



INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
AGENDA ITEM
Department of General Services /
Parks & Recreation

Date: June 8, 2023
To: The Honorable Board of County Commissioners
Through: John A. Titkanich, Jr., County Administrator
Michael C. Zito, Assistant County Administrator
Beth Powell, Director Parks and Recreation
From: Wendy Swindell, Conservation Lands Manager
Subject: Notice of Grant Award from the Indian River Lagoon Council – Small Grants Program – Contract #: 2023SG-07

BACKGROUND:

As part of the improvements undertaken at the recently opened Jones' Pier Conservation Area, the small concrete cottage on site has been renovated and re-purposed to accommodate a facility for staff, volunteers, and researchers associated with academic projects and volunteer work. This renovation work was funded, in part, by a 2021 grant from the Indian River Lagoon Council to convert the kitchen area in the cottage into a "wet lab." For the 2021 grant effort, staff worked with the Indian River State College's Biological Sciences Department students to complete the wet lab conversion, as well as to complete a "Bio Blitz" at Jones' Pier to begin an inventory of biodiversity at this conservation area.

Since 2020, staff has been developing working relationships with project partners, scientific organizations, and academic groups with the goal of promoting environmental education and research opportunities at Jones' Pier. New efforts for 2023 include coordination with the Florida Oceanographic Society (FOS) to complete a "living dock" oyster project on the small pier. In addition, staff has coordinated with the biology department at St. Edward's Upper School and the Pelican Island Audubon Society River Kidz Program towards future programming in the summer, and the remainder of 2023.

The goals of the 2023 Jones' Pier programming will be: (1) for younger age groups to develop a beginner's field guide for Jones' Pier. The produced take away field pamphlet guide will be housed in a free little library at the trailhead for visitors to reference when walking the trails on site. Students will have an opportunity to complete field work to collect species, use the microscope (age level appropriate) and other resources to prepare a brief description of each species. They will work with an art teacher to create their rendering, and will be credited in the guide (accompanying each species) for their work; and (2) the St. Edward's High School students will be tasked with completing a research study to compare the diversity of species in the Jones' Pier marsh versus the nearby Lagoon. This will involve the capture and identification of fish, macroinvertebrates, and more challenging species, and working with environmental professionals to develop a

comprehensive Jones' Pier biodiversity inventory. The goal of their project will be to present a poster at the 2024 Indian River Lagoon Symposium describing their results.

Funds for this project would be used to purchase a camera to attach to the microscope purchased in 2022 with IRLC small grant funds, purchase of a 50-gallon fish tank to hold specimens for identification, a variety of nets and art supplies, field ID guides to assist students in identification, and field pamphlet printing costs. A copy of the Grant Agreement between the Indian River Lagoon Council and the County has been attached.

FUNDING

Funding for the project in the amount of \$1,166.80 of Indian River Lagoon Council funds will be matched by the County in the amount of \$1,471.40 for a total project cost of \$2,638.20. The Student Field Guide Grant is budgeted and available in the General Fund/Conservation Lands/IRL Council Student Field Guide Grant, number 00121572-035290-23801, in the amount of \$2,638.20.

Account Name	Account Number	Amount
General Fund/Conservation Lands/IRL Council Student Field Guide Grant	00121572-035290-23801	\$2,639.00

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff respectfully recommends that the Chairman execute the Indian River Lagoon Council 2023 Small Project grant Agreement – Contract #: 2023SG-07 for the Environmental education Programming at the Jones' Pier Conservation Area.

ATTACHMENT

- IRL Council Small Grants Program Agreement – Contract#:2023SG-07

APPROVED AGENDA ITEM FOR JUNE 20, 2023