection, including stricter water quality standards than in non-aquatic preserve waters, during permitting and construction to ensure preservation of the existing conditions.

Sand Sources

Bay County fully investigated and identified a new sand source offshore from Shell Island. The borrow area contains approximately 3.5 million cy of sand for the federal shore protection project. Approximately 3 million cy are available in borrow areas O2, O3, 5c, 11, and S-1. These borrow

areas have been previously approved or fully investigated for permitting. Bay County obtained a new multi-use beach nourishment permit in 2013 for these borrow areas in order to complete both regularly scheduled and emergency storm loss and/or hot spot nourishment project(s) over the next 15 years.

Offshore sand sources sufficient to meet the expected needs of future projects in this subregion over the next 15 years have been identified. Some upland dredged material storage sites adjacent to the Intracoastal Waterway may contain potentially usable beach quality sand. Most of these upland sites are located in Bay and Gulf Counties and material would have to be transported by barge or truck. For additional information on sand sources, the Department manages a database titled the [Regional Offshore Sand Source Inventory \(ROSSI\)](#).

Additional Information

The introduction of the state's Strategic Beach Management Plan provides additional background information on the Department's Beach Management Programs and includes overviews of:

- The principles and statutes followed to help guide the state's management strategies
- Comprehensive list of Florida's inlets
- The miles of critically eroded beaches under active management
- Statewide sand source studies
- Statewide monitoring programs
- Innovative technologies examined
- Basic suggestions for emergency response plans
- Beaches, Economics and Tourism



Figure 3. The St. Andrews Reach subregion of the Panhandle region of Florida. View an [interactive map](#) or [COASTS imagery](#).

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Middle Barriers

There are 29.5 miles of beaches in the **Middle Barriers** subregion, which extends from east of St. Andrews Inlet (R105) in Bay County eastward through the Gulf fronting mainland beaches (R31) in Gulf County, as shown on Figure 4. There is a total of 0.9 mile of critically eroded beaches in this subregion, none of which have been restored and maintained.

Erosion is attributed to tropical storms, hurricanes, and the effect of the inlets including St. Andrews inlet, St. Andrews Sound East Entrance (East Pass or Old Pass), Eloise Inlet, and Mexico Beach Inlet. The most erosive storms in recent years were Hurricane Eloise (1975), Hurricanes Elena and Kate (1985), Hurricane Opal (1995), Hurricane Earl (1998), Hurricane Ivan (2004), Hurricane Dennis (2005), Hurricane Michael (2018) and Hurricane Sally (2020).

In 1995, Hurricane Opal caused extensive erosion throughout the coast of northwest Florida, including all the beaches of the Middle Barriers subregion. Using federal and state disaster funds, a program of assisted recovery of the beach and dune system was conducted in Mexico Beach where upland developed property was left vulnerable to storms. Sand was trucked from upland borrow sites, placed in an alongshore berm configuration, and stabilized with wood slat sand fencing and plantings of sea oats. However, the beach and dunes had not fully recovered when Hurricane Earl made landfall in this subregion and impacted the area in 1998, causing additional damage that required a second phase of assisted recovery of the most eroded developed areas.

Hurricanes Ivan (2004) and Dennis (2005) inflicted severe beach and dune erosion with substantial sand overwash along Shell Island and the Crooked Island barrier complex. Ivan also caused seven breaches in the Crooked Island complex; all but one breach closed prior to Dennis. Following Dennis, the entrance to Mexico Beach Inlet was completely shoaled and essentially closed. [Hurricane Michael](#) caused major beach and dune erosion throughout this subregion in 2018, with major impacts at Shell Island, Crooked Island, Tyndall Air Force Base, Mexico Beach and Beacon Hill.

Strategies for Inlets and Critically Eroded Beaches

Mexico Beach Inlet, Bay County, R127-R128

In response to recommendations from the feasibility study of 2008, the city proposed a modified bypassing protocol to truck bypassed material from stockpiles at the two inlet dredging discharge

points to the designated critical erosion area to the east; however, the city withdrew the application. The estimated gross quantity of beach sand reaching the updrift boundary of the west inlet jetty or inlet channel is 86,700 cy. A target annual bypassing quantity of 32,400 cy has been incorporated with the authorized bypassing project for the city and was initially listed in Strategic Beach Management Plan (SBMP) in 2015. The city has proposed to construct a mobile sand bypassing system to improve its maintenance system with sand placement between R-128 and R- 138. The city conducted a feasibility study in 2016 on the inlet and concluded the east jetty would be improved by lengthening it 200 feet seaward. Due to Hurricane Michael (2018), the County obtained a permit to construct a beach/dune restoration project in 2020. The county has obtained a permit to modify and build an eastern jetty and to extend the western jetty. The city conducted an inlet management study to develop an inlet sediment budget in 2022/2023 and the department adopted an [inlet management plan](#) in the summer of 2023. To see the annual inlet bypassing volumes that occurs in Mexico Beach Inlet, see the department's [Annual Inlet Report](#).

Strategy: Continue the authorized sand bypassing project by excavating sand from the beach west of the inlet, from the ebb shoal at the inlet entrance, and from the channel within the inlet, and by transferring the material to the downdrift shoreline east of the inlet through the authorized discharge points; continue to monitor the dredge records of the authorized bypassing project to achieve a target annual bypassing quantity of 32,400 cy; replace, sand-tighten, and extend the east jetty to a point comparable with the west jetty; comply with the strategies listed in the new 2023 inlet management plan.

Mexico Beach, Bay County, R132-R137.8

This is a 0.9-mile segment of critically eroded beach within the City of Mexico Beach located nearly a mile east of Mexico Beach Inlet. Assisted recovery of the beach and dune system within the most eroded developed areas was conducted following Hurricanes Opal, Earl, Ivan, Dennis, and Michael. Following the impact of Ivan, emergency protective berms were constructed using funds from FEMA. A feasibility study sponsored by the Department and the City of Mexico Beach was conducted in 2008. This study recommended increasing the sand bypassing at the inlet, constructing a beach restoration project in the critical erosion area, and modifying the bypassing protocol following an additional feasibility investigation. Additional nourishment and protective measures were needed, including the construction of a beach berm, sand fence, vegetative plantings, and a bypass system that would utilize some of the sand bypass material excavated from west of the inlet on Crooked Island

and hauled via truck to the critically eroded area. The city submitted an application for the truck haul project to the Department in March 2010. However, the city did not have the funding to complete the permitting requirements, and the permit application was withdrawn in May 2012. Mexico Beach's beach and dunes system and 99% of the coastal development seaward of US 98 had major damages due to Hurricane Michael in 2018. The Department issued a permit modification (JCP#0290631-006-JN) in August 2019 to rebuild 3.1 miles of beach/dune between R127.8 to R144 that were impacted by Hurricane Michael. The city initiated an emergency dune (FEMA Berm) project that was constructed in summer 2019 along Mexico Beach between R127.8 to R144 (3.1 miles) with the placement of approximately 95,000 cy of sand, 282,400 coastal dune plants and 15,600 linear ft of sand fencing. In addition, a beach restoration project is being planned with a proposal of approximately 1.5 million cy to be placed at Mexico Beach in 2023/2024.

