

FLORIDA COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

COASTAL PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE¹

Grant Abstracts, FY 2018-2019

PROJECT: *Navarre Beach Marine Sanctuary Snorkel Reef Educational Signage and Brochure*

RECIPIENT: Santa Rosa County Board of County Commissioners

FCMP FUNDS: \$10,000

ABSTRACT: Design and placement of (5) educational signage panels and 5,000 brochures to be located at the easternmost gulf side pavilion/walkover complex within Navarre Beach Marine Park in Santa Rosa County. The emphasis will be on the newly expanded Navarre Beach Gulf Side snorkel reef to inspire community action and promote protection and effective management of its marine wildlife and habitat resources. The proposed project builds upon existing resources and will be closely coordinated with key stakeholders which include the Santa Rosa County Tourism Development Office, Extension Service Sea Grant Marine Office, Navarre Beach Marine Sanctuary, Navarre Beach Area Chamber Foundation, Navarre Beach Marine Science Station and the Navarre Beach Sea Turtle Conservation Center. Controlled access information is needed in this area because of increasing visitor use of the snorkel reefs, which is anticipated to continue within the park. The educational signage will be located on the boardwalk, pavilion and dune walkover that will allow visitors to enjoy the coastal resources and marine environment without causing environmental harm. The signage will allow visitors to understand the importance of the coastal system and marine wildlife and habitat and promote stewardship of these resources. The educational brochures will be made available throughout the area for residents and visitors.

PROJECT: *Paradise Coast Blueway Paddling Trail*

RECIPIENT: Collier County

FCMP FUNDS: \$15,000

ABSTRACT: The Paradise Coast Blueway trail development effort began with the Ten Thousand Islands section, which covers the wilderness area between Everglades City and Goodland. The main trail and six day-trip routes cover the wilderness areas within Everglades National Park and the Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge. While Phase I focused on the southern portion of the Blueway, stretching to the County's border with Monroe County, the next remaining phases move north, into more developed areas. The project will continue to build on the success of the first phase by developing maps and user information for Phase II and III of the Blueway. Phase II will cover the Goodland to Gordon Pass area and includes routes through Rookery Bay, a prime and easily accessible area for paddlers. Phase III includes a trip up the Gordon River in Naples, and a coastal route along the beaches to the northern county line. It will also include Lake Trafford in Immokalee as a day trip. Phase II and III will continue with providing unapparelled access to natural resources such as Rookery Bay, users will be able to travel through populated areas along the coast and inland areas through the Gordon River. This includes access points, amenities, hazards, parks, neighborhoods and commercial areas with retail and restaurant destinations, the grantee will contract with Turrell, Hall & Associates.

¹ The [Coastal Partnership Initiative](#) makes federal funds from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration available to local governments of Florida's 35 coastal counties and municipalities that are required to include a coastal element in their comprehensive plan. Florida public colleges and universities, regional planning councils, national estuary programs and nonprofit organizations may also apply if an eligible local government agrees to participate as a partner.

PROJECT: *Monroe County Harry Harris Park Vulnerability Analysis*

RECIPIENT: Monroe County

FCMP FUNDS: **\$30,000**

ABSTRACT: The scope of work will include the completion of a vulnerability assessment at the Harry Harris Park owned and maintained by Monroe County. Harry Harris Park is a place to spend the day at the ocean. The beach, not open to the ocean is a tidal pool safer for children. The basketball courts, kiddie playground, pavilions and BBQ grills are close to restrooms and parking. Two softball fields host local teams, one of the most popular features in this park is its deep water easy access boat ramp. The maximum length for vehicle plus trailer cannot exceed 45' there are 15 parking spaces for vehicles with trailers for day parking only and this feature is heavily utilized by Park visitors. This assessment will proactively develop adaptation strategies to enhance the County's investment in an important State goal- the preservation and enhancement of public access in Florida. This analysis furthers the work of the County's sustainability and climate plan ongoing under the GreenKeys plan which sets forth recommendations to plan appropriate uses and adaptation measures for areas. The analysis will review the existing features within the property and identify necessary adaptation measures to protect the park from storms and future impacts from sea level rise and other impacts/stress to maintain operations. The work will also enhance and protect the County's financial investment in preserving its use in perpetuity as a public facility with recreational boat access use and furthering the State's goals to preserve and protect public access.

PROJECT: *Perico-Robinson Connector Trail and Boardwalks*

RECIPIENT: Manatee County

FCMP FUNDS: **\$30,000**

ABSTRACT: The Robinson-Perico Connector Trail Project (Project) is in Manatee County between two popular preservation properties, Robinson Preserve and Perico Preserve. These preserves contain miles of trails that are very well utilized by the public with nearly 300,000 people walking or biking the trails every year. In 2015 Manatee County purchased a privately-owned parcel that would protect an additional 15.5 acres of sensitive habitat and allow a trail connection between Robinson and Perico Preserves. The connector trail is intended for pedestrians and bikes and will include a shell path, boardwalks, and bridges along the approximately 0.28-mile-long upland area within the Robinson-Perico Connector Parcel (Parcel). The upland area lies between a manmade storm water lake to the southwest (offsite) and a mangrove swamp associated with Perico Bayou. The spatial arrangement of upland berms in relation to the wetlands will require the construction of approximately 100 feet of boardwalks to minimize wetland impacts. The Project will also include approximately 1,353 square yards of 6-foot-wide trail surface (bank run shell) along the entire span of the parcel with boardwalks located over wetland habitats.

