



TO: City of Lake City

FROM: Gateway Grant Writing & Administration Services, Inc.

DATE: June 10, 2025

SUBJECT: Gwen Lake Restoration Project – Opportunity to Apply for HMGP Funding

Gateway Grant Writing & Administration Services, Inc. is pleased to inform the City of Lake City that we have secured an opportunity for the City to apply for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding to support the Gwen Lake Restoration Project.

In an effort to identify funding solutions for this important initiative, Gateway approached Columbia County to request permission to apply for HMGP funds on behalf of the City. These funds were set aside specifically for Columbia County through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) following Hurricanes Helene and Milton. At the County's June 5th Board of County Commissioners meeting, Gateway was present to support the request and to answer any questions regarding the proposal. We are pleased to report that Columbia County granted the City of Lake City the opportunity to apply for these funds. Mr. Steve Brown from the City of Lake City was also in attendance to support the request.

Gateway has worked diligently with the County to advocate for the inclusion of the Gwen Lake project and to position the City for success in the highly competitive HMGP program. We are proud of the collaboration and support received to date and remain committed to leading the City through the next phase of this process.

It is important to note that this is an **invitation to apply**, not a funding award. Gateway will now move into the formal application phase, which involves a highly detailed and technically demanding process that includes engineering justification, benefit-cost analysis, environmental documentation, and detailed budgeting. The HMGP grant application process can take 6-9 months coordinated efforts with federal and state agencies to ensure the project meets all qualifications. The application is due July 25, 2025.

Please also be advised that the HMGP program requires a **25% local match**, which must be confirmed as part of the application. While the City previously considered a project budget of approximately **\$2.5 million**, recent estimates from Four Waters Engineering and Michael Klink suggest that the **opinion of probable cost** to complete full restoration of Gwen Lake is closer to **\$3.2 million**. As such, Gateway may return to the County with a revised funding request to ensure the full scope of work is adequately covered.

We appreciate the City's continued support and will keep you informed with a monthly progress report as we move forward with the application process.