

**Ponte Vedra Beach Management Project
St. Johns County, FL**

NORTH COUNTY - BEACH ACCESS PLAN

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In support of the recently announced St. Johns County, Florida - Coastal Storm Risk Management (CRSM) Project Feasibility Study (North Ponte Vedra Beach) by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Jacksonville District, this document describes the County beach access plan for the study area. The County has long established that the public has the right of access to the beach and a right to use the beach for recreation and other customary purposes, as described in County Ordinance 2007-19, Section 2. Building upon those rights, this beach access plan (a) describes the current condition of public beach access following the Federal CSRM Project guidelines and (b) identifies options in a segment-wise fashion for improvements to beach access and public parking under those same guidelines. Correspondingly, improved public access may increase the level of Federal participation and cost-sharing in a potential CSRM project.

The study limits extend along Ponte Vedra Boulevard and A1A from the St. Johns / Duval County boundary at Florida Department of Environmental Protection monument R-1 southward to R-102.5 at the northern limit of the Federally-authorized South Ponte Vedra Beach/Vilano Beach project near the Serenata Beach resort (**Figure 1**). Ponte Vedra Beach (PVB) occupies 8.9 miles of Atlantic Ocean shoreline (R-1 to R-46.2). South thereof, the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTM-NERR) Atlantic shoreline extends 4.2 miles from R-46.2 to R-67.1 at South Ponte Vedra Beach (SPVB). The study area extends southward into SPVB another 7.1 miles to R-102.5 at Serenata Beach. These beaches serve a local population well in excess of 100,000 people¹, in addition to tourists regionally, nationally, and worldwide who visit the area in conjunction with the beaches and other local amenities, including historic St. Augustine and the Tournament Players Championship (TPC) golf tournament at Sawgrass.

¹ Based on 2020 census data from only the 32082 (PV Beach), 32081 (PV/Nocatee), and 32259 (Fruit Cove/St. Johns) zip codes in northern St. Johns County.

