

RESOLUTION 2003.01

RESOLUTION OF THE PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA, BARRIER ISLAND GOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL (BIG-C), STRONGLY URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO SAVE THE \$30 MILLION ANNUAL BEACH MANAGEMENT TRUST FUND CONTRIBUTION TO FULLY FUND THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION'S BEACH EROSION CONTROL PROJECT PRIORITY LIST FOR FY 03-04 AS PROVIDED FOR IN CHAPTERS 161 AND 201 OF THE FLORIDA STATUTES AND FURTHER REQUESTING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO OPPOSE ANY LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS TO AMEND EXISTING LAW WHICH ALLOCATES \$30 MILLION ANNUALLY IN CERTAIN DOCUMENTARY STAMP TAX REVENUES TO THE ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION TRUST FUND FOR THE PURPOSES OF BEACH PRESERVATION AND REPAIR; AND BY PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Florida's number one tourist attraction is its beaches; and

WHEREAS, beach related tourism has a \$41.6 billion impact on the state's economy; and

WHEREAS, beaches contribute over \$1 billion in tourist-related sales tax revenues annually; and

WHEREAS, 442,000 jobs are created by beach-related tourism, with an \$8 billion payroll resulting from additional spending related to Florida's beaches; and

WHEREAS, over half of Florida's 825 miles of sandy beaches are experiencing erosion, with 333 miles designated by the Department of Environmental Protection as critically-eroded; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature, pursuant to Chapter 161, Florida Statutes, has declared beach erosion to be a serious threat to the economic and general welfare of the state and its residents; and has further declared it to be a necessary responsibility to preserve Florida's beaches and make provisions for beach nourishment projects; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature, in 1998, pursuant to statute 161.091 and statute 201.15 (11), provided that designated funding of \$30 million annually shall be deposited in the Ecosystem Management and Restoration Trust Fund, and that documentary stamp tax revenues shall be the source of that funding; and

WHEREAS, this \$30 million annual allocation has enabled Florida to develop a consistent, adequately-funded, priority driven, long range management program to address critical erosion; and

WHEREAS, this program represents a cost-effective intergovernmental partnership which leverages a dollar for dollar local government match, and up to 65% of the total project cost from Federal sources.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA, BARRIER ISLAND GOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL (BIG-C), strongly urges the Florida Legislature to fully fund the Department of Environmental Protection's beach erosion control project priority list for FY 03-04 with \$30 million as provided for in Chapters 161 and 201 of the Florida Statutes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA, BARRIER ISLAND GOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL (BIG-C), respectfully requests that the Florida Legislature oppose any legislative efforts to amend existing law which allocates \$30 million annually in certain documentary stamp tax revenues to the Ecosystem Management and Restoration Trust Fund for the purposes of beach preservation and repair.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

The foregoing Resolution was offered during Regular Session of the Pinellas County, Florida, Barrier Islands Governmental Council (BIG-C), on the 26th day of February 2003, by Mayor Leon Atkinson who moved its adoption, and said motion was seconded by Mayor Harold Radcliffe and upon roll call the vote was unanimous.

J. J. Beyrouti
President

ATTEST:

Tom De Cesare
Secretary