



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 3025

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

Alaqua Wildlife Rehabilitation Center (AWRC) seeks funding for an expanded program that includes relocating and updating its trauma hospital with state-of-the-art equipment to enhance the treatment of over 1500 patients annually. AWRC aims to develop interactive educational displays for re-nesting/reuniting, establish indoor and outdoor children's play areas, create ambassador habitats, and launch a mobile education program focused on intervention necessity and practical conservation techniques. AWRC and the state of Florida truly have an opportunity of a lifetime to set themselves apart from any other wildlife rehabilitation efforts in the U.S. The amalgamation of AWRC's rescue team, the advanced trauma hospital with in-house laboratory, coupled with the plans for an interactive education center and sanctuary for non-releasable Florida wildlife will give us the opportunity to lead the charge to combine wildlife rehabilitation with wildlife conservation efforts, and thrive as a result.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted?

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	1,500,000
Total State Funds Requested	1,500,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	1,500,000	83%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	304,000	17%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025	1,804,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding?

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

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.



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

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
 N/A

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		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	A complete budget with justification by line item is available upon request. Rehab Outside, Rehab Bears, Rehab Inside, Ambassadors, Infrastructure and utility install, fill dirt/spreading, engineering/permits, driveway clearing, underbrush clearing, fencing around wildlife, relocation of small medical buildings/install, maintenance shed, enclosures, injured animal transport	1,500,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		1,500,000

14. Program Performance

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



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This funding request aims to facilitate the relocation, enhancement, and expansion of AWRC's facilities and services. The objectives include upgrading and expanding capacity for their essential work, along with promoting education and ecotourism through stewardship initiatives and public education. This project's success will yield benefits for public health, tourism, education, and wildlife. With this funding, AWRC aspires to transform the entire region into an leadership model of ecotourism.

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

AWRC is set to enhance its services by relocating and modernizing the trauma hospital, equipping it with cutting-edge technology for more efficient care of over 1500 patients annually. This transition paves the way for the addition of wildlife stewardship education, positioning the Florida panhandle as an ecotourism model and pioneer, fostering the growth of a "volunteer tourism" sector.

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

Through this funding, AWRC will enhance citizen services by rescuing sick and injured wildlife, contributing to public health and the aesthetics of the region's primary tourist attractions—beaches, parks, and trails. Safeguarding tourism will stimulate the local and regional economy, directly benefiting the well-being of the community's residents.

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

Alaqua is a cornerstone of its community and enjoys substantial public participation in the form of visitors and volunteers. In addition to benefiting the 12-county service area, visitors, volunteers, and participants in workshops educational programs will be directly impacted by services made available through this funding. The entire tourist-dependent economy and those impacted by it will benefit from AWRC's services.

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

The tracking methods for program benefits include:

1. Revenue Tracking: Quarterly monitoring financial gains of volunteer-related tourism, evaluating the economic impact on the local community.
2. Community Engagement Surveys: Assessing quarterly involvement and support from local residents in ecotourism initiatives.
3. Ecological Assessments: Measuring the program's environmental impact through quarterly evaluations of cases and calls.
4. Participant Surveys and Knowledge Assessments: Annually gauging the reach and effectiveness of educational programs by collecting participant feedback.
5. Ongoing Biodiversity Index and Conservation Metrics Monitoring: Continuously tracking intake numbers and patterns to identify changes in local biodiversity and the achievement of conservation goals.
6. Sustainable Practices Audits and Compliance Checks: Evaluating practices within ecotourism and volunteer tourism operations to ensure their effectiveness and ethical standards.

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?

AWRC commits to prompt notification, provision of a revised plan, and diligence in rectifying any compliance situation including payback with penalty as contractually defined. Additionally, AWRC would implement an internal response of enhanced reporting requirements and contractual obligation review. AWRC will consistently practice transparency in financial controls, vendor selection methodology and incentives to control costs, programmatic requirements, and risk mitigation efforts.

15. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name **Last Name**

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number **Ext.**



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16. 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

17. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number