



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2022-2023

LFIR # 1155

1. Project Title Florida Aquarium Salt-Water Treatment Facility for Endangered Coral and Aquatic Animals

2. Senate Sponsor Lauren Book

3. Date of Request 10/21/2021

4. Project/Program Description

The Florida Aquarium contributes to the health, economic viability, and sustainability of Florida's ecosystems by providing protection, care, and rehabilitation of threatened and endangered marine animals. This request supports the construction of a salt water well water treatment facility that will improve water quality for the conservation of wildlife that have a direct impact on Florida's environment: corals, sea turtles, and marine mammals such as manatees. The facility will be constructed at the Florida Conservation and Technology Center in southern Hillsborough County. FWC will provide additional resources to complete construction and its on-site fish hatchery will also benefit from the water treatment facility. This project is uniquely positioned to improve the future viability of Florida's marine wildlife while providing an immediate impact to citizens in the form of education, economic impact, and community sustainability.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

State Agency contacted? Yes

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	100,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	900,000
Total State Funds Requested	1,000,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	1,000,000	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 2022-2023	1,000,000	100%

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.

Without support from the State of Florida's legislative appropriations, The Florida Aquarium will continue to seek private support for this critical animal health investment.



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

Yes

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

The Florida Aquarium was awarded \$8,016,205 from the Shuttered Venues Operators Grant through the Small Business Administration. The Aquarium also received two Payroll Protection Program loans totaling \$3,967,590. Funds were used to support operational deficits during COVID-19 related closure and restrictions on attendance, ensuring that employees could be retained, as well as improving infrastructure to ensure that the Aquarium can welcome back guests safely during ongoing pandemic conditions.

11. 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	10% Indirect Cost to support the administration of the project	100,000
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	Funds to support the construction of a salt water treatment facility	900,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		1,000,000

12. Program Performance

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

The project's goal is to improve the environmental sustainability of Florida's ecosystems, by improving water quality and enhancing care for threatened and endangered aquatic animals, namely corals, sea turtles, and marine mammals. The Coral initiative's goal is to house and care for corals that have been rescued from the disease-stricken Florida Reef Tract, to sexually reproduce corals that are in danger of extinction and to raise coral babies that will someday be out-planted in the Florida Keys. The Sea Turtle initiative's goal is to receive stranded turtles from FWC, care for and rehabilitate turtles, and release them back to the ocean when medically appropriate. The Marine Mammals initiative's goal is to provide emergent care space in partnership with and under the permit of SeaWorld's manatee rescue program.

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

A salt water treatment facility will be constructed to treat water from an existing well on site. The water will be used in the care of threatened and endangered species of Atlantic corals, sea turtles, and marine mammals. FWC will use the water to maintain its fish hatchery on site.

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



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The care, reproduction, and rearing of reef-building corals benefits citizens of Florida in a variety of ways: healthy coral reefs provide buffering from tropical storms and erosion that impacts property value. They also provide a habitat for fish, lobsters, and other species that are harvested for food. Sea turtle conservation efforts contribute to healthy oceans, which provide a large economic impact in terms of tourism every year in the state. Manatees help control vegetation that can obstruct Florida's waterways, as well as providing needed fertilizer in the shallow areas they inhabit. They are also a driver of ecotourism, attracting visitors to view them in Florida's springs, bays, and beaches.

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

This project is uniquely positioned to improve the future viability of Florida's marine wildlife while providing an immediate impact to citizens in the form of education, economic impact, and community sustainability. The animals served by this project will be threatened and endangered corals, sea turtles, and manatees. It is expected that annually, the Aquarium will care for thousands of coral colonies, at least 20 sea turtles, and up to 4 manatees at once.

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

The outcome of this project will be the enhanced care of threatened and endangered marine animals which will contribute to a healthy and thriving ecosystem in Florida. This will be measured by an inventory count of the number of animals cared for during the funding period. Additionally, the coral initiative will measure how many coral larvae are produced in a year, including how many are transferred to partner institutions. Expected outcomes are: Provide daily care for 15 species of coral; Produce at least 500,000 coral larvae; Receive and rehabilitate at least 20 sea turtles; Provide 365 days of care space for up to 4 manatees at once.

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?

Unused funds will be returned to the State

13. 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.

The Florida Aquarium, a 501(c)(3) organization, is the owner of the facility and the entity receiving the funds.



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14. Requestor Contact Information

a. First Name Last Name
b. Organization
c. E-mail Address
d. Phone Number Ext.

15. 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

16. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name
b. Firm Name
c. E-mail Address
d. Phone Number