



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2836

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

The Wakulla Springs Remediation Research and Education initiative at Florida State University combines scientific research and public education to address water quality and ecosystem health at Wakulla Springs. Funding will support groundwater source identification, nutrient pollution analysis, and environmental DNA studies, alongside communication efforts such as educational video production, economic impact analysis, and community outreach. This initiative will provide critical data for conservation efforts while engaging the public in protecting this vital natural resource.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted? Yes

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

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	850,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	850,000

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)	850,000	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 2025-2026	850,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding? Yes

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2024-25	0	750,000	147	No

9. Is future-year 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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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?

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

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

N/A

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.

Florida State University is a public state university.

12. 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		
Salary and Benefits	The allocated funds for salaries will support a dedicated research team comprising one post-doctoral researcher, one senior technician, and two additional technicians. These personnel will play key roles in sample collection, processing, and analysis, utilizing their expertise in molecular techniques and hydrological monitoring.	310,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	The funds allocated for expenses includes the acquisition of molecular analysis equipment, such as chemicals, glassware, and hydrological monitors, essential for processing samples and conducting detailed analyses (172k). Additionally, funds will cover travel expenses for fieldwork, utilizing trucks and small boats as needed (8k), along with providing necessary field and lab supplies (10k).	540,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		850,000

13. Program Performance



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

The requested funds will support scientific research and public education initiatives aimed at improving the health and sustainability of Wakulla Springs. Funding will enhance groundwater research by identifying and analyzing sources contributing to the spring, assessing nutrient pollution levels, and studying the effects of seawater intrusion. It will also support efforts to improve water quality and ecosystem health by monitoring nitrogen and phosphorus inputs that impact water clarity and plant growth, utilizing environmental DNA to study microbial community dynamics. Additionally, the funds will expand public awareness through the development of educational materials, including videos and outreach programs for high school students, as well as conducting an economic impact analysis of the Wakulla Springs watershed.

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

The requested funds will support a combination of research activities and public education initiatives to improve the health of Wakulla Springs. Scientific research efforts will include groundwater source identification, chemical and molecular analysis of nutrient pollution, and environmental DNA studies to assess ecosystem dynamics. Fieldwork will expand to previously unstudied areas to improve understanding of groundwater flow and the impacts of seawater intrusion. Additionally, public education and outreach efforts will include the development of educational videos and materials for high school students, watershed tours, economic impact analysis, and the production of maps and informational flyers. Student engagement will be supported through stipends for graduate and undergraduate interns working on media production and communication efforts. These activities will ensure a comprehensive approach to both scientific research and public awareness, contributing to the sustainability.

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

The appropriation project will provide direct services to citizens through educational programs, including targeted videos and curriculum for high school students, and guided watershed tours that raise awareness of environmental issues at Wakulla Springs. Public outreach materials such as informational flyers and maps will offer residents important insights into the springs' ecology and conservation efforts. Additionally, community engagement activities, including workshops and speaker events, will help citizens understand the economic value of the watershed and encourage active participation in its protection.

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

The target population served by this project includes local residents, high school students, and the broader community surrounding Wakulla Springs. The educational programs and watershed tours will primarily engage high school students. Additionally, the project will serve local residents and visitors to the area, with outreach materials and community engagement efforts expected to reach thousands of individuals annually, including through public events and online resources. The project aims to foster a deeper understanding of the environmental and economic importance of Wakulla Springs for all community members.

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

Qualitative assessments, such as observed changes in the diversity and abundance of fish and wildlife populations in and around Wakulla Spring, will contribute to evaluating the overall success and impact of the remediation efforts.

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?

Revert state appropriation and withhold future funding towards this initiative.

14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster? No

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)



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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#:

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)



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- 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

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number

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