

State of Florida

Tampa Bay Watershed Restoration

Tampa Bay is the largest open-water estuary in Florida at nearly 400 square miles. The bay contains more than 200 fish species, including snook, redfish, and spotted sea trout. Its mangrove-blanketed islands support among the most diverse waterbird nesting colonies in North America, annually hosting 40,000 pairs of 25 different species. However, Tampa Bay has extensive areas of impaired waterbodies (those not meeting water quality standards), which have adversely affected coastal habitats. This proposal's five projects collectively will restore and protect habitat and water resources; replenish living marine resources; and revitalize the local economy—and the communities that depend on those resources and that economy—and set them on a sustainable, resilient footing. The five projects are:

1. Robinson Preserve Restoration (\$1,755,000)
2. River Tower Shoreline Restoration and Stormwater Treatment (\$1,755,000)
3. Palm River Restoration Project Phase II, East McKay Bay (\$585,000)
4. Edward W. Chance Reserve Hydrologic Restoration (\$204,750)
5. Alafia Bank Bird Sanctuary Living Shorelines (\$2,647,710)

Each project extends the benefits of projects and programs already proven successful in the watershed. They will accomplish these ends by restoring shoreline habitat, creating and enhancing upland habitat, and providing stormwater treatment to reduce pollutant impacts on critical water resources—and in doing so, will achieve the complete set of Council goals and objectives. These actions in turn will invigorate the diverse Tampa Bay economy, which depends on its expansive coastal environment to attract and sustain its year-round community and a thriving tourist industry. The significance of funding projects in this area is that the state and local governments have already invested millions in projects aimed at improving Tampa Bay. Requested funding amount: \$6,947,460.