

State of Florida

Suwannee River Watershed Restoration

This proposal includes three projects that, collectively, will help restore and protect water quality, water supplies and habitat in the Suwannee River Watershed. It is one of Florida's least populated areas and, for that reason, remains more biologically diverse and healthier than many other watersheds. The proposal will also replenish living marine resources; and revitalize the local Gulf Coast economy—and the communities that depend on those natural resources and that economy—and set them on a more sustainable, resilient footing for the future. The three projects are:

1. Restoring Resilience to Oyster Reefs in the Big Bend of Florida's Gulf Coast (\$5,181,697)
2. Lower Suwannee & Gulf Watershed Conservation Easement (\$4,000,000)
3. Suwannee River Partnership Irrigation Water Enhancement Program (\$2,884,000)

Each project extends the benefits of projects and programs already proven successful in the watershed. They will accomplish these ends by restoring water resources, reducing excessive nutrients, and replenishing and protecting coastal and marine resources through conservation of coastal lands and restoration of oyster reef habitat—and in doing so, will achieve the complete set of Council goals and objectives. These actions in turn will help revitalize the local Gulf Coast economy, which depends on oystering and other marine-based products as well as tourism and silviculture, and promote the resilience and sustainability of local communities throughout the watershed. They leverage other resources and build on past investments in the region to extend their impact. Requested funding amount: \$12,065,697.