PROJECT: *Smyrna Dunes Park – Brazilian Pepper Removal*

RECIPIENT: Volusia County Coastal Division

FCMP FUNDS: **\$14,800**

ABSTRACT: Contracted Brazilian Pepper Removal in the areas upland mangroves edges, coastal berm, maritime hammock, and coastal grasslands. Removal will occur in the fall of 2018 by a hired contractor. This will include the appropriate application of herbicide). The work will include chainsaw cutting of Brazilian Pepper trees, hand and loader removal and disposal. All cut stems will be treated immediately with appropriate herbicide. In areas where removal of trunks is not feasible basal bark application of herbicide may be utilized. All removal work performed by the contractor will be completed by hand.

PROJECT: *Atlantic Beach 10th Street Dune Walkover Project*

RECIPIENT: City of Atlantic Beach

FCMP FUNDS: **\$30,000**

ABSTRACT: The project involves the construction of a dune walkover structure over an existing coastal dune system at the 10th Street Beach Access point in Atlantic Beach, as well as, an addition of (2) benches and ADA signage. The City maintains over 15 beach access points and less than a third of them have ADA accessible walkovers. 10th Street is the third most frequented beach access point in the City and has 10 public parking spaces already dedicated making it an ideal location for a constructed walkover to maximize access for pedestrians to safely reach coastal landmarks while providing protection to the beach vegetation and coastal ecosystem.

PROJECT: *Exotic Plant Removal and Habitat Improvement in Walton County's Rare Coastal Dune Lakes*

RECIPIENT: Walton County Public Works Division, Environmental Department

FCMP FUNDS: **\$30,000**

ABSTRACT: Walton County is home to 15 globally rare and imperiled coastal dune lakes. Dune lakes are a unique landscape feature and are only found in a few places around the world. The Walton County dune lakes consist of freshwater from streams, groundwater seepage, and rain combined with the occasional saltwater influx from intermittent connection with the Gulf of Mexico. This connection, called an outfall, acts as a flood control and releases lake water into the Gulf when high water levels exert enough pressure against the dunes to break through and create an opening. Salt water and marine organisms flow back into the lake through the outfall in varying amounts and duration, depending on the tides and weather. The aquatic plants found in the coastal dune lakes play a very important role in maintaining and protecting the water quality, providing shoreline stabilization, and ensuring balanced fish and wildlife species.. Invasive plants disrupt the delicate balance of ecosystems by outcompeting beneficial native plants for water, sunlight, nutrients, and space; diminishing biodiversity; reducing food sources and habitat for native wildlife and insects; and affecting fire regimes. Several nuisance exotic/invasive species have been identified along the coastal dune lakes including torpedo grass (*Panicum repens*), Chinese tallow trees (*Sapium sebiferum*), alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*), and common reed (*Phragmites* spp.). Walton County and the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA) have partnered together to achieve the common goal of reducing invasive aquatic plant species in these lakes. There will be an initial treatment of the dune lakes later in the year in 2018, and a follow-up treatment in early 2019 for the lakes that have a larger invasive plant problem. CBA will plan and lead volunteer events to remove the dead, treated vegetation after treatments are complete. The splitting up of the lake treatments, as well as the planned volunteer events to remove the treated vegetation, will keep the decaying plant matter from greatly altering the water chemistry of the lakes. CBA will also conduct bi-annual aquatic plant surveys of the coastal dune lakes to monitor the progress and locate future target treatment areas. Re-vegetation with native plants will be completed as necessary by CBA staff and volunteers.

PROJECT: *Jensen Beach to Jupiter Inlet Aquatic Preserve – Water Level and Water Quality Baseline Study*

RECIPIENT: Town of Jupiter Island

FCMP FUNDS: **\$10,000**

ABSTRACT: The project entails the establishment of a long-term tide monitoring station located at the Bridge Road crossing of the Jensen Beach to Jupiter Inlet Aquatic Preserve (JBJIAP). The JBJIAP covers over 35 miles of estuarine/lagoon waters and is designated as Class II Waters, Outstanding Florida Waters. The Town of Jupiter Island will study and assess the potential impacts of storm impacts (surge/flooding) and rising sea levels on future coastal planning and resiliency efforts. Currently, there is a lack of up-to-date, real-time water surface elevation data to ground-truth and adjust locally predicted tide levels in the estuary (versus open