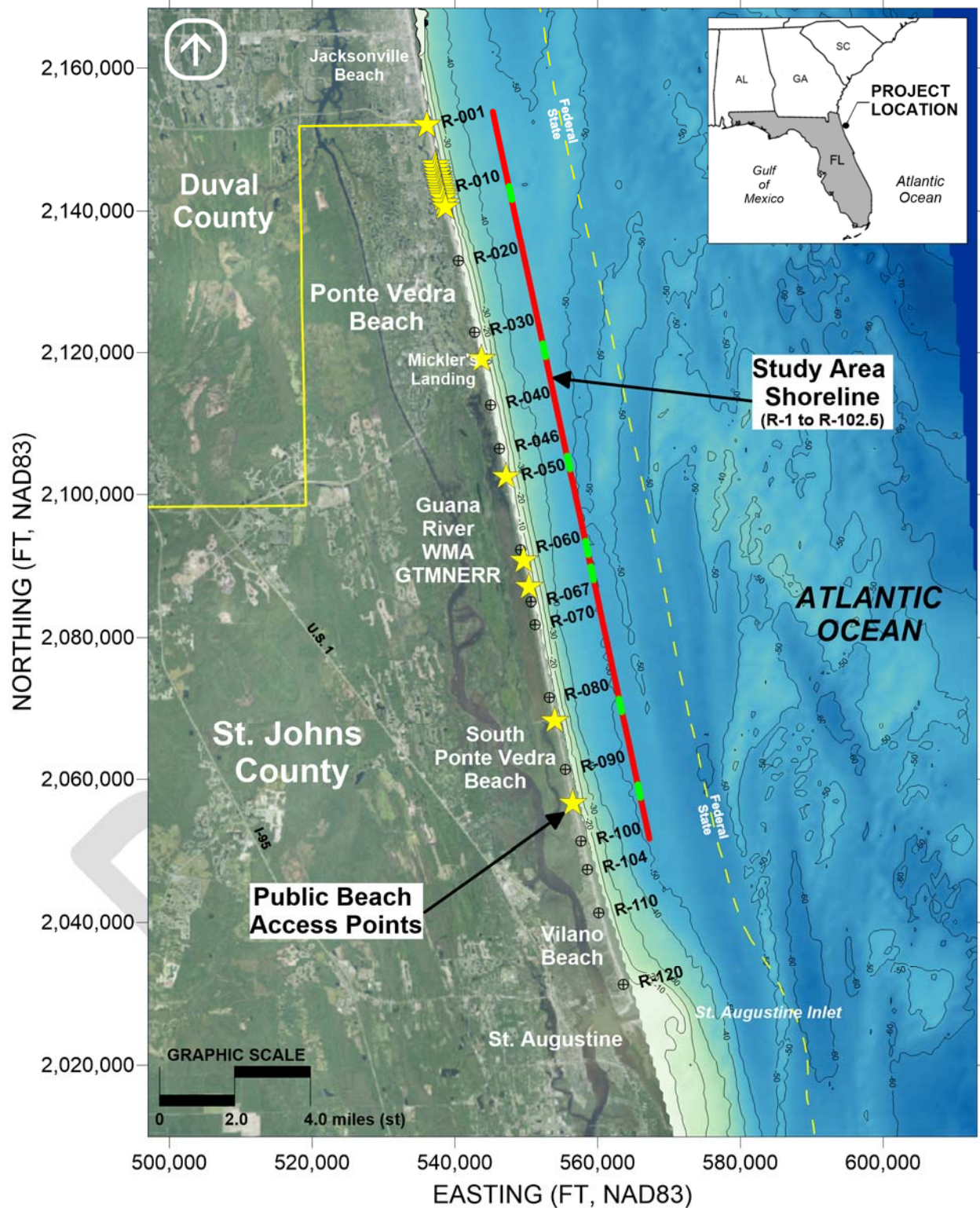


Figure 1 – Location map of northern St. Johns County. Existing public beach access points are highlighted by yellow stars. Segments of the study area marked in green (versus red) indicate areas of the beaches that currently qualify as publicly accessible under Federal guidelines (e.g., accesses with adequate parking, etc.).

2.0 COUNTY COMMITMENT

St. Johns County, FL, is committed to improving public access to the County’s beaches. The County maintains 17 of the 21 public access points listed in **Table 1** and coordinates directly with the GTM NERR in the maintenance and promotion of all the access points. An example of this commitment is the availability of beach access information online. The locations of public beach access points are published on the St. Johns County website and through a smartphone application (‘app’) that provides a map interface and updates of information regarding beach driving, temporary access closures, and information regarding species protection. **Figure 2** depicts a screenshot of an advertisement for the smartphone application. Another recent example of the County’s commitment is the opening of the brand-new Mussallem Park public beach access located south of Ponte Vedra in Vilano Beach (near R-116). Likewise, the County is committed to pursuing additional options for access, as described in this plan.

Although the County has long established that the public has the right of access to the beach and a right to use the beach for recreation and other customary purposes, as described in County Ordinance 2007-19, Section 2, there are currently beach segments that do not meet the Federal criteria for provision of publicly-available parking or other acceptable means of accessing the beach in order for those beach segments to potentially qualify for Federal participation in a CSRM project (e.g. beach nourishment). The County is actively pursuing options to increase the length of publicly-accessible shoreline within the project limits. Herein, recommendations to improve public beach access are based on these federal guidelines and definitions.