Strategy: Continue the inlet sand bypassing protocol to implement a truck haul beach nourishment project; design and construct beach or dune restoration project; monitor; coordinate with the Port of Port St. Joe and Mobile District of the USACE to obtain future beach quality maintenance dredge material from the federal navigation channel in St. Joseph Bay.

Regional Strategies for Beach and Inlet Management

Sponsors and Funding

This subregion contains the governmental entities of [Bay County](#), [Gulf County](#), the [City of Mexico Beach](#), the [Mexico Beach Community Development Council](#) and the [USACE](#). A part of Shell Island is included in the St. Andrews State Park. Tyndall Air Force Base includes part of Shell Island, the entire Crooked Island complex, and the mainland coast to Mexico Beach Inlet. Project cost estimates and schedules may be found in the [Beach Management Funding Assistance Program - Long Range Budget Plan](#).

Project Coordination

Regionalization is the funding and coordination of multiple nourishment and inlet management activities to take advantage of identifiable cost savings through economies of scale, reduced equipment mobilization and demobilization costs, and elimination of duplicative administrative tasks. An opportunity to obtain beach quality sand should be investigated when the federal navigational channel leading to Port St. Joe needs maintenance dredging.

Environmental Protection

The protection of marine turtles, beach mice, Gulf sturgeon and shorebirds and their habitat are primary environmental concerns within this subregion. Eloise Inlet is an important shorebird nesting site. Sensitive areas for beach mice include Tyndall Air Force Base (West and East Crooked Island). Within those sensitive areas, natural communities identified as primary and secondary dunes as well as scrub dunes, back dunes, coastal scrub and or coastal strand all provide essential habitat for beach mouse populations. Additionally, primary dunes and secondary dunes that occur on private lands are important for resilience of those developed lands and sustaining wildlife populations and should be maintained or restored. These areas can be subject to change as conditions change, and coordination with the FWC Regional Species Conservation Biologist for the FWC region of the project is encouraged during project development. The timing of construction activities has not been restricted during the marine turtle nesting season of May 1 through October 31. Project design and method of construction are restricted to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to the federally and state listed species and their habitats.

Sand Sources

A full-scale sand search was completed with the design and permitting of an offshore borrow area for the Mexico Beach Restoration Project. The total volume available in the borrow site is approximately 4,270,000 cy, with approximately 1,500,000 cy proposed to be removed for the initial beach restoration event planned for 2023/2024. Sand sources may also be available inside and outside of the federal channel. Some upland dredged material storage sites adjacent to the Intracoastal Waterway also contain small quantities of usable beach quality sand. Most of this material is in Bay and Gulf Counties and would have to be transported by barge or truck. For additional information on sand sources, the Department manages a database titled the [Regional Offshore Sand Source Inventory \(ROSSI\)](#).

Additional Information

The introduction of the state's Strategic Beach Management Plan provides additional background information on the Department's Beach Management Programs and includes overviews of:

- The principles and statutes followed to help guide the state's management strategies
- Comprehensive list of Florida's inlets
- The miles of critically eroded beaches under active management

- Statewide sand source studies
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- Innovative technologies examined
- Basic suggestions for emergency response plans
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Figure 4. The Middle Barriers subregion of the Panhandle region of Florida. View an [interactive map](#) or [COASTS imagery](#).

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San Blas Realignment

There are 21.2 miles of beaches in the **San Blas Realignment** subregion, which extends from the entrance to St. Joseph Bay and along St. Joseph Peninsula and Cape San Blas to R141 near Money Bayou in Gulf County, as shown on Figure 5. There are 8.3 miles of critically eroded beaches in this subregion, of which 7.5 miles have been restored. Erosion is attributed to tropical storms and hurricanes, and to natural geomorphic changes caused by the pattern of littoral transport of sand in this area.

The most erosive storms in recent years were Hurricane Eloise (1975), Hurricanes Elena and Kate (1985), Tropical Storm Beryl (1994), Hurricane Opal (1995), Hurricane Earl (1998), Tropical Storm Helene (2000), Tropical Storm Isidore (2002), Tropical Storm Bonnie and Hurricane Ivan (2004), Tropical Storm Arlene (2005), Hurricanes Dennis and Katrina (2005), Hurricane Gustav (2008), Hurricane Michael (2018), Hurricane Sally (2020) and Tropical Storm Fred (2021).

In October 1995, Hurricane Opal caused extensive erosion throughout Northwest Florida. Using federal and state disaster funds, a program of assisted recovery of the beach and dune system was conducted to provide temporary storm protection to upland developed property left vulnerable to storms. Sand was trucked from upland borrow sites, placed in an alongshore berm configuration, and stabilized with wood slat sand fence and plantings of sea oats. However, the beach and dunes had not fully recovered when Hurricane Georges impacted the area in 1998, causing additional damage that required a second phase of assisted recovery of the most eroded developed areas.

Hurricane Ivan caused significant erosion in this subregion in 2004. Hurricanes Dennis, Katrina, and Rita exacerbated erosion conditions throughout northwest Florida in 2005. As is described below, recovery efforts like those implemented after Opal were planned and carried out in each area. [Hurricane Michael](#) caused major beach and dune erosion throughout this subregion in 2018.

Strategies for Inlets and Critically Eroded Beaches

St. Joseph Bay Entrance Channel, Gulf County

The St. Joseph Bay Entrance Channel is part of the federal **Port St. Joe Harbor Navigation Project**. The project was completed to the authorized channel depth of -37 ft MLW in 1962. Maintenance dredged material was placed in open water sites in the bay or Gulf, except in 1970, 1973, and 1986, when dredged material was placed on the north end or Gulf shoreline of St. Joseph Peninsula. The authorized channel depth has not been maintained since 1986. The Port Authority is

proposing port expansion and modernization to keep up with increasing domestic and international trade activity in the Panhandle.

Strategy: Place all beach compatible navigation channel dredged material on adjacent eroding beaches pursuant to Section 161.142, F.S. The nearest critically eroded beaches are Mexico Beach and St. Joseph Peninsula.