coast records of water surface elevation changes). By deploying and maintaining an accurate tide monitoring station the Town plans to use the collected data to review and evaluate local water surface elevation changes (tidal constituents), as well as to begin a process of better defining tidal exchanges in an extremely complex estuarine system connected to two inlets (St. Lucie Inlet to the north and Jupiter Inlet to the south). An improved understanding of the local water surface elevations will enable local coastal communities to better evaluate the potential impacts of episodic storm surge events; as well as, assess longer term sea level rise impacts and potential water quality impacts associated with increased upland development runoff, flood risk, and groundwater table changes. The Town of Jupiter Island will install and maintain a tide monitoring station within the Jensen Beach to Jupiter Inlet Aquatic Preserve (part of the Indian River Lagoon system), recording water level changes for comparison to other tide station records and for prediction of tidal inundations, storm surge, tidal hydraulics, and sea level rise/flood risks within the local coastal communities.

PROJECT: *Reconstruction of Treasure Island's Ring Billed Gull Parking Lot*

RECIPIENT: City of Treasure Island

FCMP FUNDS: **\$30,000**

ABSTRACT: The Ring Billed Gull Lot located in Pinellas County serves as one of the two primary beach access lots in the popular area of Sunset Beach in Treasure Island. A contractor will remove the existing parking lot and replace it under the supervision of City staff. City staff will be installing the lot's irrigation system, vegetation and educational signage. Reconstruction with pervious concrete in the lot will provide (8) additional parking spaces, enhance the lot's drainage and incorporate an educational rain garden and other vegetative components. Most importantly, the project will reduce storm water runoff and flooding, which will help preserve water quality by reducing associated water pollutants. Native, drought resistant plants will be selected based on the NRCS guide for Coastal Dune Restoration and chosen to reduce irrigation and the use of herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers. The rain garden will be designed with a 6-inch water holding capacity for natural storm water infiltration. Educational signage will be used to convey the benefits of rain gardens. This project will serve as a pilot project for the potential future use of pervious concrete and native vegetation in city projects.

STATE AGENCY AND WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT PROJECTS²

PROJECT: *Adaptation Action Initiative, Year 3*

AGENCY: DEP/Florida Coastal Office

CONTACT: Whitney Gray

FCMP FUNDS: **\$165,000**

ABSTRACT: [Florida Coastal Office \(FCO\)](#) will provide assistance to local governments to take action related to adaptation to current and future risks of coastal flooding. FCO will collaborate with other state agencies (Focus Groups) to discuss current and upcoming resiliency resources and efforts. This collaborative approach will provide both interagency coordination and direct support to local governments that are involved in the Adaptation Action Initiative. On an annual basis, FCO will select up to two (2) communities to receive enhanced technical assistance for adaptation. Communities that are deemed to be at a high risk to coastal hazards and can demonstrate support and partnerships at the local level will be given priority. Selected communities will be eligible to receive a combination of financial assistance to support plan development, expertise from a skilled team, and staff support from the Department of Economic Opportunity.

PROJECT: *Development of a Visitor Use Monitoring Protocol for Florida's Aquatic Managed Areas, Year 3*

AGENCY: DEP/Florida Coastal Office

CONTACT: Jeff Carter/Richard Noyes

FCMP FUNDS: **\$100,000**

ABSTRACT: Unfettered access presents challenges to submerged land managers attempting to assess visitor use; sites accessible from all sides do not lend themselves to the traditional techniques of counting visitors, such as entrance gate counts. Consequently, the [Florida Coastal Office](#) will address the current lack of consistent visitor use monitoring methods by developing a statewide, cost-effective protocol, which will provide scientifically defensible, comparable data that can be used to evaluate public use of Florida's coastal resources, future access needs, and potential impacts of visitors in coastal and aquatic managed areas. The protocol and resulting estimates will enhance the ability of state and local managers to focus limited management resources on specific areas or priorities, and will be incorporated into coastal and aquatic area management plans.

PROJECT: *Statewide Ecosystem Assessment Program of Florida's Coastal Aquatic Managed Areas, Year 3*

AGENCY: DEP/Florida Coastal Office

CONTACT: Cheryl Clark

FCMP FUNDS: **\$250,000**

ABSTRACT: FCO and Florida Coastal Management Program partner agencies collect a variety of coastal resource ecological data (e.g., water quality, nutrient levels, bacteria/pathogens, submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), etc.) within these place-based management locations. However, the types of data collected and methods used are not always consistent between and outside of these locations nor is always readily available in formats usable by managers, planners, policy makers and the public. [This five \(5\)-year strategy](#) will develop and pilot a comprehensive ecosystem assessment program which will synthesize, interpret and disseminate information about the ecological health (statuses and trends) of Florida's coastal resources. In Year 1, the Florida Coastal Office will form a Resource Assessment Data Team to identify: (1) the data resources available from ongoing monitoring programs within the stat; and (2) 1-3 key stressors and indicators, available data, data needs and gaps and evaluate the layout of a report which can be recommended for a statewide approach.

² Program enhancement projects identified in the FCMP's [Section 309 Assessment and Strategies, FY 2016-2020](#).