



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 3289

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

4. Project/Program Description

Founded in 1971, EC-SAR is the only student-staffed maritime search and rescue team at an undergraduate college in the US, responding to more than 400 maritime distress calls per year. This highly trained group of student volunteers works closely with the U.S. Coast Guard, 911 and other agencies, providing free 24-hour maritime assistance to the boaters of Tampa Bay and adjacent waterways. Leveraging the program's five decades of experience (including serving as the first rescue units to respond to the Sunshine Skyway Bridge collapse in 1980), EC-SAR has become one of the most respected search and rescue organizations on the west coast of Florida. In 2012, EC-SAR developed a search pattern for locating people in the waters surrounding the Skyway Bridge, recognized by the Tampa Bay Search and Rescue Council, Pinellas County Emergency Response Services and the U.S. Coast Guard. In 2019, EC-SAR received the Meritorious Public Service award from the Coast Guard.

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	221,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	151,936
Total State Funds Requested	372,936

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)	372,936	53%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	40,000	6%
Other	290,000	41%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	702,936	100%

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		

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.



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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? 09/01/2025

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction? 05/31/2026

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

See 9b.

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.

Eckerd College owns all of the EC-SAR infrastructure, including the docks.

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		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Funding will support: capital replacement needs such as new engines and trailers (\$100,000); insurance (\$41,000); boat and equipment maintenance (\$17,000); special events/student recognition (\$11,000); fuel (\$25,000); communication and navigation electronics (\$7,500); uniforms and personal gear (\$7,500) and general equipment and supplies (\$12,000).	221,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Funding will support infrastructure improvements including the replacement of three docks: dock 1 new pilings, frame and decking (\$49,685); dock 2 new pilings, frame and decking (\$23,986); dock 3 new pilings, frame, decking (\$13,865); dock 3 installation of 4 new boat lifts and pilings (\$73,200); city and county permits (\$1200); less discount (\$10,000).	151,936
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		372,936

13. Program Performance

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



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Funds will be used for operating support and infrastructure improvements, facilitating the team's ability to continue rescues, patrols, and training. In addition to needed infrastructure upgrades (including boat docks, lifts and pilings), funds will support operating costs such as fuel, navigation electronics, uniforms, and capital replacement expenses (e.g., new engines). While EC-SAR currently receives annual funding from Pinellas County for Maritime BLS First Responder Services, this represents only 5% of the team's annual operating budget. Requested funds will help to alleviate the team's reliance on fundraising and other revenue generation initiatives.

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

EC-SAR team members coordinate the utilization of four rescue boats and an operations/communications center to save lives and property on a daily basis. Students serve a 24-hour-duty rotation every 3 days, participate in weekly patrols, and monitor VHF radios and phones for incoming calls for assistance. EC-SAR students train rigorously in a nine-month program focused on basic and advanced skills including: boating safety, seamanship, line work, basic life support, in-water rescue, emergency rescue techniques, communications, navigation, boat handling, search planning and patterns, vessel and equipment maintenance, and maritime regulations.

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

EC-SAR serves a 500-square nautical-mile area of response, adding to the maritime safety of Pinellas, Hillsborough and Manatee counties - including 26 municipalities with resident populations totaling nearly 2.9 million. In partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard, 911 Emergency Response and other state and local agencies, EC-SAR fulfills a critical need by ensuring the safety of the Tampa Bay region's boating community. The services provided include towing disabled vessels, searching, firefighting, dewatering, un-grounding, searching for and rescuing persons in the water, righting capsized vessels, and responding to Pinellas County 9-1-1 maritime rescue calls as a basic life support (BLS) provider.

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

The target population is the boating community in EC-SAR's 500-square nautical-mile area of response. Beyond the 500+ boaters annually served by EC-SAR on average, this funding will directly benefit the team members by improving their training and rescue resources. EC-SAR is a highly motivated group of volunteer students who are dedicated to serving the community. Although students do not receive pay or academic credit for their participation, the opportunity to learn and practice unique skills are the motivators for membership. Participation as a student member of EC-SAR develops maturity and discipline and instills a commitment to volunteerism that will benefit our community long after graduation from Eckerd.

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

EC-SAR will continue to protect the boating community of Tampa Bay and adjacent waterways, by responding to an average of 400 distress calls per year. The team will compile annual statistics on the number of calls received, cases performed, boat hours logged, and number of people assisted.

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?

Funding will be returned if deliverables or performance measures are not met.

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)

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?



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- 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)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity



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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.