St. Joseph Peninsula, Gulf County, R69-R106

This is a 7.2-mile segment of critically eroded beach along the shoreline of St. Joseph Peninsula. Assisted recovery of the beach and dune system within the most eroded, developed areas was conducted following Hurricanes Opal and Earl. Following the 2004 hurricane season, emergency protective berms were constructed using funds from FEMA, and a dune restoration project was also completed in 2005 to supplement the emergency protective berms with additional sand and vegetation. A sand source investigation and feasibility study for this area were completed in 2006. In 2009, Gulf County completed construction of the **St. Joseph Peninsula Beach Nourishment Project** from R67 to R105.5, using 3,607,246 cy of sand from an offshore sand source. A feasibility study was conducted in 2018 to evaluate the use of beach erosion control structures to reduce sand losses at the eroding south end of the project. The feasibility study of erosion control structures is under review by the Department. Over the last seven years, the southern shoreline of the project area (R-90 to R-105.5) has experienced accelerated erosion. In 2016, approximately 800 feet of armoring was installed to protect single-family dwellings that are threatened by the erosion. Hurricane Michael caused severe erosion along the peninsula in October 2018, including a breach (R72) that developed just north of the state park entrance. The breach eventually closed on its own in May 2019. The nourishment was planned to begin construction for October 2018 but was delayed due to Hurricane Michael. Construction was completed in November 2019 from Stump Hole at the Cape and then northerly into the St. Joseph Peninsula State Park that included placement along the naturally closed breach area near Eagle Harbor. The 2019 beach project excluded sand placement at Rish Park (R85.5 to R89.5). The entire beach nourishment project placed approximately 2.6 million cy of offshore material between R70.5 to R105.5, spanning 6.6 miles of shoreline. The beach berm will descend from an elevation of +5.5 feet NAVD to +4.5 feet NAVD. A dune restoration project on the southern end of the peninsula commenced construction in February 2021 and was mostly completed before suspending construction due to permit constraints on June 1, 2021. The project was completed in October 2021, with an approximate volume of 79,000 cubic yards of sand placed in the template from

an upland source. Gulf County is pursuing a permit modification in 2022/2023 to install coastal structures (breakwaters or groins) in the vicinity of R102 to R105 to address erosion losses at the southern end of the St. Joseph Peninsula project area (Cape San Blas).

Strategy: Maintain the project through monitoring and nourishment; complete design and construct erosion control structures at the southern end of the project to reduce the erosion rate and increase the performance of the beach fill project; evaluate the feasibility of transferring beach quality sand dredged from the Port St. Joe federal navigation channel to the south end of the project.

Cape San Blas, Gulf County, R106-R111.5

This is a 1.1-mile segment of critically eroded beach along Cape San Blas that includes the Stump Hole area. A segment of County Road 30E at Stump Hole was destroyed by Hurricane Opal (1995). A non-conforming rock mound structure was constructed to protect the reconstructed access road; this was overtopped, and the road was damaged during Hurricane Earl (1998). The rock mound structure was also damaged by Hurricane Ivan (2004) and Dennis (2005). Following the effects of the 2004 hurricane season, emergency protective berms were constructed using funds from FEMA, followed by a dune restoration project in 2005 to supplement the emergency protective berms with additional sand and vegetation. Due to erosion, Eglin AFB has removed damaged and threatened buildings. Eglin AFB has now abandoned all facilities and infrastructure threatened by erosion. In addition, the Cape San Blas lighthouse was relocated inland to the City of Port St. Joe at George Core Park. Approximately 660 ft of land was lost off the south tip of Cape San Blas during Hurricane Michael (2018).

A 1,550-foot-long boulder mound structure designed to withstand a 50-year storm event was constructed by Gulf County to protect County Road C30E at Stump Hole (R105-R107) between St. Joseph Peninsula and Cape San Blas in 2012/2013. Gulf County is pursuing a permit modification in 2022/2023 to install coastal structures (breakwaters or groins) in the vicinity of R102 to R105 to address erosion losses at the southern end of the St. Joseph Peninsula project area (Cape San Blas).

Strategy: Conduct a feasibility study on erosion control alternatives; design environmentally acceptable alternatives to enhance the longevity of the beach nourishment project; monitor.

Regional Strategies for Beach and Inlet Management

Sponsors and Funding

This subregion contains the governmental entities of [Gulf County](#), [Florida Department of Transportation](#) and the [USACE](#). In addition, the northern portion of St. Joseph Peninsula is a state park managed by the [Division of Recreation and Parks](#) and the Cape San Blas area is U.S. Air Force property. Project cost estimates and schedules may be found in the [Beach Management Funding Assistance Program - Long Range Budget Plan](#).

Project Coordination

Regionalization is the funding and coordination of multiple nourishment and inlet management activities to take advantage of identifiable cost savings through economies of scale, reduced equipment mobilization and demobilization costs, and elimination of duplicative administrative tasks. An opportunity for regionalization using beach compatible sand may occur if the federal navigational channel is maintenance dredged in the future.

Environmental Protection

The protection of marine turtles, beach mice, Gulf sturgeon and shorebirds and their habitat are primary environmental concerns within this subregion. The Cape San Blas beach has been designated as critical habitat for the threatened Piping Plover by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Additionally, St. Joseph Peninsula and St. Joseph Bay Entrance Channel are sensitive areas for shorebirds. Sensitive areas for beach mice include Rish Park, St. Joe Peninsula State Park, and Eglin Air Force Base (Cape San Blas property). Within those sensitive areas, natural communities identified as primary and secondary dunes as well as scrub dunes, back dunes, coastal scrub and or coastal strand all provide essential habitat for beach mouse populations. Additionally, primary dunes and secondary dunes that occur on private lands are important for resilience of those developed lands and sustaining wildlife populations and should be maintained or restored. These areas can be subject to change as conditions change, and coordination with the FWC Regional Species Conservation Biologist for the FWC region for the project is encouraged during project development. The timing of post-storm recovery activities was restricted during the marine turtle nesting season of May 1 through October 31. Project design and method of construction may be restricted to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to the listed species and their habitat. The [St. Joseph Bay Aquatic Preserve](#) is located near many of the critically eroded areas listed in this subregion. Projects located within and

near the Aquatic Preserve boundaries require additional protection, including more stringent water quality standards than in non-aquatic preserve waters, during permitting and construction to ensure preservation of the existing conditions.