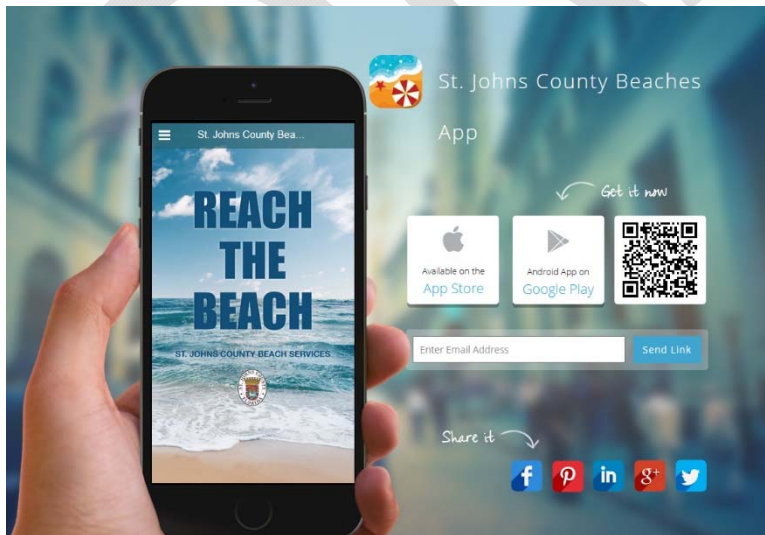


Figure 2 – Screenshot of the website advertisement for the **St. Johns County Beaches** smartphone application. This app was created to make the beaches more accessible to the public.

3.0 GUIDELINES FOR ACCESS

Federal guidelines for beach access and Federal participation in CSRMs projects are published in USACE Engineering Regulations ER 1105-2-100 (USACE, 2000), as excerpted below.

E-24 (pg. E-133)

- d. Public Use and its Relation to Federal Participation. Federal involvement in shore protection developed historically in a beach context, generally with efforts to stabilize, create or restore beaches. It was intended that beaches receiving public aid should not provide exclusively private benefits, and therefore, whenever a hurricane and storm damage reduction project involves beach improvements, real estate interest to ensure public use of the Federal project is required. (See Table E-22 – Fed. Participation.) Items related to public access are discussed below.
 - (1) User Fees. Reasonable beach recreation use fees used to offset the local share of project costs are allowable.
 - (2) Parking. Lack of sufficient parking facilities for the general public (including nonresident users) located reasonably near and accessible to the project beaches may constitute a restriction on public access and use, thereby precluding eligibility for Corps participation. Generally, parking on free or reasonable terms should be available within a reasonable walking distance of the beach. The amount of parking should be consistent with the attendance used in benefit evaluation. In some instances non-Federal plans may encourage or direct substitution of public transportation access for private automobile access. Reports considering public transportation must indicate how the public transportation system would be adequate for the needs of projected beach users.
 - (3) Access. Provision of reasonable public access rights of way, consistent with attendance used in benefit evaluation is a condition of Corps participation. Reasonable access is access approximately every one-half mile or less.
 - (4) Beach Use by Private Organizations. Federal aid to private shores owned by beach clubs and hotels which limit beach use to members or guests is contrary to the intent of Public Law 84-826.
 - (5) Public Shores with Limitations. Publicly owned beaches, which limit use to residents of the community or a group of communities, are not considered to be open to the general public and are treated as private beaches.

Additional but similar information is provided by the USACE in ER 1165-2-130 (USACE, 1989):

6. Program Policies (Shore Protection)
 - h. Public Use (pg12). Public use is a condition for Federal participation in hurricane, abnormal tidal or lake flood protection projects. Current shore erosion control law provides that "Shores other than public (i.e., privately owned) will be eligible for Federal assistance if there is a benefit such as that arising from public use..." In the case of beaches used for recreation, public use means use by all on equal terms. This means that project beaches will not be limited to a segment of the public. Unless the protection of privately-owned beaches is incidental to protection of public beaches (paragraph 9), they must be open to all visitors regardless of origin or home area, or provide protection to nearby public property to be eligible for Federal assistance. Items affecting public use are discussed below.
 - (1) User Fees. A reasonable beach fee, uniformly applied to all, for use in recovery of the local share of project costs is allowable. Normal charges made by concessionaires and municipalities for use of facilities such as bridges, parking areas, bathhouses, and umbrellas are not construed as a charge for the use of the Federal beach project, if they are commensurate with the value of the service they provide and return only a reasonable profit. Fees for such services must be applied uniformly to all concerned and not as a prerequisite to beach use.
 - (2) Parking. Lack of sufficient parking facilities for the general public (including non-resident users) located reasonably nearby, and with reasonable public access to the project, will constitute de facto restriction on public use, thereby precluding eligibility for Federal participation. Generally,

parking on free or reasonable terms should be available within a reasonable walking distance of the beach. Street parking is not considered acceptable in lieu of parking lots unless curbside capacity will accommodate the projected use demands. Parking should be sufficient to accommodate the lesser of the peak hour demand or the beach capacity. In some instances State and local plans may call for a reduction in automobile pollutants by encouraging public transportation. Thus, public transportation facilities may substitute for or complement parking facilities. However, reports which consider public transportation in this manner must indicate how the public transportation system would be adequate for the needs of projected beach users. In computing the public parking accommodations required, the beach users not requiring parking should be deducted from the design figure.

