

“Preservation of a culture and the Bay”
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Purpose of Research: Prove the most efficient way to maintain U.S. Highway 98 that will preserve the environment and the way of life of the citizens who rely on it.

Abstract

The research conducted proved valuable in preserving the culture and The Apalachicola Bay. The research revealed whether U.S. Highway 98 should be moved inland or remain a commercial highway located along the Apalachicola Bay. The area of focus was a strip along the eastern coast of Eastpoint. It lies directly along the Apalachicola Bay. It is one of the most susceptible areas to sustain damage along U.S. Highway 98. It is an area that leaves residential as well as business' vulnerable to extensive damage which can include but are not limited to landslides, flooding and high winds. The significance of this research reveals an environmentally efficient way of maintaining a culture while at the same time providing the renewal of life to a dying culture. Data collection consisted of a census of business' and residential areas that lie along the 2 mile radius. This included those that lie directly along the bay and those parallel. Interviews were placed with owners or representatives to establish and overall feeling of the impact of U.S. Highway 98. These citizens were selected on the basis that their businesses and daily life are conducted along this highway. Interviews were also placed with the County Planner and Commissioners. Electronic data was collected on developmental plans for the area. Data was also collected from county commissioner meetings. The consensus of the citizens along U.S. Highway 98 was that Franklin County is loosing their culture, revenues have greatly dropped in the wake of the aftermath of Hurricane Dennis, and they are in fear of the potential damage of another devastating hurricane. Franklin County is an oystering town that is being swallowed by the tourism that 'forgotten coast' has bought to Florida. Hurricane Dennis not only destroyed businesses and homes but it helped to wash away a culture. Findings showed that not only would the maintenance of the highway prove costly but that the constant erosion and continuance of breakwaters could prove dangerous to the Bay. The relocation of the road would open a doorway for the citizens of Franklin County to reclaim their culture and maintain their way of life. It proves to be the most environmentally efficient way to maintain the Apalachicola Bay. Overall, findings conclude that to preserve the way of life that the citizens depend on while maintaining safety for the environment is moving U.S. Highway 98 inland. With the money saved, funds should be allocated to business owners to assist them in upholding their business in the wake of another Hurricane.