Sand Sources

Sand sources sufficient to meet the expected needs of future projects in this subregion over the next 15 years have not been identified. An offshore sand source for the next nourishment event, in fall 2019, was identified. Some upland dredged material storage sites adjacent to the Intracoastal Waterway also contain small quantities of usable beach quality sand. Most of this material is in Bay and Gulf Counties and would have to be transported by barge or truck. Coordination is recommended between Gulf County, Port St. Joe Port Authority and the USACE on joint venture opportunities in the beneficial use of dredge material for beach nourishment projects. For additional information on sand sources, the Department manages a database titled the [Regional Offshore Sand Source Inventory \(ROSSI\)](#).

Additional Information

The introduction of the state’s Strategic Beach Management Plan provides additional background information on the Department’s Beach Management Programs and includes overviews of:

- The principles and statutes followed to help guide the state’s management strategies
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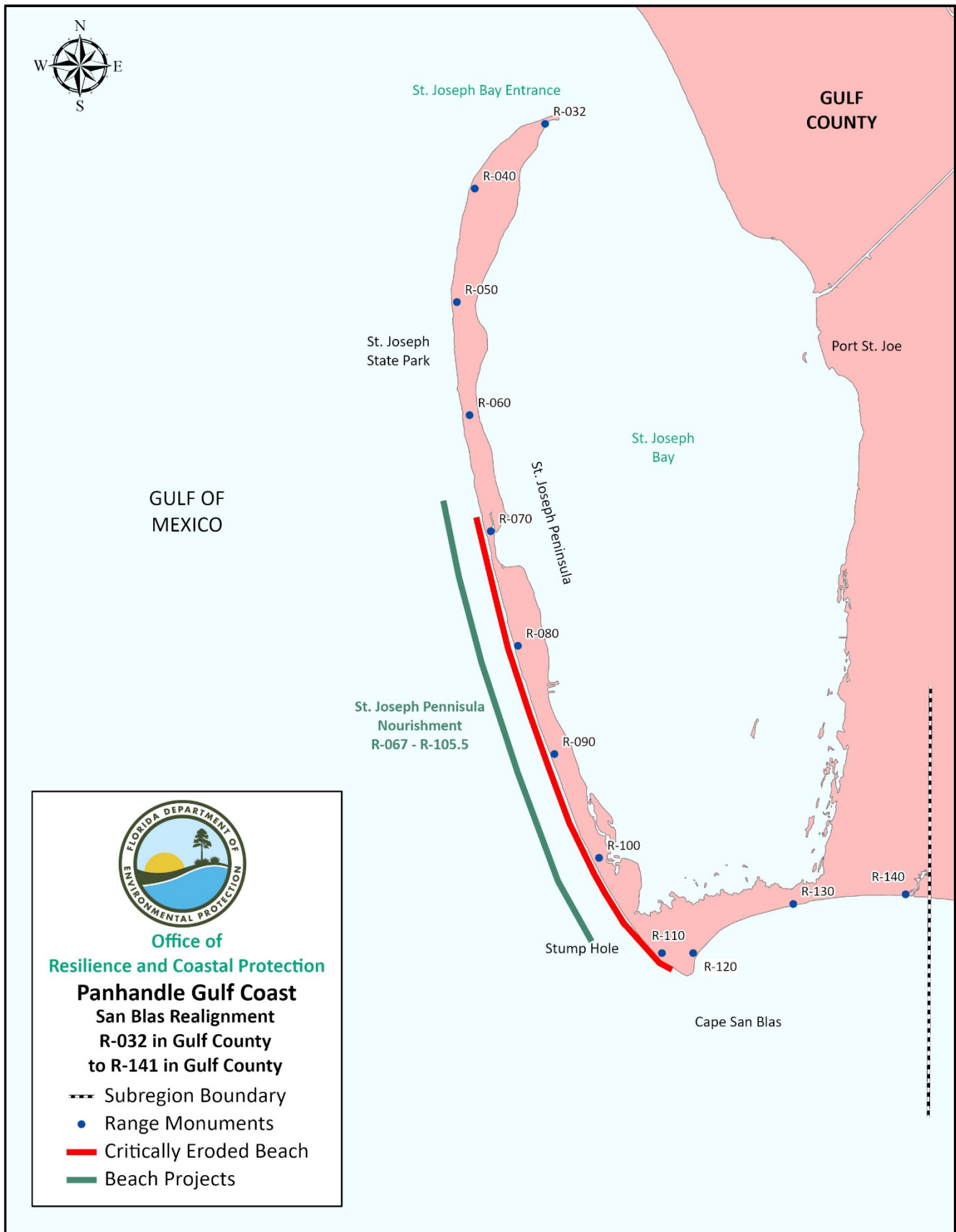


Figure 5. The San Blas Realignment subregion of the Panhandle region of Florida. View an [interactive map](#) or [COASTS imagery](#).

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Apalachicola Barriers

There are 51 miles of beaches in the **Apalachicola Barriers** subregion, which extends from R141 near Money Bayou in Gulf County to Turkey Point in Franklin County, as shown on Figure 6. There are 11.3 miles of critically eroded beaches in this subregion, none of which have been restored.

Erosion is attributed to tropical storms, hurricanes and the effects of inlets including Indian Pass, West Pass, Sikes Cut and East Pass. Erosion is also attributable to natural geomorphic changes caused by the pattern of littoral transport of sand in this subregion. The most erosive storms in recent years were Hurricane Agnes (1972), Hurricanes Elena and Kate (1985), an extratropical storm in October 1992, Tropical Storm Beryl (1994), Hurricane Opal (1995), Hurricane Earl (1998), Hurricane Dennis (2005), Hurricane Gustav (2008), Hurricane Hermine (2016), Hurricane Michael (2018) and Tropical Storm Fred (2021).

In 1995, Hurricane Opal caused extensive erosion throughout northwest Florida, but only had a distant fringe impact on this subregion. In 2005, Hurricane Dennis caused major beach and dune erosion throughout this subregion, resulting in 7.4 additional miles of beach being designated as critically eroded. During the spring and summer of 2006, dunes were restored along 4.2 miles of St. George Island State Park shoreline (R106-R128.5). [Hurricane Michael](#) caused major beach and dune erosion throughout this subregion in 2018.

Strategies for Inlets and Critically Eroded Beaches

St. Vincent Island, Franklin County, V334-V339

This is a 0.9-mile segment of critically eroded beach on eastern St. Vincent Island near Sambur Slough. This segment is in the St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This segment of beach has been substantially lost as the shoreline has eroded back into the maritime forest. Hurricane Michael (2018) caused major morphological changes to the beach in this area, including the Flag Islands south of St. Vincent Island.