- (3) Access. Reasonable public access must be provided in accordance with the recreational use objectives of the particular area. However, public use is construed to be effectively limited to within one-quarter mile from available points of public access to any particular shore. In the event public access points are not within one-half mile of each other, either an item of local cooperation specifying such a requirement and public use throughout the project life must be included in project recommendations or the cost sharing must be based on private use.
- (4) Beach Use by Private Organizations. Federal participation in private shores owned by beach clubs and hotels is incompatible with the intent of the P.L. 84-826 if the beaches are limited to use by members or paying guests.
- (5) Public Shores With Limitations. Publicly-owned beaches which are limited to use by residents of the community or a group of communities are not considered to be open to the general public and will be treated as private beaches.

In terms of specific guidance or quantification regarding the level of beach access and parking that should be provided for consideration for Federal participation in a CSRSM project², the Federal guidance clearly indicates that acceptable beach access rights of way should be located within ½-mile of one other to provide contiguous beach accessibility alongshore. At each access point, however, the level of publicly available parking (e.g., number of spaces) within a reasonable walking distance would be based upon a projection of the volume of beach users at the lesser of peak hour demand or the beach capacity (assumed to lie within ¼-mile of the access in both directions). Consistent with the ½-mile requirement, a reasonable walking distance from parking to the access point is thus projected to be ¼-mile. Without a detailed beach use study, assumptions must be made as to what constitutes an appropriate number of publicly-available parking spaces.

Regarding the use of public transportation to serve the public access demands for consideration of potential Federal participation in a CSRSM project, the ½-mile requirement for access points applies. Regarding the frequency of bus service³, no specific guidance is provided as the Federal regulations again defer to the projected beach use, which would be determined through a study.

² It is important to recognize that having adequate public access is a requirement, but does not automatically qualify a beach segment for Federal participation and cost-sharing in a CSRSM project.

³ The FDEP Beach Management Funding Assistance Program requires that qualifying mass transit must be available to the general public and must operate year-round (Chapter 62B-36.007(1)(c)3 Florida Administrative Code).

4.0 EXISTING BEACH ACCESS

Table 1 lists the established public beach access points along the north County shoreline, referenced by address and distance south from the Duval/St. Johns county line. At present, there are 21 public beach access points along 20.2 miles of shoreline (see **Figure 1**). Not all accesses meet Federal guidelines for “reasonable” access. Fifteen of the accesses, all marked and many with dune walkovers, lie within the northern-most 2.25 miles of Ponte Vedra Beach, fourteen of which are between the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club (R-4 to R-6) and The Lodge & Club (R-13). These corridors are accessible to residents, bicycle users, and visitors at nearby hotels and condominiums. Four access points (#1A, #4, #5, and #11) have bike racks. The southernmost of these access points, #14 near R-12, has public parking located within ¼-mile. South thereof, Mickler’s Landing lies 6.5 miles south of the County line, and it offers over 240 public parking spaces as well as public facilities such as public restrooms, showers, bicycle racks, and lifeguard service. Mickler’s Landing is a heavily utilized public access point in St. Johns County and is frequently overcrowded on weekend/summer days. Some of this load would likely shift to other access points if available.

Along the undeveloped Guana Tolomato Matanzas Natural Estuarine Research Reserve (GTMNERR) shoreline, the State offers public beach access with ample parking at each of three parking lots located within the Reserve⁴.

South of the undeveloped Reserve shoreline, two additional parking lots offer beach access to the public in the study area along South Ponte Vedra Beach. The first of these two access points, approximately 16 miles south of the County line, lies on GTMNERR property “next to the gas station” near FDEP monument R-83 at the GTMNERR main entrance and visitor center. It is noted that with GTMNERR ownership of the beach parcel, the area does fall within the boundaries of the CBRS Otherwise Protected Area (OPA). The southern-most public beach access is 18.5 miles south of the county line across from Fire Station #9, just north of R-95. Most of this beach segment likewise lies in the same OPA boundary. **Appendix A** includes aerial imagery of the 20-mile shoreline depicting all public access points in Ponte Vedra beach, the GTM NERR, and South Ponte Vedra Beach (north of Seranata Beach).

