

July 26, 2018

Ms. Susan Skelton, Executive Director

Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc.

P.O. Box 12007

Tallahassee, FL 32317

Dear Ms. Skelton,

The purpose of this letter is to inform Triumph Gulf Coast Inc. of the efforts of a group in Apalachicola called *The Apalachicola Bay Oyster Management Group*. This group consists in part of the following individuals:

- Steven Rash - Stakeholder Water Street Seafood
- Tommy Ward – Stakeholder Buddy Ward and Sons Seafood
- Shannon Hartsfield – Stakeholder Director SMARRT Group Seafood Workers Association
- Andy Kane, Ph.D. – Associate Professor of Aquatic Pathology UF
- Dan Tonsmeire – Apalachicola Riverkeepers

Apalachicola Bay is in a very perilous condition and its entire ecological survival is threatened. This in turn has created serious negative economic conditions in our community. Our group came together in an effort to develop a comprehensive restoration and management plan to save Apalachicola Bay by rebuilding wild oyster reefs which have all but disappeared.

Our group is now ready to move from the initial stage and to increase our efforts with formal restoration plans as well as funding applications. We hope to submit a pre-application in partnership with a state entity to Triumph within the next forty-five days.

It is also our intent to work closely with the Florida State University Coastal and Marine Laboratory (FSUCML). FSUCML's proposed research will be directed toward development of an Apalachicola Bay restoration and management plan. FSUCML has also committed to working closely and collaboratively with the Apalachicola Bay Oyster Management Group during the preparation of our Triumph Gulf Coast Inc application as well as in the ultimate implementation of the restoration plan. This includes leveraging local, state, federal and NGO partners in the acquisition of resources to achieve long-term restoration goals.

We feel that having FSU involved with the welfare of Apalachicola Bay is a win-win situation for the bay and for all parties involved in saving the bay. In addition, we hope that Triumph approves the FSU application to allow them to begin their important work.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Rash', written in a cursive style.

Steven Rash

Chairman

Cc : Gary Ostrander, Ph.d.

Vice President for Research

Florida State University