Strategy: Monitor

Cape St. George, Franklin County, R18.5-R22.5

This is a 0.6-mile segment of critically eroded beach on Cape St. George, managed by the Department's Florida Coastal Office as part of the Apalachicola Bay National Estuarine Research

Reserve. The historic pre-Civil War lighthouse built in 1852 was in the nearshore after the shoreline receded during Hurricane Dennis (2005). With the increased scour from Dennis and subsequent minor storms, the lighthouse finally toppled into the Gulf of Mexico on October 21, 2005. The lighthouse was subsequently removed and rebuilt on St. George Island in 2008 at the county park near R84. Marine turtle habitat just west (R18-R21) of the former lighthouse site is currently threatened where the beach has eroded and become narrow.

Strategy: Monitor with vertically controlled aerial photography and physical surveys.

Bob Sikes Cut, Franklin County, R51-52

Bob Sikes Cut is a federally owned inlet with a federally maintained navigation channel extending from Apalachicola to the Gulf of Mexico. The **Apalachicola Bay Navigation Project** was authorized by Congress in 1952, allowing for opening of the new inlet, which was dredged by local interests in 1954. The new inlet was named Bob Sikes Cut on May 10, 1955, by the Florida Senate after the late U.S. Congressman. Due to rapid shoaling in the entrance channel, two granite jetties were constructed in 1956, extending approximately 500 ft into the Gulf beyond the beach. Between 1958 and 1975, material in the amount of 691,940 cy was dredged (approximately 40,000 cy/yr.); however, the quantity of beach placement is unknown. Since 1975, maintenance dredging of Bob Sikes Cut has occurred on an infrequent basis, with dredged material placed on the inlet shorelines, within a nearshore disposal site, or on the beach west of the inlet. Hurricane Dennis (2005) severely impacted the inlet through shoaling and by breaching the east and west jetties from their connecting shorelines. These breaches had also occurred during Hurricanes Elena and Kate in 1985. During an emergency project, the USACE dredged the inlet in 2005 and used the material to close the breaches. In 2006 a similar emergency project was completed to maintain the navigable depth. Bob Sikes Cut was dredged in early 2016 by the USACE and approximately 42,000 cy of material was placed in the inlet shoreline disposal area on the west side of the inlet, north of the west jetty. The Department has not adopted an inlet management plan for Bob Sikes Cut. Hurricane Michael (2018) severely impacted the inlet through shoaling and by breaching the east and west jetties from their connecting shorelines. The beach east of the cut/inlet was designated critically eroded by the Department in 2019. The USACE dredged the cut/ inlet in April 2022.

Strategy: Bypass all beach quality maintenance dredged material to the adjacent eroded beaches.

St. George Island Plantation, Franklin County, R52-R59.6

This is a 1.7-mile segment of critically eroded beach from R52-R59.6 on St. George Island, just east of Bob Sikes Cut. This area underwent major erosional impacts from Hurricane Michael (2018).

Strategy: Conduct dune restoration when necessary following storms; conduct a feasibility study to determine if sand from inlet can be used for beach nourishment; monitor.

St. George Island State Park, Franklin County, R106-R128.5

This is a 4.5-mile segment of critically eroded beach along the eastern Gulf shoreline of St. George Island within the state park. Assisted recovery of the dune system within the most eroded areas was conducted following Hurricanes Elena, Kate, Opal, and Earl. In 1986 and 1996, the park road was reconstructed following damages caused by Hurricanes Elena and Kate (1985) and Opal (1995).

Following Opal, a portion of the roadway (from R110-R127.6) was relocated 200 to 400 ft landward, where access around wetland areas was available. Hurricane Dennis (2005) severely impacted St. George Island State Park, resulting in the entire developed segment of the park shoreline being designated critically eroded. From July 2005 through the summer of 2006, park restoration proceeded, including repairing the roads and beach accesses, reconstructing a barrier dune system seaward of the road, and reconstructing park buildings further inland from the beach. In September 2008, Hurricane Gustav inflicted major beach and dune erosion between R114 (East Slough) and R129 (Sugar Hill), causing a retreat of 45 to 75 ft of the vegetation line and a loss of 100,000-150,000 cy of material from the beach berm and dune.

Strategy: Conduct dune restoration when necessary following storms; monitor with vertically controlled aerial photography and physical surveys.

Dog Island, Franklin County, R168-R187.2

This is a 3.6-mile segment of critically eroded beach along the eastern Gulf shoreline of Dog Island. Dog Island has been severely eroded by all the major storms affecting Franklin County. In 2005, Hurricane Dennis severely impacted Dog Island, resulting in 2.3 additional miles of beach being designated as critically eroded. Hurricane Michael (2018) caused major beach and dune erosion.

Strategy: Monitor

Regional Strategies for Beach and Inlet Management

Sponsors and Funding

This subregion contains the governmental entities of [Gulf County](#), [Franklin County](#), and the [USACE](#). In addition, [St. Vincent Island](#) is a national wildlife refuge, Little St. George Island is a state preserve, and the eastern portion of [St. George Island](#) is a state park. Project cost estimates and schedules may be found in the [Beach Management Funding Assistance Program - Long Range Budget Plan](#).

Project Coordination

Regionalization is the funding and coordination of multiple nourishment and inlet management activities to take advantage of identifiable cost savings through economies of scale, reduced equipment mobilization and demobilization costs, and elimination of duplicative administrative tasks.

Opportunities in this subregion include this area being an appropriate candidate for placement of sand transferred from dredged material management areas on the Apalachicola River.

Environmental Protection

The protection of marine turtles, seagrass, Gulf sturgeon and shorebirds and their habitat are primary environmental concerns within this subregion. Sensitive areas for shorebirds include St. Vincent Island, [Flag Island](#), Bob Sikes Cut, St. George Island, East Pass, and Dog Island. Indian Pass is an important winter foraging site for federally listed shorebirds. These areas are subject to change as conditions change, and coordination with [FWC shorebird staff](#) is encouraged during project development. The timing of post-storm recovery activities was restricted during the marine turtle nesting season of May 1 through October 31. Project design and method of construction are restricted to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to the state and federally listed species and their habitats. The [St. Joseph Bay Aquatic Preserve](#), the [Apalachicola Bay Aquatic Preserve](#) and [National Estuarine Research Reserves - Apalachicola](#) are located near many of the critically eroded areas listed in this subregion. Projects located within and near the Aquatic Preserve boundaries require additional protection, including stricter water quality standards than in non-aquatic preserve waters, during permitting and construction to ensure preservation of the existing conditions.

Sand Sources

Conduct sand searches for storm recovery work. For additional information on sand sources, the

Department manages a database titled the [Regional Offshore Sand Source Inventory \(ROSSI\)](#).