With available parking, the last seven access sites in **Table 1** satisfy the current Federal guidelines to provide adequate public access. Assuming a ¼-mile alongshore length from both directions at each access, approximately 3.5 miles of the 20-mile study area currently qualifies as publicly accessible.

⁴ It is noted that the GTMNERR is an Otherwise Protected Area (OPA) in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Barrier Resources System (USFWS CBRS). The OPA boundary, #FL-OP3, is depicted in the aerial-based maps provided in Appendix A.

Table 1 – Listing of public beach access points along the Ponte Vedra shoreline.

	PUBLIC BEACH ACCESS POINTS	NEARBY ADDRESS / ROAD	DISTANCE SOUTH OF COUNTY LINE (mi)	NEARBY R-MONUMENT	PARKING SPACES (#)
PONTE VEDRA BEACH	Public Access #1	51 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	0.02	R-1	-
	Public Access #1A	311 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	1.10	R-7	-
	Public Access #2	321 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	1.19	R-7	-
	Public Access #3	333 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	1.31	R-8	-
	Public Access #4	343 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	1.40	R-8	-
	Public Access #5	San Diego Rd.	1.50	R-9	-
	Public Access #6	407 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	1.57	R-9	-
	Public Access #7	415 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	1.65	R-10	-
	Public Access #8	Solana Rd.	1.74	R-10	-
	Public Access #9	505 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	1.80	R-10	-
	Public Access #10	513 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	1.88	R-11	-
	Public Access #11	519 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	1.93	R-11	-
	Public Access #12	527 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	2.01	R-11	-
	Public Access #13	541 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	2.14	R-12	-
Public Access #14	557 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	2.25	R-12	13	
	Mickler's Landing	Mickler Rd.	6.42	R-34	248
GTM NERR	GTMNERR North Parking (CBRS OPA FL-OP3)	1600 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	9.62	R-50	70
	GTMNERR Middle Beach (CBRS OPA FL-OP3)	2000 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	11.91	R-61	82
	GTMNERR South Parking (CBRS OPA FL-OP3)	2200 Ponte Vedra Blvd.	12.63	R-65	98
S. PONTE VEDRA BEACH	GTMNERR Visitor Center (Gas Station) (CBRS OPA FL-OP3)	2700 South Ponte Vedra Blvd.	16.25	R-83	112
	South Ponte Vedra Beach Recreation Area (Fire Station #9)	2993 South Ponte Vedra Blvd.	18.50	R-95	32

*Sites highlighted in green are considered to provide qualifying beach access under current Federal guidance.

4.0 OPTIONS FOR INCREASED ACCESS UNDER FEDERAL GUIDELINES

To increase the length of qualifying publicly-accessible shoreline under Federal guidelines, the following general alternatives were considered, typically in 0.5-mile increments along Ponte Vedra Beach and South Ponte Vedra Beach.

- Options to increase parking access with existing public property;
- Options to provide established bus/shuttle service;
- Options to acquire property for new access (w/parking or available transportation);

In each alternative, consideration is given first to the availability of publicly-owned property (whole parcels and/or access corridors) in those areas where qualifying access is currently lacking.

Increase Public Parking with existing property – The options for simply increasing public parking within reasonable walking distance of the beach have generally been exhausted and are thus are very limited. In PVB, expansion is limited by the high level of development along the beach strand. Along the SPVB beaches, much of the undeveloped property within a reasonable distance of the beach belongs to the State as part of the GTMNERR. Additionally, current rules and regulations, as well as road widths and conditions in many areas, prohibit on-street parking along Ponte Vedra Boulevard (A1A) and the local neighborhood streets within walking distance of public access corridors. In the vicinity of the public access corridors #1 through #14 in PVB, only access #14 near Corona Road currently has any established public parking within a reasonable walking distance. Along the South PVB shoreline, the two access points listed in **Table 1** represent the only existing beach access parking. It is noted, however, that a) the road right-of-way along the west side of A1A is quite wide (approximately 60 ft from edge of pavement) along the 1.8 mile segment from R-73 to R-95 (approx.). Along the same segment there are numerous 10-ft wide corridors (32, approx.), owned by the County, that extend from the road to the beach and could be developed into public access points. The County has previously given consideration to developing a portion or portions of the right-of-way into small parking areas, located within ¼-mile walking distance of a given County corridors. These corridors are identified in the maps found in **Appendix A**.

