

Estuary Program to Award \$250,000 in Community Grants



PENSACOLA & PERDIDO BAYS ESTUARY PROGRAM

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The Pensacola & Perdido Bays Estuary Program is pleased to announce the opening of the 2023-2024 Community Grant Program funding opportunity. This program will fund action projects that serve to restore, preserve, connect, inform, and educate.

The PPBEP Community Grant Program will award \$250,000 in total funding to help restore and protect our waters. Award amounts will range from \$10,000 to \$50,000. Local governments or nonstate entities (educational institutions and 501(c)3s) are eligible to submit a proposal for projects located within the Perdido and/or Pensacola watershed within Escambia, Santa Rosa, and/or Okaloosa counties.

The PPBEP is a stakeholder-driven, science-based organization charged with restoring and preserving the Pensacola and Perdido Bay Systems, and their associated watersheds. PPBEP is guided by a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, which serves as a blueprint for the restoration and preservation of the area and waterways. Through these actions, PPBEP's vision is to create a healthy and sustainable environment, economy, and community.

The funding opportunity includes seven eligible project categories that align with the Estuary Program's CCMP: Water Quality, Sedimentation, Habitat Restoration, Fish and Wildlife Conservation, Watershed Awareness and Education, Resilience, and Community Science. Over the past three years, PPBEP has awarded \$700,000 to 26 projects in the community.

The deadline to apply is 11:59 p.m. CT on Aug. 3, 2023, and projects must be completed by May 31, 2024. Priority consideration will be given to “shovel ready” action projects and projects that inform, engage, and educate the community. Projects that leverage match, including volunteer efforts, will also receive priority consideration. The 2023-2024 grant recipients will be recognized at the Estuary Program’s Community Grant Symposium on Sept. 22 at the Bayview Community Center during National Estuaries Week. National Estuaries Week is a nationwide celebration of our bays and estuaries and the many benefits they provide to our local communities. The symposium will highlight the work completed by grant recipients that were funded by the 2022-2023 grant cycle. The public is invited to attend to learn more about the projects that were funded in our local communities.

2022-2023 awarded projects included:

- No-Till Seed Drill Rental Program – Blackwater Soil and Water Conservation District
- EscaRosa OysterCorps – Franklin’s Promise
- Empowering Students to Take Action: Aquatic Care Team – Navarre Beach Marine Science Station
- Manatees & Meadows: Protecting Manatees and Their Habitat Through Outreach: National Wildlife Federation
- Coastal Landscaping Workshop & Plant Giveaway – Escambia County
- Zooplankton Ecology and Water Quality Monitoring of Perdido Bay – University of West Florida
- Streambank Erosion in the Pensacola and Perdido Bay Watershed – University of West Florida
- Peripheral Oyster Mapping in Santa Rosa Sound – Northwest Florida State College

For additional details and to apply, please visit <https://www.ppbeb.org/what-we-do/programs-and-projects/community-grants>.

The Community Grant Program is made possible through the support of the Florida Legislature. The Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program was awarded \$250,000 in legislative appropriations to support the Community Grant Program. The Estuary Program offers their deepest

appreciation to the Northwest Florida Legislative Delegation for their support, specifically Senator Broxson and Representative Andrade and for sponsoring the Program's legislative funding request.