Additional Information

The introduction of the state’s Strategic Beach Management Plan provides additional background information on the Department’s Beach Management Programs and includes overviews of:

- The principles and statutes followed to help guide the state’s management strategies
- Comprehensive list of Florida’s inlets
- The miles of critically eroded beaches under active management
- Statewide sand source studies
- Statewide monitoring programs
- Innovative technologies examined
- Basic suggestions for emergency response plans
- Beaches, Economics and Tourism

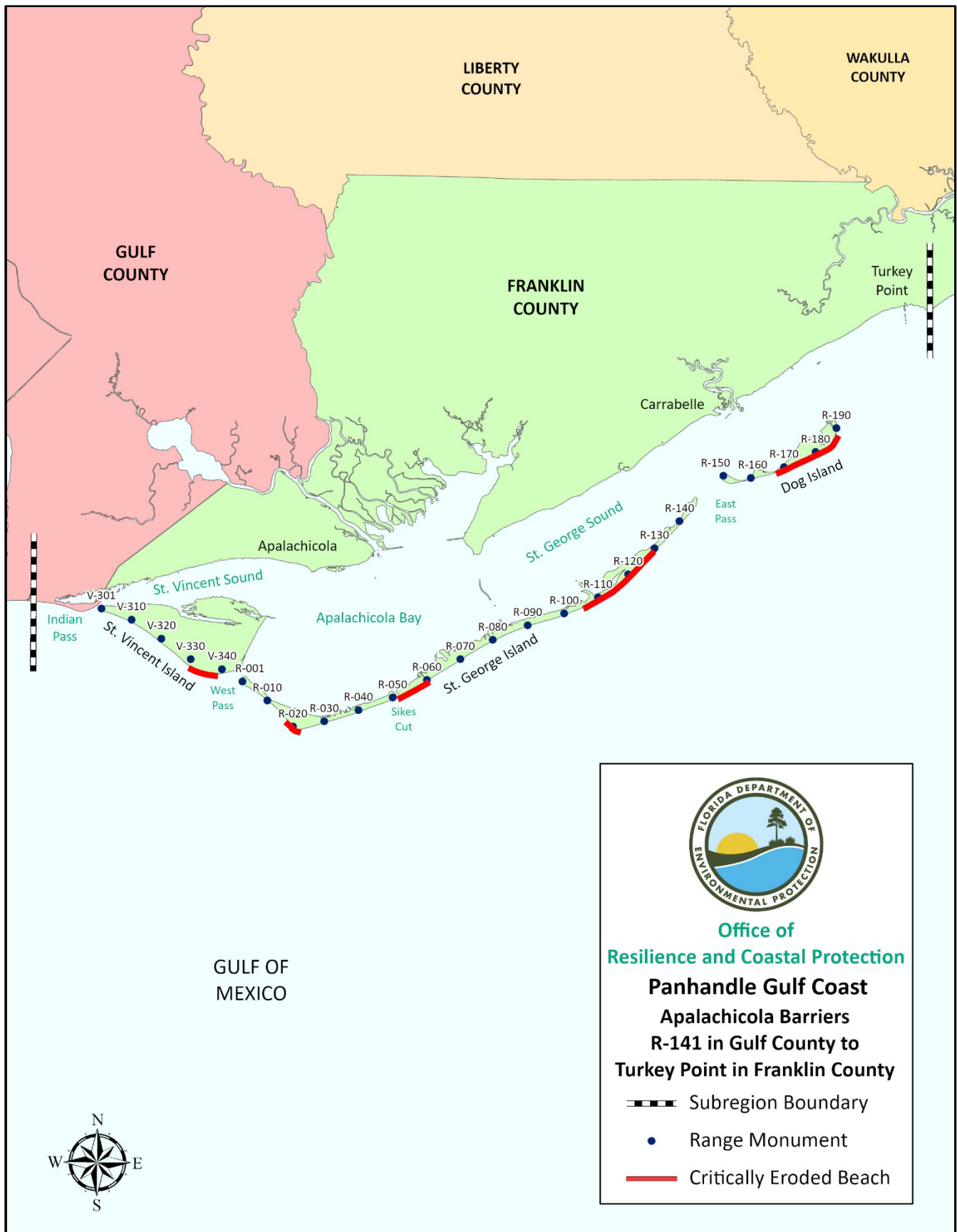


Figure 6. The Apalachicola Barriers subregion of the Panhandle region of Florida. View an [interactive map](#) or [COASTS imagery](#).

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Ochlockonee Barriers

There are 22.1 miles of beaches in the **Ochlockonee Barriers** subregion, which extends from Turkey Point in Franklin County to the St. Marks River in Wakulla County, as shown on Figure 7. There is a total of 2.8 miles of critically eroded beaches in this subregion (1.5 miles in Franklin County and 1.3 miles in Wakulla County), none of which have been restored.

Erosion is attributed to tropical storms, hurricanes, and natural geomorphic changes caused by the pattern of littoral transport of sand in this subregion. The most erosive storms in recent years were Hurricane Agnes (1972), Hurricanes Elena and Kate (1985), an extratropical storm in October 1992, Tropical Storm Beryl (1994), Hurricanes Allison and Opal (1995), Hurricane Earl (1998), Hurricane Dennis (2005), Tropical Storm Debby (2012), Hurricane Hermine (2016), and Hurricane Michael (2018).

Strategies for Inlets and Critically Eroded Beaches

Area Wide Projects

In 1963, construction of a federal navigation channel from Panacea Harbor through Dickerson Bay to Apalachee Bay was completed. The channel has required infrequent maintenance dredging. The federal **St. Marks River Navigation Project** provides a channel from Apalachee Bay to a turning basin at St. Marks. The channel was last dredged in 1994.

Alligator Point (Southwest Cape), Franklin County, R210-R216

This is a 1.1-mile segment of critically eroded beach on the east end of Alligator Point between the Southwest Cape and Lighthouse Point on St. James Island. Extensive armoring has been constructed seaward of the private properties and County Road 370. This area was severely impacted by Hurricanes Elena and Kate in 1985, which destroyed coastal protection structures. Following these storms, the revetment protecting County Road 370 was constructed using federal and state disaster funds. Tropical Storm Beryl in 1994 caused further damage, resulting in emergency repairs and a revetment extension.

Hurricane Earl caused further damage in 1998. Hurricane Dennis caused severe erosion and damage in this area in 2005, resulting in the abandonment of the road between R212 and R213.