Establish bus/shuttle service – Bus/shuttle service can be established with dedicated stops at multiple points along the shoreline to provide augmented access to the beach and potentially increased Federal project participation. The bus service must be accessible to the public, necessitating adequate public parking areas located away from the beach. Such public parking areas for bus service in Ponte Vedra Beach could include:

- Ponte Vedra Concert Hall and Cornerstone Park
- St. Johns County Public Library

Bus/shuttle services must provide not only a safe stop area, but also an established and marked public corridor to access the beach. Additionally, in order for publicly-accessible shoreline segments to be further considered for potential eligibility, it is assumed that the service must be provided year-round to justify Federal participation.

The primary focus of bus service would be those areas that have existing public access corridors, but no available parking. In particular, providing established shuttle service and stops at only four or five of the northern access corridors #1 through #8 in Ponte Vedra Beach could provide adequate accessibility to the beach from corridors spaced roughly ½-mile apart. Other areas of the PVB shoreline south of Corona Road to Mickler’s Landing would require establishment of an access corridor, i.e. purchase or easement acquisition, for bus riders to get to the beach from Ponte Vedra Boulevard. Likewise, south of Mickler’s Landing, multiple access corridors would be needed to provide adequate accessibility for the whole segment in PVB. Along the South PVB shoreline, multiple County-owned corridors exist along the shoreline from R-67 southward to South Ponte Vedra Park at R-95. Several of these corridors could be considered for improvement to create bus stops for the area. It is noted that the addition of only one bus stop and corridor would at most provide 0.5 miles of shoreline accessibility under the Federal guidelines

Acquire Property for Increased Public Access – Opportunities exist for a) the purchase of property for public parking and beach access, or b) the establishment of access corridors with accompanying bus service, established by purchase or easement acquisition (either purchased or gifted). At present there are over a dozen vacant properties in PVB and many more in SPVB that could serve this purpose. Many more properties could be approached for the development of access corridors for shuttle stops. The cost of acquisition and development of these properties for access, including possible rezoning requirements, could be in part offset by the additional Federal eligibility for a CSRSM project in that area⁵. A targeted approach to property acquisition or long-term lease would increase public access and potential Federal project participation. Any property sought for public access should seek to expand the alongshore footprint of qualifying access.

⁵ As stated previously having adequate public access is a requirement, but does not automatically qualify a beach segment, for Federal participation in a CSRSM project.

Table 2 summarizes the alongshore distribution of Federally-qualifying beach access, and provides options for increasing that access in areas that currently do not meet the Federal criteria. The table is structured vertically with different row heights to provide a relative representation of the areas that currently do or do not meet the criteria. With the availability of publicly-owned corridors in numerous locations, the establishment of bus service becomes a desirable option. In all segments, purchasing property for parking or bus stops and beach access is an option. Property acquired on the west side of the road for parking would need an established publicly-owned or leased access corridor on the beach side of the road. In each instance, an established access would provide up to a ½-mile of beach accessibility (plus potentially the alongshore length of the parcel itself). Ultimately, a combination of approaches can be applied to establish access in all areas⁶. As noted above, currently there is no specific Federal guidance as to how many parking spaces are required at each access or how frequently bus service must be provided to an access point. Such information would be informed by a beach use study. More specific first options for improvement public access in lacking areas include:

