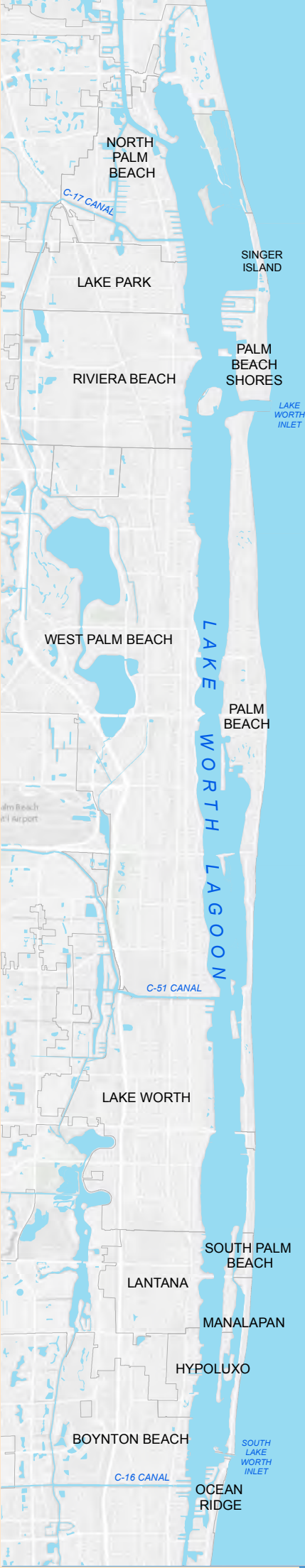




lake worth
LAGOON

LAKE WORTH LAGOON INITIATIVE



Working to improve water quality, increase resiliency and restore habitat

2023 Legislative Funding Request

Thank you for your support of water quality improvements and habitat restoration in **Lake Worth Lagoon**. Your commitment is making a positive difference for coastal systems state-wide. Since 1998, the Florida Legislature has appropriated over \$23 million for restoration and enhancement of the lagoon, a 20-mile estuary extending from North Palm Beach to Ocean Ridge in **Palm Beach County**. These legislative funds have been effectively leveraged with local funds to support 54 projects totaling just over \$90 million.

While the **Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative (LWLI)**, a multiagency and stakeholder collaborative established in 2008, has made considerable progress to reverse impacts to the system from human activities during the past century, challenges remain within the lagoon and its watershed.

For the 2023 legislative session, LWLI requests \$2.3 million in state legislative appropriations to fund the ranked projects identified below that will continue to benefit the lagoon’s water quality and habitat.

Rank Order	Project Name	Funding Request	Matching Funds	Estimated Project Cost
1.	Lake Worth Lagoon System Assessment	\$261,804	\$261,804	\$523,608
2.	Bonefish Cove Restoration	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000
3.	Providencia Cay Restoration	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000
4.	Marine Debris Removal Pilot Project	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$200,000
5.	Lake Worth Lagoon Seagrass Restoration Project	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000
	TOTAL	\$2,361,804	\$1,861,804	\$4,223,608



www.LWLI.org

FY 2023 PROJECT PROPOSALS

Lake Worth Lagoon's economic, environmental and recreational value is connected to its resources, which include seagrass beds, mangroves, reefs, recreationally and commercially important fish, and imperiled species such as manatees and sea turtles. The water quality, sediment and habitat improvements associated with these projects will continue to protect, restore and enhance the lagoon's valuable resources.



Lake Worth Lagoon System Assessment

Local Sponsor: Palm Beach County

Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative Funding Request: \$261,804

Proposed Match Amount: \$261,804

Estimated Total Project Cost: \$523,608

This project includes the continuation of long-term data collection within the lagoon to monitor sea turtles, oysters and seagrasses. Data and analysis from these efforts are used to drive management strategies for the preservation and restoration projects in Lake Worth Lagoon and its watershed.

