

Lee County Board of County Commissioners
Attn: Commissioner Kevin Ruane
P.O. Box 398
Fort Myers, Florida 33902

RE: Request Hurricane Ian Rehabilitation Assistance for Captiva Beaches

Dear Chairman Ruane:

As you are aware, the Captiva Island beach has received catastrophic damage from Hurricanes Ian, Helene, and Milton. The Captiva Erosion Prevention District (CEPD) is seeking restoration of Captiva Beaches through an island-wide nourishment project.

Evaluation from CEPD's engineering firm, APTIM, has determined the need for placement of 800,000 cubic yards of sand from Hurricane Ian and over 300,000 cubic yards of sand from Hurricanes Helene and Milton to repair the beaches to pre-storm conditions. The damage has caused the beach to return to conditions not seen since before the initial project in 1988. The goal of this project is to provide enhanced storm protection infrastructure and preparedness for the Winter 2025 tourist season. A damaged beach is continuing to have a negative impact on Captiva businesses.

Prior to Hurricanes Helene and Milton, the CEPD Board selected a bid with Great Lakes Dredge and Dock that will start no earlier than May 1st, 2025. The bid was for 800,000 cubic yards with an option to increase or decrease the sand volume by 25% while maintaining the quoted unit cost. APTIM performed a post-storm analysis for Hurricanes Helene and Milton, and to meet the engineers' recommendations the project will now require over 1.1 million cubic yards of sand. This may raise the project cost to approximately \$35 million, exceeding the original bid and funding opportunities available to the district.

The Captiva Erosion Prevention District has exhausted alternative funding avenues. The Army Corps of Engineers has declined to participate in a restoration project on Captiva due to easement issues based on the current interpretation of the Water Resources Defense Act and limited public access to the beach. FEMA has declined to provide assistance to Captiva's beach because Captiva is a federally authorized and corps constructed beach. CEPD has secured some funding from FDEP and SB-4a in the amount of \$13,243,200 through grant 23LE7. Additionally, we have secured cost share funding from the FDEP at 21.07% of the remainder of the project after 23LE7 is utilized through grant 25LE1. Unfortunately, this leaves a shortfall that the CEPD is unable to fund through its reserves alone.

The CEPD completed the last island-wide nourishment project in 2021. Many of the property owners are still paying on their assessment for that project. To minimize exposure to the property owners of Captiva with a second project assessment within three years, we respectfully request funding assistance from Lee County aligned with

the historic calculation, plus an additional \$10,000,000 one-time cost share reduction to cover the increased costs of this unprecedented situation.

The point of contact for this request is:

John Riegert
Deputy Director
(239) 472-2472
jriegert@mycepd.com

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.
Sincerely,

Chairman, on behalf of the Captiva Erosion Prevention District Board of Commissioners