- Along the northern 2.0 miles of Ponte Vedra Beach, multiple County-owned marked public access points exist that could be developed into bus stops. With proper spacing, only three to four existing stops are needed to span the segment. One new corridor would be needed just north of the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club to provide full access.
- Along the 3.7-mile segment from Las Mirandas at R-14 southward to the north limits of the Mickler’s Landing access, property must be acquired to provide public access. Each access developed would provide 0.5 miles of alongshore beach access, plus the parcel width (potentially). At least eight (8) access points would be required to provide full coverage.
- South of the accessible area from Mickler’s Landing, property must be acquired to provide public access. Each access developed would provide 0.5 miles of alongshore beach access, plus the parcel width (potentially). At least five (5) access points would be required to provide full coverage.
- In the GTMNERR, no recommendations for increasing public access beyond the existing parking areas is provided, due to the nature the upland development.
- Along the northern 3.0 miles of South Ponte Vedra Beach, numerous existing access corridors exist, such that bus stops could be developed every 0.5 miles to provide public access.
- Between the “gas station” access and South Ponte Vedra Park (R-84.4 to R-93.5), as above, there are multiple existing corridors that could be developed as bus stops. At least four (4) properly-located access points are required to achieve complete coverage for accessibility.
- South of South Ponte Vedra Park, to Seranata Beach, no public parcels or corridors are available, thus property must be acquired to provide public access. Each access developed would provide 0.5 miles of alongshore beach access, plus the parcel width (potentially). At least three (3) access points would be required to provide full coverage.

⁶ It is recognized, however, that one approach may diminish the economic efficiency of the other. For example, buying property for parking in an area in lieu of establishing a bus stop may diminish the efficiency of the bus program.

Table 2 Alongshore distribution of access and options for increasing public access.
(Row height visually indicates the relative alongshore extent of public access per Federal guidelines.)

	BEACH SEGMENT	NORTH LIMIT	SOUTH LIMIT	LENGTH (miles)	CURRENTLY ACCESSIBLE (FEDERAL REGS)	COMMENTS / OPTIONS TO MAXIMIZE BEACH ACCESS & POTENTIAL FEDERAL PROJECT PARTICIPATION
PONTE VEDRA BEACH	Ponte Vedra Beach (north)	County Line (R-1)	527 Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-11.4, access #12)	2.0	No	1) Add bus stop/service at three to four (3-4) existing access corridors a. access near San Juan Drive (#1) b. access south of PV Inn and Club (#1A) c. use of access #8 best achieves 1/2-mile spacing to access #14 2) Acquire property or bus access corridor just north of PV Inn & Club
	Ponte Vedra Beach (Public Access #14)	527 Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-11.4, access #12)	611 Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-14)	0.5	Yes	Parking Available (13 spots)
	Ponte Vedra Beach (central)	611 Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-14)	1101 Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-32.5)	3.7	No	1) Acquire corridors or parcels to add parking at up to eight (8) locations a. 1/2-mile spacing between access points b. create public parking at acquired parcels c. create bus stops at acquired corridors
	Mickler's Landing	1101 Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-32.5)	1127 Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-35)	0.5	Yes	Parking Available (248 spots)
	Ponte Vedra Beach (south)	1127 Ponte Vedra Blvd (R-35)	1461 Ponte Vedra Blvd. R-46.2	2.2	No	1) Acquire corridors or parcels to add access at up to five (5) locations a. 1/2-mile spacing between access points b. add signage and create public parking at acquired parcels c. create bus stops at acquired corridors
GTM NERR	GTMNERR (north)	1461 Ponte Vedra Blvd (R-46.2)	R-48.7	0.5	No	No action recommended (Reserve property, OPA)
	GTMNERR North Parking (CBRS OPA FL-OP3)	1600 Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-50)		0.5	Yes	Parking Available (70+ spots)
	GTMNERR (north-central)	R-51.2	R-60.1	1.8	No	No action recommended (Reserve property, OPA)
	GTMNERR Middle Beach (CBRS OPA FL-OP3)	2000 Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-61.5)		0.5	Yes	Parking Available (82 spots)
	GTMNERR (central)	R-62.8	R-63.9	0.2	No	No action recommended (Reserve property, OPA)
	GTMNERR South Parking (CBRS OPA FL-OP3)	2200 Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-65)		0.5	YES	Parking Available (98 spots)
	GTMNERR (south)	R-66.3	2345 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd.	0.2	No	No action recommended (Reserve property, OPA)
SOUTH PONTE VEDRA BEACH	SPVB	2345 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-67.1)	2671 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-82)	3.0	No	1) Add bus stop/service at up to ten (10) existing corridors a. 1/2-mile spacing between access points b. permit/develop/enhance existing corridors c. add signage and create bus stops 2) Acquire parcel(s) for parking/access, up to ten (10) locations 3) Create parking in west R/W at up to five (5) existing corridors a. 1/2-mile spacing between access points (R-73 to R-82) b. permit/develop/enhance existing corridors c. add signage, crosswalk, safety measures
	GTMNERR Visitor Center (Gas Station) (CBRS OPA FL-OP3)	2671 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-82)	2727 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-84.4)	0.5	Yes	Parking Available (112 spots)
	SPVB	2727 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-84.4)	2969 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-93.5)	1.8	No	1) Add bus stop/service at up to five (5) existing corridors a. 1/2-mile spacing between access points b. permit/develop/enhance existing corridors, add signage 2) Acquire parcel(s) for parking/access, up to five (5) locations 3) Create parking in west R/W at up to five (5) existing corridors a. 1/2-mile spacing between access points b. permit/develop/enhance existing corridors c. add signage, crosswalk, safety measures
	South Ponte Vedra Park (State/County co-owned) (Fire Station #9)	2969 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-93.5)	3027 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-96.2)	0.6	Yes	Parking Available (32 spots)
	SPVB	3027 S. Ponte Vedra Blvd. (R-96.2)	Serenata Drive (R-102.5)	1.2	No	1) Acquire parcel(s) for corridors or parking/access, up to three (3) locations a. 1/2-mile spacing between access points b. permit/develop/enhance parking areas and/or corridors, add signage