Identifying opportunities for future enhancement and preservation

Bonefish Cove Restoration

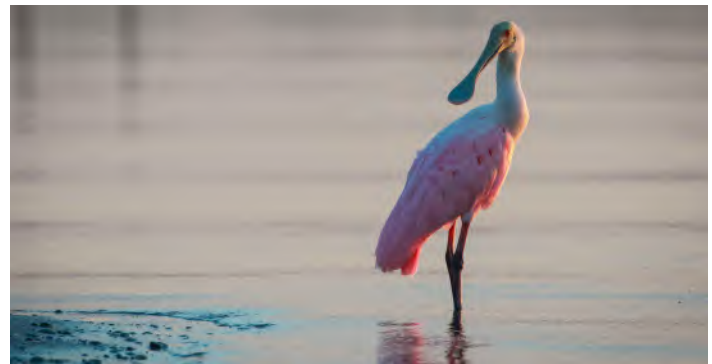
Local Sponsor: Palm Beach County

Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative Funding Request: \$1,000,000

Proposed Match Amount: \$1,000,000

Estimated Total Project Cost: \$2,000,000

This restoration project provides the placement of sand and rock material to cap muck sediments to create seagrass, oyster, bird nesting and intertidal mangrove habitats, providing long-term benefits to water quality, wildlife habitats and the resiliency of Lake Worth Lagoon.



Creating habitats to restore and improve ecosystem health and resiliency

Providencia Cay Restoration

Local Sponsor: Palm Beach County

Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative Funding Request: \$500,000

Proposed Match Amount: \$500,000

Estimated Total Project Cost: \$1,000,000

This restoration project consists of the placement of clean, lagoon-compatible sand and rock material to cap muck sediments and create seagrass, oyster, bird nesting and intertidal mangrove habitats, providing long term benefits to the water quality, wildlife habitats and resiliency of Lake Worth Lagoon.

Marine Debris Removal Pilot Project

Local Sponsor: Palm Beach County

Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative Funding Request: \$100,000

Proposed Match Amount: \$100,000

Estimated Total Project Cost: \$200,000

Removal of existing floating structures within Lake Worth Lagoon. Floating structures are not registered or classified as vessels, therefore not identified as derelict vessels. These floating structures are not maintained and often impact existing natural resources and become hazards to navigation or damage property when they break loose from improper and unregulated moorings.

Acquisition and preservation efforts to conserve valuable natural resources



Lake Worth Lagoon Seagrass Restoration

Sponsor: Palm Beach County

Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative Funding Request: \$500,000

Proposed Match Amount: \$0

Estimated Total Project Cost: \$500,000

Seagrass beds are critical habitat for juvenile fish, green sea turtles, manatees and other marine life. Various species of nursery-grown seagrasses will be planted in designated natural and restoration areas within Lake Worth Lagoon. These planted seagrass beds will be monitored and assessed to determine applicability of seagrass planting as a potential component of future restoration projects within the lagoon.

PAST SUCCESSES AND HIGHLIGHTS



Initiative Steering Committee

Palm Beach County
South Florida Water Management District
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Florida Inland Navigation District
Palm Beach County League of Cities
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission



Restoring habitats to improve water quality for the benefit of wildlife and people



Top: A 550-foot boardwalk leads visitors closer to the mangrove islands created at **South Cove Natural Area** in downtown West Palm Beach. **Middle:** The restoration of **Grassy Flats Natural Area** in central Lake Worth Lagoon was completed in 2013. Significant seagrass and intertidal habitat was created at the site, along with the capping of 13 acres of existing muck sediments.

Below left: FWC and PBC ERM scientists tagging protected American Oystercatcher chicks from a restoration island in Lake Worth Lagoon. **Below center:** Restoration and enhancement projects, such as the creation of artificial reefs, improve fisheries habitat and provide recreational opportunities. **Below right:** Youth participating in a *Growing up Wild-Meet the Creatures of the Lagoon* outdoor education and exploration event.

Enhancing recreational, ecotourism and educational opportunities





Applying technological innovation and community support for restoration



Top: In August 2015, volunteers planted thousands of marsh grasses and mangroves at the **Grassy Flats Restoration Project** in central Lake Worth Lagoon. **Middle:** In August 2016, lush wetland grasses covered portions of the intertidal islands created as part of the 13-acre Grassy Flats project. **Bottom left:** Grassy Flats construction included the use of conveyors and sand shooters. **Bottom right:** The nesting of state-listed imperiled shorebirds, such as Black Skimmers at project sites in the lagoon is an indication of habitat restoration success.



LAKE WORTH LAGOON INITIATIVE

For more information on the efforts of the Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative, contact:

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An expanded version of this report which includes summaries of additional past projects is available upon request.