Hello Representative Shoaf, Griffitts, Senator Simon, Senator Trumbull

Panhandle Clean Water Initiative Case #170127

I am writing today to solicit your help in getting a bill passed that would require FDEP to cooperate with the Mobile District Corps of Engineers to help us with the Problems caused by the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway here in Gulf, Franklin and Bay Counties.

The facts are in, the data is indisputable.

The diversion of 2.06 BILLION gallons of Apalachicola River water and sediment away from the oyster beds of Apalachicola Bay EACH DAY, and its unnatural and harmful discharge into the seagrass beds of St. Joe and St. Andrew Bays is well documented.

The unnatural and harmful discharge of 1.6 BILLION gallons of Apalachicola River Water and sediment into St. Joe Bay EACH DAY is well documented.

The unnatural and harmful discharge of 600MILLION gallons of Apalachicola River Water and sediment into St. Andrew Bay EACH DAY is well documented.

The breach of the historic watershed boundary between the St. Andrew/St. Joe Bay Watershed and the Apalachicola River Watershed by the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (the Canal) is well documented.

The reversal of the historic flow of the Jackson River caused by the dredging of the GIWW and the destruction of the freshwater flora and Fauna of lake Wimico is well documented.

I can provide you with copies of the studies referenced in a fact sheet if you need them.

This bill would require 500 thousand dollars per year for three years (total of 1.5 million max) to pay the State’s portion of the 216 feasibility study mandated by Federal statutes to involve USACE as partners in this project.

Please do not believe anyone at FDEP that says they are doing anything about our problem with the diversion and discharge caused by the GIWW.

Since the GIWW is a federally managed navigable waterway the ONLY ENTITY WITH JURISDICTION involving this waterway is the USACE.

USACE has indicated a willingness to partner with the State to study this problem and develop and implement solutions. The Corps has produced an Initial Advisory Report on this issue (See 216 IA attachment)

There is a very specific, federally mandated way forward(216 study) to involve the expertise and resources of the USACE for this problem and FDEP continues to be unwilling to cooperate.

We have been meeting with FDEP about this issue for 5 years now, and NOTHING HAS HAPPENED.

FDEP IS WASTING PRECIOUS TIME AND FLORIDA TAXPAYER MONEY!

We have letters of support for this project from the Bay, Gulf and Franklin County Board of Commissioners, as well as the cities of Port St. Joe, Apalachicola, and Mexico Beach.

These Bays and beaches are our economic lifeblood in Franklin, Gulf and Bay Counties and FDEP is being childish and negligent with their excuses and unwillingness to cooperate.

This is the same kind of bureaucratic nonsense that You, the Governor, and our President campaigned against.

Please Help Us!