Disaster recovery funds were used to sponsor a feasibility study of beach erosion control alternatives

for Alligator Point and Lighthouse Point in 2000. The recommendations of this study included the placement of beach fill and construction of T-groins. Franklin County initiated project design and conducted a sand search in 2006 to place approximately 1.7 million cy of material at Alligator Point and Lighthouse Point. The proposed **Alligator Point Beach Restoration Project** included a dune feature with a height of +13 ft and a berm +5 ft (NAVD) and 80 to 240 ft wide from R210 to R225. The project was authorized by the Department in May 2011, but the county withdrew its support for the project in response to local interests. Hurricanes Hermine (2016) and Michael (2018) caused major erosion and damage along the beaches of Alligator Point.

Strategy: Design and construct a beach restoration project; monitor.

Lighthouse Point, Franklin County, R220-R222

The southeast end of St. James Island is critically eroded and threatening residential development, extending north from Lighthouse Point for 0.4 -mile. Hurricanes Elena and Kate (1985), Tropical Storm Debby (2012), Hurricane Hermine (2016) and Hurricane Michael (2018) caused major damage and erosion, resulting in the inland relocation of County Road 370 between R222 and R225. With the inland relocation of the road, this segment was delisted and no longer considered critical. The authorized Alligator Point Beach Restoration Project would have included the remaining critically eroded beach north of Lighthouse Point; however, the county withdrew its support in response to local interests. Most of the threatened properties in this segment have recently been armored with bulkheads.

Strategy: Emergency nourishment by truck haul placement following major storms; monitor through vertically controlled aerial photography and physical surveys.

Mashes Sands County Park, Wakulla County

Mashes Sands is an approximately two-mile long natural barrier beach that is truncated by two tidal inlets that connect Gulf waters to natural lagoons and wetlands. South of the inlet on the east shoreline of Mashes Sands is a 0.3-mile segment of critically eroded beach along the Mashes County Park shoreline located adjacent to the entrance to Ochlockonee Bay. North of the inlet, non-critical erosion continues for approximately 0.4 miles, and the remaining beach is accretional. All the major storms that have impacted this subregion have caused major erosion along Mashes Sands beaches.

A feasibility study was completed in 2008 that recommended a limited beach restoration project using

sand trucked in from inland sources or from a shoaled canal entrance on Ochlockonee Bay. Terminal groin construction by the county has substantially resolved the canal shoaling problem. The county has not obtained funding to initiate a beach restoration project.

Strategy: Implement the recommendations of the feasibility study to conduct a small-scale beach restoration project using sand from upland borrow sources or from maintenance dredging of an adjoining canal entrance in accordance with the feasibility study; monitor.

Shell Point, Wakulla County

This is a 1.0-mile segment of critically eroded beach on Shell Point. Hurricane Kate in 1985 severely damaged this area, resulting in extensive armoring (rock revetments and bulkheads) being constructed. All major storms that have impacted this subregion have caused major erosion along Shell Point beaches. A feasibility study was completed in 2008. The Shell Point Beach Nourishment Project is an early restoration project that is listed in the *Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill: Programmatic and Phase III Early Restoration Plan* and *Early Restoration Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement* and was selected by the Deepwater Horizon NRDA Trustees for implementation. The beach restoration project completed construction in April 2018 and placed approximately 2600 cy of sand from an upland sand source on the beach/dune at the county park, planted native plants, and constructed five oyster shell breakwaters.

Strategy: Maintain the small-scale beach nourishment project using upland sand in accordance with the feasibility study; monitor.

Regional Strategies for Beach and Inlet Management

Sponsors and Funding

This subregion contains the governmental entities of [Franklin County](#), [Wakulla County](#) and the [USACE](#). In addition, Bald Point State Park is managed by the [Division of Recreation and Parks](#), and the [St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge](#) is managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior. Project cost estimates and schedules may be found in the [Beach Management Funding Assistance Program - Long Range Budget Plan](#). The Shell Point Beach Nourishment Project is an early restoration project selected by the [NRDA Trustees](#) for implementation. See the latest [NRDA latest updates](#) for the [Deepwater Horizon](#) projects (94 in Florida) and their [interactive maps](#).

Project Coordination

Regionalization is the funding and coordination of multiple nourishment and inlet management activities to take advantage of identifiable cost savings through economies of scale, reduced equipment mobilization and demobilization costs, and elimination of duplicative administrative tasks. At this time, no significant opportunities for coordinating projects in this subregion have been identified.

Environmental Protection

The protection of marine turtles, seagrasses, Gulf sturgeon, and shorebirds and their habitat are primary environmental concerns within this subregion. The timing of post-storm recovery activities was not restricted during the marine turtle nesting season of May 1 through October 31. Project design and method of construction are restricted to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to the state and federally listed species and their habitat. The [Alligator Harbor Aquatic Preserve](#) is in the vicinity of this subregion. Projects located within and near the Aquatic Preserve boundaries require additional protection, including more stringent water quality standards than in non-aquatic preserve waters, during permitting and construction to ensure preservation of the existing conditions.

Sand Sources

Sufficient sand sources have been identified for the Alligator Point Beach Restoration Project. In the future, sand searches should be performed for storm recovery work. For additional information on sand sources, the Department manages a database titled the [Regional Offshore Sand Source Inventory \(ROSSI\)](#).

Additional Information

The introduction of the state’s Strategic Beach Management Plan provides additional background information on the Department’s Beach Management Programs and includes overviews of:

- The principles and statutes followed to help guide the state’s management strategies
- Comprehensive list of Florida’s inlets
- The miles of critically eroded beaches under active management
- Statewide sand source studies
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- Innovative technologies examined
- Basic suggestions for emergency response plans
- Beaches, Economics and Tourism

