



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 3257

1. **Project Title**
2. **Senate Sponsor**
3. **Date of Request**

**4. Project/Program Description**

This project aims to remove 50 acres of hydrilla in East Lake Tohopekaliga using large-scale mechanical harvesting. After removal of hydrilla, native submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) will be installed throughout the treated area. Restored SAV beds will improve water quality and clarity through filtration of nutrients and stabilization of sediments. Restored areas will also provide critically important habitat for fish and wildlife. After installation is complete, maintenance & monitoring will be performed monthly for a period of five years. Monthly maintenance of invasive species will be completed to limit nutrients in the lake and to prevent shading of native SAV. Restored areas will be monitored during this time frame to assess and quantify the beneficial impacts of the project. The project also includes a research component designed to identify cost-effective strategies for hydrilla management. Beneficial reuse of harvested materials will also be analyzed.

5. **State Agency to receive requested funds**
- State Agency contacted?**  No

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

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	2,665,600
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>2,665,600</b>

**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)	2,665,600	100%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025</b>	<b>2,665,600</b>	<b>100%</b>

8. **Has this project previously received state funding?**  No

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

9. **Is future funding likely to be requested?**  No
- 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
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits	Administration and contracting	91,392
Other Salary and Benefits	NA	0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Hotels, fuel/mileage, Per Diem for site visits, outreach/education events, production of educational materials.	57,120
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Grant assistant manager, accountant (payroll, tax prep), and public outreach.	137,088
<b>Operational Costs: Other</b>		
Salary and Benefits	NA	0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	NA	0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Environmental Monitoring, Permitting, Engineering, Reporting, Planting Nursery grown grass, Protecting grass, Maintenance of grass, and Mechanical Maintenance of Exotics, Research Initiatives	2,380,000
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>2,665,600</b>

14. Program Performance

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



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

Prior to installation of native SAV, the site will be prepared for planting via hydrilla removal with a large mechanical harvester. Initial hydrilla removal will be coordinated with Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission's (FWC) scheduled herbicide treatment in order to harvest when the hydrilla community is relatively weak. Native SAV, sourced from a local nursery, will be installed throughout the treated area. Under the right conditions (such as high grazing pressure), native SAV can out-compete invasive species, limiting the extent to which invasive species can proliferate. Mechanical maintenance of invasive species includes monthly mowing within the project area using vessels designed to trim the tops of all SAV within the footprint; this mowing will simulate high-grazing pressure, which allows the shoots and rhizomes of native plants to become dense enough to out-compete hydrilla. The restoration area will be monitored regularly throughout the five-year duration of the project.

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

Harvested material will be put to beneficial reuse, namely compost for citrus farmers. The use of compost reduces the amount of fertilizer that citrus growers need to apply to the tree. Working with local partners to compost the wrack will remove nutrients out of the waterbody and improve water quality. The project will also result in enhanced research that is needed for large-scale SAV restoration and hydrilla management efforts throughout FL. The research component of the project is designed to evaluate mechanical harvesting methods, disposal or beneficial utilization of harvested material, and integrated weed suppression using native SAV plantings. By greatly reducing the use of herbicides, deleterious side effects caused by chronic use of these chemicals will be minimized. Dense mats of hydrilla provide breeding grounds for vector organisms that can adversely affect human and/or wildlife; this threat will also be reduced.

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

This project will directly benefit the residents that live along the lake's shoreline, those who enjoy water-based recreational activities, and the industries that depend on clean, healthy waters. Multiple herbicide treatments have been used to control hydrilla in this lake. However, a significant portion of Florida's residents would prefer that other weed management techniques be explored. As described above, this project seeks to evaluate SAV restoration and harvesting for aquatic weed management throughout FL's waterbodies. This could potentially benefit citizens statewide.

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

This project will have direct positive impacts to real estate, recreational activities and the tourism industry, as they are all dependent on healthy habitats and clean water. This project will help to identify alternative aquatic weed reduction operations (in conjunction with restoration techniques) that will lower the costs of managing invasive aquatic plants. This is needed, as over \$18M in public funds were used to control aquatic weeds in FL's public waters in FY21-22; almost \$13M of the total funds was spent on managing hydrilla alone. As the project progresses, it is important to capture the results and determine the project effectiveness through in-situ monitoring. The restoration area will be monitored regularly throughout the five-year duration of the project to ensure that project goals and objectives are achieved.

**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 in full monies allocated to the deliverable should be withheld.

**15. Requester Contact Information**

**a. First Name**  **Last Name**

**b. Organization**

**c. E-mail Address**



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d. Phone Number  Ext.

#### 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