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

St. Johns County, FL, is committed to improving public access to the County's beaches. The County has long established that the public has the right of access to the beach and a right to use the beach for recreation and other customary purposes, as described in County Ordinance 2007-19, Section 2. This beach access plan (a) describes the current condition of public beach access following the Federal Coastal Storm Risk Management guidelines and (b) identifies options for improvements to beach access and public parking under those same guidelines. Correspondingly, improved public access may increase the level of Federal participation and cost-sharing in a potential CSRSM project. Currently, approximately 3.5 miles of the 20.2-mile study area shoreline meet the Federal criteria.

The study limits extend along Ponte Vedra Boulevard and A1A from the St. Johns / Duval County boundary at Florida Department of Environmental Protection monument R-1 southward to R-102.5 at the northern limit of the Federally-authorized South Ponte Vedra Beach/Vilano Beach project near the Serenata Beach resort (**Figure 1**). Ponte Vedra Beach (PVB) occupies 8.9 miles of Atlantic Ocean shorefront (R-1 to R-46.2). South thereof, the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTM-NERR) Atlantic shoreline extends 4.2 miles from R-46.2 to R-67.1 at South Ponte Vedra Beach (SPVB). The study area extends southward into SPVB another 7.1 miles to R-102.5 at Serenata Beach. These beaches serve a local population well in excess of 100,000 people, in addition to tourists regionally, nationally, and worldwide who visit the area in conjunction with the beaches and other local amenities, including historic St. Augustine and the Tournament Players Championship (TPC) golf tournament at Sawgrass.

Options for improving beach access under the Federal guidelines focus on establishing public access points every ½-mile along the project shoreline, and providing adequate public parking or public bus service at each of those access points. Currently there is no specific Federal guidance as to how many parking spaces are required at each access or how frequently bus service must be provided to an access point. Such information would be informed by a beach use study. Herein, recommendations for increased access focus on the existing publicly-owned access corridors in north Ponte Vedra Beach and along the South Ponte Vedra Beach shoreline. These parcels may be served by public bus service. Other areas of the project shoreline, adjacent to Mickler's Landing and north of Seranata Beach, will require the purchase or lease of property to establish qualifying access points.

6.0 REFERENCES

USACE, 1989. “*Federal Participation in Shore Protection, ER 1165-2-130,*” Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington, DC.

USACE, 2000. “*Planning Guidance Notebook, ER 1105-2-100,*” Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington, DC.

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