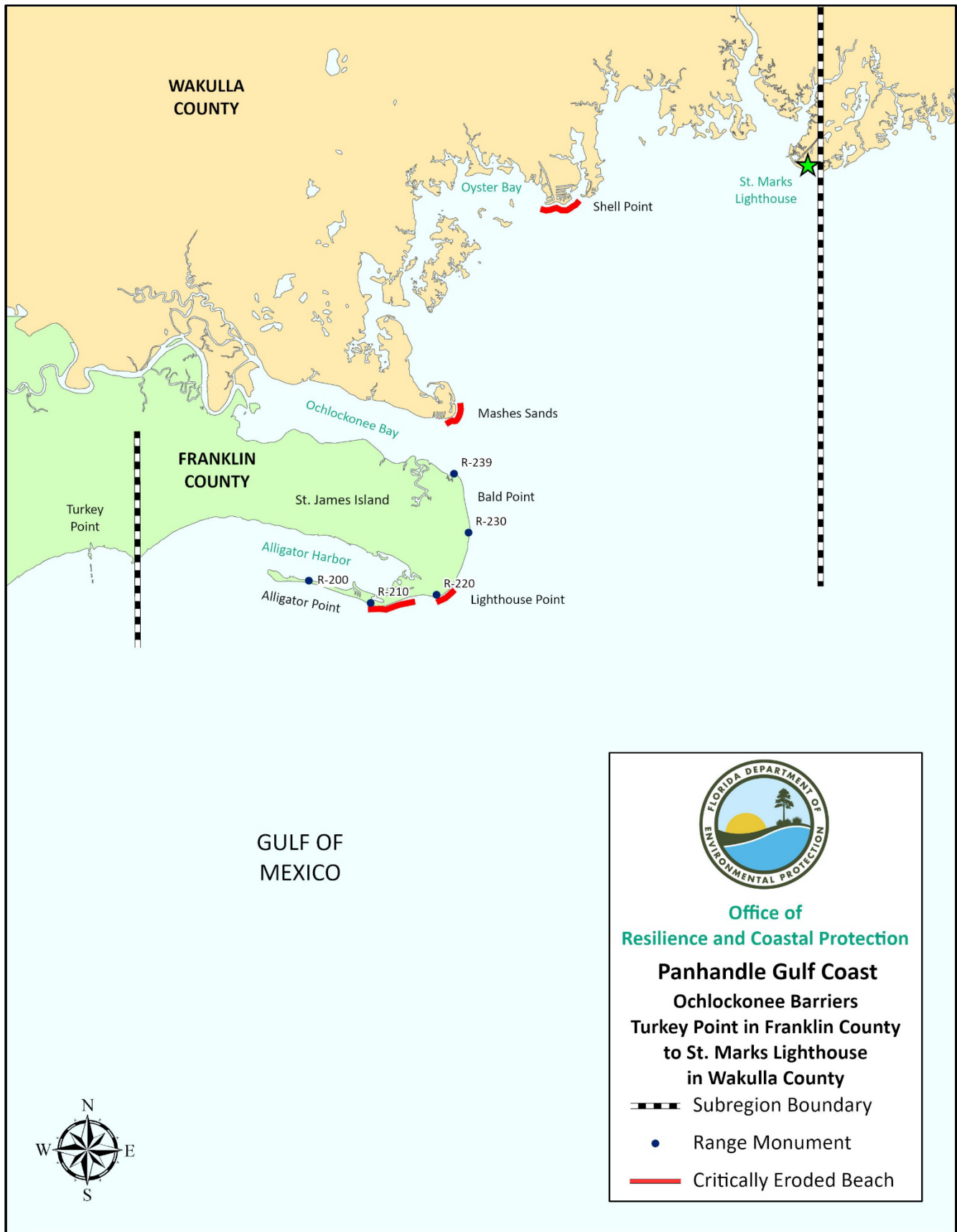


Figure 7. The Ochlockonee Barriers subregion of the Panhandle region of Florida. View an [interactive map](#) or [COASTS imagery](#).

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Appendix - Acronyms

Acronyms associated with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Strategic Beach Management Plan and coastal management activities:

Coastal Associations Acronyms:

- ASBPA – American Shore & Beach Preservation Association
- FSBPA – Florida Shore & Beach Preservation Association
- DCA – Dredging Contractors of America

Federal Agencies Acronyms:

- BOEM – Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
- CBRA – Coastal Barrier Resources Act
- CHL – Coastal and Hydraulics Laboratory
- CIRP – Coastal Inlets Research Program
- CMS – Coastal Modeling System
- CSRMS – Coastal Storm Risk Management
- CZMA – Coastal Zone Management Act
- EA – Environmental Assessment
- EIS – Environmental Impact Statement
- ERDC - Engineer Research and Development Center
- FCCE – Flood Control and Coastal Emergency
- FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency
- FRF – Field Research Facility
- GRR – General Reevaluation Report
- HCPs – Habitat Conservation Plans
- HSDR – Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction
- LPP – Locally Preferred Plan
- LRR – Limited Reevaluation Report
- MMP – Marine Minerals Program
- NAVD 88 – North American Vertical Datum of 1988
- NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act
- NGVD 29 – National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929
- NHC – National Hurricane Center

- NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- NPS – National Park Service
- NWR – National Wildlife Refuge
- ODMDS - Ocean Dredge Material Disposal Site
- OCS – Outer Continental Shelf
- RSM – Regional Sediment Management
- SAJ – Jacksonville District, South Atlantic Division
- SPP – Shore Protection Project
- SLC – Sea Level Change
- SLR – Sea Level Rise
- TSP – Tentatively Selected Plan
- USACE – United States Army Corps of Engineers
- USFWS – United States Fish and Wildlife Service
- WRDA – Water Resources Development Act

State Agencies Acronyms:

- AIWW - Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway
- APP – Aquatic Preserve Program
- BIPP – Beaches, Inlets and Ports Program
- BMA – Beach Management Agreement
- BMFA – Beaches and Mines Funding Assistance Program
- BMP – Best Management Practices
- BSM – Bureau of Survey and Mapping
- CCCL – Coastal Construction Control Line
- COASTS – Collection of Aerials and Shoreline Trends Systems
- DEP – Department of Environmental Protection
- DMMA – Dredge Material Management Area
- DSL – Division of State Lands
- DWRM – Division of Water Resource Management
- ECL – Erosion Control Line
- EOC – Emergency Operation Center
- FAC – Florida Administrative Code
- FAR – Florida Administrative Register
- FDEM – Florida Department of Emergency Management

- FDFS – Florida Department of Financial Services
- FDOT – Florida Department of Transportation
- FHCF - Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund
- FIND – Florida Inland Navigation District
- FPS – Florida Park Service
- FS – Florida Statutes
- FWC – Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission
- HCP – Habitat Conservation Plan
- IMP – Inlet Management Plan
- IWW – Intracoastal Waterway
- JCP – Joint Coastal Permit
- LABINS – Land Boundary Information System
- LGFR – Local Government Funding Request
- LRBP – Long Range Budget Plans
- MHWL – Mean High Water Line
- MLLW – Mean Lower Low Water
- MLW – Mean Low Water
- MOA – Memorandum of Agreements
- MOU – Memorandum of Understandings
- NERR – National Estuarine Research Reserve
- OCULUS – DEP’s Electronic Document Management System
- OGC – Office of General Counsel
- ORCP – Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection
- R – Range or Reference Monument/Survey Marker
- RCP – Resilience and Coastal Protection
- ROSSI – Regional Offshore Sand Source Inventory
- SAND – Sediment Assessment and Needs Determination Study
- SBMP – Strategic Beach Management Plan
- SOP – Standard Operating Procedures
- SOW – Scope of Work
- TAC – Technical Advisory Committee
- TIITF – Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund
- WCIND – West Coast Inland Navigation District