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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State delivers on pledge to provide Flagler County with \$35 million for dunes restoration, no local match

June 21, 2023 – Flagler County received good news Tuesday when the Florida Department of Environmental Protection notified it that it was allocating an additional \$18.06 million for dunes restoration.

“We will receive the amendment after July 1 (the beginning of the state’s new fiscal year),” said County Engineer Faith Alkhatib. “And no local match. We have a really great relationship with FDEP and have been working closely with them – especially in the aftermath of the storms when (FDEP) Secretary Shawn Hamilton came here to assess the damages.”

The amendment she was referring to is to the \$17 million already allocated to Flagler County this past December as part of Gov. Ron DeSantis’s \$106 million Recovery Plan following Hurricane Ian and Hurricane Nicole. The plan included a \$35-million pledge to the county through the FDEP.

Flagler County is to receive other monies, notably \$12 million from the Federal Emergency Management Agency within “Category B” that covers “emergency protective measures” and is working to get another \$6 million for “Category G” that covers “parks, recreational, and other facilities.”

“This will allow us to do a major renourishment project on 11.6 miles of our beaches,” Alkhatib said. “We will be able to do a dredging operation – like the Army Corps project – instead of a trucking operation, which is not as cost effective.”

Such a project will have to be designed and permitted, a process that will likely take 18 months to complete before dredging sand from an offshore borrow pit to renourish the dunes.

“This is wonderful news, and I would be remiss if I didn’t express my heartfelt appreciation for the remarkable dedication and hard work displayed by our exceptional engineering team,” said County Administrator Heidi Petito. “Successfully acquiring the much-needed funding for our beach restoration project is a testament to the expertise, innovation, and unwavering commitment that each one of them brings to our organization. It is not

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just a reflection of their skills as engineers but also a testament to their ability to articulate the value and impact of our projects.”

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