



FLORIDA'S Great Northwest

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Florida's Great Northwest
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FLORIDA'S GREAT NORTHWEST RECEIVES STATE GRANT FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

Destin, Florida (May 19, 2008) – Florida's Great Northwest (FGNW) has been awarded a \$150,000 state grant through the Florida International Business Expansion Initiative by Enterprise Florida, Inc. The Florida International Business Initiative grant is a matching grant and is part of Florida's Great Northwest's Northwest Florida International Trade Initiative, an on-going effort to assist local businesses expand their import and export activities as well as attract foreign investment capital to Northwest Florida.

Partially funded by the grant, Florida's Great Northwest will host two outbound trade missions in 2008.

- **Farnborough, England** (July 14-20) – This trade mission targeting the Aerospace & Defense Industry will be held in conjunction with the Farnborough Air Show. A delegation of eleven economic development professionals including Florida's Great Northwest staff, county economic development organizations from Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Bay, and Leon Counties, and utilities are registered to attend. The economic development professionals are focused on attracting foreign investment to Northwest Florida. Florida's Great Northwest is seeking qualified Northwest Florida aerospace and defense businesses interested in expanding their import and export opportunities to join the delegation. Space is limited.
- **Panama City, Panama** (November 11-13) – The 3-day trade mission to Panama will focus on international business meetings in the targeted industries of Renewable Energy; Life Sciences (medical devices and medical technologies); Aerospace and Defense; and Transportation and Logistics. Panama is strategic to Florida for a number of reasons. Historically, the country is a significant trading partner. To facilitate trade development opportunities, one-on-one business meetings with foreign companies will be the primary focus under the EFI grant. Strategically, the expansion of the Panama Canal offers significant increased international commerce as international shippers seek to diversify their ports of entry. To explore opportunities based on the canal expansion, the Panama Mission will also

focus on experiential learning opportunities for the region's rural and urban economic development organizations.

Florida's Great Northwest Chairman Fred Leopold stated, "This is the second year Florida's Great Northwest has received the Enterprise Florida International Business Initiative Grant. This award will allow Northwest Florida to continue to develop its international trade and investment initiatives."

"Two deep-water ports, an extensive rail system and four regional airports make Northwest Florida ripe for international trade. Although all of Northwest Florida is well-positioned for the development of international commerce, the construction of the new international airport in West Bay and the ongoing increases in cargo through the Port of Panama City strategically position the central part of our region to be a hub for international commerce," added Florida's Great Northwest President, Al Wenstrand.

Businesses in the Northwest Florida region are invited to participate in either of the two trade missions. These missions will provide opportunities to make international contacts and meet with foreign businesses interested in trade development and international investment in Northwest Florida. For more information, please contact Cristie Kedroski at (850) 337-3469 or ckedroski@fgnw.org.

The Florida International Business Expansion Initiative grant was funded by the 2008 Florida Legislature and is administered by Enterprise Florida, Inc., Florida's statewide economic development organization. The grant will be used by Florida's Great Northwest in 2008 to expand international trade development and foreign direct investment activities in Northwest Florida.

About Florida's Great Northwest, Inc.

Florida's Great Northwest is a regional economic development organization serving 16 counties in Northwest Florida from Pensacola through Tallahassee. Florida's Great Northwest provides regional leadership in workforce and economic development, including its primary mission of creating high-wage, high-skill jobs, branding and marketing, as well as supporting the local economic development organizations in the region.

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