FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

HENDERSON BEACH STATE PARK ADMINISTRATION
17000 EMERALD COAST PARKWAY
DESTIN, FLORIDA 32541

RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

CARLOS LOPEZ-CANTERA
LT. GOVERNOR

JONATHAN P. STEVERSON
SECRETARY

May 7, 2015

Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners:

RE: Letter of Support for Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance of Northwest Florida State College

Dear Board Members:

AS Director of Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Park and Henderson Beach State Park, I would like to express support for the efforts of the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA) to deliver experiential science-education curriculum that leads to student-led habitat restoration in our Choctawhatchee Bay watershed. In the past, CBA has partnered with the Parks to allow students to interact with our local water resources and have a direct role in onsite shoreline and dune restoration. For this new proposal, we look forward to working with CBA to continue restoration activities at Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou and Henderson Beach State Parks.

We are enthusiastic about the proposed expansion of the CBA's Grasses in Classes and Dunes in Schools programs, as it will increase watershed awareness among Okaloosa County's schoolchildren, while providing students with hands-on science education that meets state science education standards.

I would strongly encourage the Commission to contribute funding assistance to help the CBA to continue its efforts to foster the next generation of watershed stewards and restore valuable coastal and estuarine habitat. Based on our past experience, I am confident that such funding will lead to successful habitat restoration, increased watershed awareness and long-term public benefits.

Sincerely,

Dan Laird
Park Manager