



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2023-2024

LFIR # 2140

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

This project will restore 45 acres of seagrass meadows in the South IRL. Nursery-grown seagrass plantings will jumpstart restoration in areas where natural recovery has not achieved historical densities. This project will cultivate, plant, protect, and maintain seagrass within areas that have been documented to have sufficient water quality to support seagrass. The planting sites are strategically located in areas that encourage natural recruitment into the surrounding barren areas; have adequate light availability; and provide stable salinity conditions needed for seagrass survival and widespread expansion. Increasing seagrass acreage by direct planting will alleviate pressure on remaining seagrass meadows. Cultivars of Shoal grass and Widgeon grass will be installed and protected with herbivory exclusion cages until they become established. The cages will be maintained for 3 years; monthly monitoring will occur for 3 years to document project success.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted?

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	2,852,620
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	2,852,620

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	2,852,620	100%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2023-2024	2,852,620	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding?

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2022-23	0	1,400,000	HB 4779	No

9. Is future funding likely to be requested?

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.

10. Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?



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If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.

Complete questions 11 and 12 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

11. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

- Planning
 Design
 Construction

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

12. List the owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

13. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits	Administration, Contracting, and Public Outreach	250,998
Other Salary and Benefits	none	0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	none	0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	none	0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits	none	0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	none	0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Nursery grown seagrass production (Shoal grass & Widgeon grass), permitting, installation of seagrass, protection of planting units using herbivory exclusion cages, maintenance of herbivory exclusion cages for three years, monthly monitoring for three years, and regular progress reporting to provide updates on seagrass expansion.	2,601,622
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	none	0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		2,852,620

14. Program Performance

a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?



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The purpose of this project is to restore 45 acres of lost seagrass meadows into the IRL south of the Fort Pierce Inlet. The benefits of seagrass meadows include providing critically important functions for fisheries production, reducing harmful algae blooms (HABs), sediment stabilization, absorbing nutrients, providing a food source for manatees, and building coastal resilience.

b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?

The project funds will be used to permit and implement a seagrass restoration project. The benefits of the project will be communicated through public outreach campaigns. Seagrass for the project will be grown, planted, and protected in an area that has sufficient water quality and clarity to promote seagrass growth within the South IRL. Herbivore exclusion cages will be placed over newly planted grasses to allow their roots to become established before grazing can occur. Once the grasses are established, they will provide a food source for manatees in the south IRL.

c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?

Seagrass meadows are critical for improving water quality and clarity. They stabilize sediments in the water body and filter nutrients from stormwater and wastewater runoff. By doing so, healthy seagrass beds reduce the frequency and intensity of HABs. Better water quality in the South IRL will increase recreational opportunities which, in turn, will stimulate the local economy. Citizens will benefit directly and indirectly from the ecosystem services provided by enhanced seagrass meadows in the South IRL.

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

This project will enhance the quality of the lagoon, which will benefit all of Florida's residents and an estimated 7.4 million tourists who visit Florida each year. The lagoon adds an estimated annual boost of \$7.6 billion to Florida's economy. According to an economic valuation report by the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, every dollar spent on improving the health of the lagoon yields a return of \$33 back to Florida's economy.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

The expected outcome of this project is to permanently restore seagrass meadows in the South IRL by utilizing scientifically validated techniques. Monthly maintenance and a three year monitoring program will take place to measure the success and outputs of this project. Regular progress reports will be submitted to the FDEP and the legislature for regular updates on seagrass expansion.

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for the contract?

If deliverables are not achieved, then funds should be withheld for nonperformance.

15. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number Ext.

16. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

c. Organization Type

For Profit Entity



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- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity
- University or College
- Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number

17. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number

Please complete the questions below for Water Projects only.

18. Have you applied for alternative state funding?

- Waste Water Revolving Loan
- Drinking Water Revolving Loan
- Small Community Wastewater Treatment Grant
- Other (please specify)
- N/A

19. What is the population economic status?

- Financially Disadvantaged Community (ch. 62-552, F.A.C)
- Financially Disadvantaged Municipality (ch. 62-552, F.A.C)
- Rural Area of Economic Concern
- Rural Area of Opportunity (s. 288.0656, Florida Statutes)
- N/A

20. What is the status of construction?



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21. What percentage of the construction has been completed?

0%

22. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

12/31/2024