

Funding Approved for Water Quality in Apalachicola Bay

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The Northwest Florida Water Management District Governing Board last week approved up to \$462,000 in grant funding for the City of Carrabelle to implement a stormwater retrofit project that will improve water quality in the Apalachicola Bay watershed.

The Marine Street Stormwater Retrofit project will treat stormwater that discharges into the Carrabelle River and ultimately into St. George Sound, part of the Apalachicola Bay system.

“The District continues to partner with local governments to improve water quality throughout the Apalachicola Bay system,” said Executive Director Jon Steverson. “The District remains committed to working to protect the environment—and ultimately the economy—of the Apalachicola region.”

The stormwater retrofit project consists of two primary components designed to improve stormwater quality before it discharges into the Carrabelle River—stormwater conveyance improvements and a bioretention system. The project will reduce stormwater runoff pollutants using a “treatment train” approach, which consists of pre-treatment to remove solid and larger pollutants followed by bioretention treatment to further remove dissolved pollutants and nutrients.

The project will also help improve drainage along Marine Street, a waterfront boardwalk area that is important to local tourism and economic development, which is currently served by inadequate drainage facilities.

The District continues to work with local governments, state and federal agencies and other partners toward the restoration of the Apalachicola River and Bay. The District’s 2013-2014 budget includes a total of \$4.7 million for Apalachicola River and Bay watershed protection and restoration, including \$3 million proposed by Governor Rick Scott and approved by the Florida Legislature as part of the state’s Fiscal Year 2013-2014 budget. The funding for the Marine Street Stormwater Retrofit Project is allocated by the District through its Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) program.