



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 1774

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

#### 4. Project/Program Description

Zoo Miami, in conjunction with FWC, proposes to build an on-site manatee rescue, rehabilitation, and release critical care center. Currently, there are only four manatee critical care centers in the United States, with the closest one being in Orlando. For injured or sick manatees, this means they must be transported over several hours before receiving appropriate medical care. At the request of the State of Florida and FWC, the funds would support the planning, design, and construction of the manatee critical care facility. This is the first phase of a multi-year project culminating in a \$15million + state-of -the-art facility dedicated to saving manatees. Funding of this first phase will allow Zoo Miami and FWC to more quickly open the critical care facility and start rescuing, rehabilitating, and releasing manatees.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted?

#### 6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	1,104,750
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>1,104,750</b>

#### 7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	1,104,750	39%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	685,750	25%
Local	0	0%
Other	1,000,000	36%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026</b>	<b>2,790,500</b>	<b>100%</b>

8. Has this project previously received state funding?

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2024-25	0	685,750	1792	No

9. Is future-year 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.

Zoo Miami Foundation will also be raising funds for the project through individual donors, corporate sponsorships, and foundation grants. Zoo Miami is contributing to the project through their Zoo Improvement Trust fund.



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## Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

### 10. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

☒ Planning ☐ Design ☐ Construction ☐ N/A

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

No

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

12/31/2027

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

12/31/2028

e. What funding stream will be used for ongoing operations and maintenance of the project?

Zoo Miami operating budget is provided by Miami-Dade County, who has agreed to support the ongoing funding needs of the project. Zoo Miami Foundation, the dedicated 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity dedicated to supporting Zoo Miami, has agreed to fund any necessary upgrades not already included in the county budget.

11. 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.

Zoo Miami Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

### 12. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Operational Costs</b>		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Funds will be spent on services required to plan, design, and permit the construction of the new Zoo Miami Manatee Critical Care and Rehabilitation Facility. Estimated timeline for this phase of the project is 36 months, 8 months for initiation and scoping, 16 months for design, 3 months for permitting, and 9 months for construction.	1,104,750
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>1,104,750</b>

### 13. Program Performance

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



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At the request of the State of Florida and FWC, the funds would support the planning, design, and construction of the manatee critical care facility. This is the first phase of a multi-year project culminating in a \$15 million+ state-of-the-art facility dedicated to saving manatees. Funding of this first phase will allow Zoo Miami and FWC to more quickly open the critical care facility and start rescuing, rehabilitating, and releasing manatees.

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

Upon completion, Zoo Miami will have the capability to transport, house, care for, and release sick and injured manatees. Medical services include capabilities to perform advanced medical examinations, necessary surgical procedures, and individualized dietary plans to treat manatees affected by boat strikes, fishing entanglements, disease, and other maladies. Zoo Miami will be one of only five acute care facilities in the country.

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

Florida manatees are considered a keystone species, instrumental in maintaining the ecosystem of our bays and beaches. Preserving these areas for the public to enjoy is critical to South Florida's perception and tourism. On-site, citizens will get to see and learn about manatees, the dangers they face, and things they can do to help save the species.

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

General public in the South Florida region  
Zoo Miami's guests, numbering approximately 1 million per year

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

Rescue, rehabilitation, and release of numerous manatees in South Florida. The methodology for measuring outcomes will include manatee intake records, number of successful releases, and recorded contacts with FWC and other organizations. Zoo Miami is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, who will provide regular inspection as part of their accreditation process.

**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 in the contract?**

Nonpayment until deliverables are met.

**14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster?**

**a. If Yes, what phase best describes the project?**

- ☐ Mitigation (reducing or eliminating potential loss of life or property)
- ☐ Response (addressing the immediate and short-term effects of a natural disaster)
- ☐ Recovery (assisting communities return to normal operations, including rebuilding damaged infrastructure)

**b. Name of the natural disaster (or Executive Order # for events not under a federal declaration):**

**15. Has the entity applied for or received federal assistance for this project?**

- ☐ Yes, Applied
- ☐ Yes, Received
- ☐ No
- ☐ No, but intends to apply

**a. If yes, provide the FEMA project worksheet ID#:**



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LFIR # 1774

b. Provide the total project cost listed on the FEMA project worksheet:

16. Has the entity applied for or received state assistance for this project (other than this request)?

- ☐ Yes, Applied
- ☐ Yes, Received
- ☐ No
- ☐ No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, specify the program and state agency (ex. Local Government Emergency Bridge Loan, Department of Commerce):

#### 17. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name  Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number  Ext.

#### 18. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

#### c. Organization Type

- ☐ For Profit Entity
- ☒ 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  Ext.

#### 19. Lobbyist Contact Information



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a. Name	<input type="text" value="Avery R Mazur"/>
b. Firm Name	<input type="text" value="The Southern Group"/>
c. E-mail Address	<input type="text" value="mazur@thesoutherngroup.com"/>
d. Phone Number	<input type="text" value="(850)671-4401"/>

*The information provided will be posted to the Florida Senate website for public viewing if sponsored by a Senator.*