

NOAA GRANT SUMMARY - Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-SEC-OED-2013-2003614

NOAA's Environmental Literacy grants supports projects designed to build the capacity of informal educators (including interpreters and docents) and/or formal educators (pre- or in-service) to use NOAA data and data access tools to help K-12 students and/or the public understand and respond to global change.

Navarre Beach Marine Science Station (NBMSS) has joined a collaboration with IMMS – CMER and LUMCON to design a learning and monitoring program that will give K-12 Teachers in Florida, Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi an opportunity to learn about hands on instruction, interpretation of data from the Gulf of Mexico, apply NOAA datasets to their classroom and use on-line tools that *will be created* by IMMS-CMER and LUMCON to assist in this interpretation. NBMSS has proposed much needed equipment that will allow students to assist in the grant project through reef monitoring in the Gulf of Mexico.

Grant Amount: \$171572.00 (partner organization)

Santa Rosa County Board of County Commissioners – Committee of the Whole Meeting
Navarre Beach Marine Science Station Expansion using
BP RESTORE funds – NFWFMD funding & Santa Rosa County RESTORE funds

1. Santa Rosa County BOCC – Request

- **Expand Footprint at current location (SRCSD currently leases site from Santa Rosa County)**
 - **Including Interpretive Center – Similar in size and design to current location – 2-story building approximately 6000 sq. ft.**
 - **Develop Outdoor Classroom – Similar in size and design to the current restroom pavillions**

2. Background

The mission of the Navarre Beach Marine Science Station is to promote the appreciation, conservation, and understanding of the marine ecosystem of coastal Florida through education and service.

In late 2008, marine science students held a town hall meeting and led several presentations for the Santa Rosa County Board of Commissioners and the SRC School Board about converting an empty, unoccupied ranger station into an environmental center. After overwhelming positive response from the community, students succeeded in obtaining the site in March 2009. Over 2,000 community service hours later the students, under faculty supervision had created what is now the Navarre Beach Marine Science Station. Since its official opening in August 2009, the Station has been host to well over 8,000 students and community members for programs concerning the local marine environments. The program provides hands-on, feet-wet curriculum that educates and challenges participants from ages 3-33+ on how to be stewards of our marine environment. New programs have expanded to now include two high schools of dual-enrolled students (through Pensacola State College and Santa Rosa County Schools), field experiences for K-8 school children, Saturday programs for K-8 students, over-night programs for 3-8th graders, public open houses for visitors to Navarre Beach, summer camps, and programs geared for both pre-K students and their family and for students with special needs. All of the programs are designed to leave participants with a new found understanding and respect for their nearby marine ecosystems, as well a desire to protect and conserve the delicate habitats of Florida.

3. Current Program

Along with the myriad of programs available to address on-going environmental issues, and recent major impacts such as the oil spill, the station is also a hub for involving students and community members alike in environmental improvement activities. Dune renourishment efforts, beach clean-ups, ethical fishing labs, and in the future there is a plan to begin water quality monitoring give the participants a feeling of true responsibility and connection to the critical area they are protecting.

Navarre High School students enrolled in Dual Enrollment Marine Biology and Oceanography (attending classes at the station) will learn about the Gulf of Mexico, its watershed, ethical angling practices, and

environmental issues facing the area through direct data collection, fishing clinics, and hands-on activities. High school students teach younger students about the Gulf of Mexico in action packed, standards-driven two hour festivals to include learning stations focused on fishing limits, marine debris, casting skills, and various topics of study. A major goal of the project is to provide meaningful outdoor experiences for all students. This unique “each one – teach one” model has received several awards.

NBMSS also partners with University of West Florida (UWF) Pensacola State College (PSC) for student instruction and field experience.

4. Success

- 2012 Navarre Chamber of Commerce Chairman Award for contributions to the community
- 2011 Environmental Protection Agency Gulf Guardian Award Winner
- 2010 Navarre Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year
- Santa Rosa Clean Community Volunteer Group of the Year
- Program featured on Ocean Conservancy blog and Gulf of Mexico Foundation website
- Model for Florida Learn and Serve programs
- Selected to host National SeaGrant meeting, NOAA B-Wet training, and regional FWC/FMSEA training

5. Project Need

Since its inception, NBMSS has had broad support and ownership by the community at large but we receive feedback that the community is waiting....waiting for NBMSS to go to the next level. NBMSS hosts children of visitors in the summer camps but still are constantly asked by visitors about programs available to the public. Our classes are interrupted almost daily with questions about our wonderful, natural resource...the Gulf of Mexico.

In addition, we have received requests from other Universities such as UWF to collaborate on research projects with their students but we are limited on space and equipment.

With the newly placed reefs in the Gulf, the Sea Turtle Conservation Center and renewed interest in Navarre Beach, the timing is right.

The program, in cooperation with the Sea Turtle Conservation Center and the Marine Sanctuary needs to expand its footprint and the program offerings.

6. Other Education Based Centers Research

NBMSS has researched other centers that are education based but serve dual purpose for destination tourism. These centers include Ponce Inlet and Jensen Beach in Florida and Tybee Island. All have larger buildings, broader program offerings for visitors and have non-profit affiliation in addition to their school board affiliation. Each has in excess of 50,000 visitors annually and is considered a large destination/eco- tourism draw for their counties.

7. Expansion of Programs

NBMSS strategy for program expansion and sustainability is two-fold. First, we are currently submitting two grants for program expansion through NOAA and the Gulf Coast Promotional Fund set aside by BP; second, we intend to develop a non-profit in affiliation with NBMSS that will allow us to receive various philanthropic gifts and tax deductible donations.

NBMSS will be submitting a series of grants to expand program offerings in March and April. The grants, if awarded will begin the program transformation and we will need support and assistance from the County for facility expansion.

8. Expansion of Facility

NBMSS is “bursting at the seams”. We do well to fit in the footprint we are in and would like to expand in the same location, next to the current location and include an interpretive center showcasing the Marine Beach Science Center and Sea Turtle Conservation Center with marine life exhibits, a wet lab, conference area and an outdoor classroom. This will allow for additional general public education programs and be a centerpiece for community events and a multi-use community center. We feel this will make Navarre Beach a true visitor destination and be the hub of eco-toursim events.

NBMSS is hopeful the County will develop a second structure next to NBMSS location that is similar to the current structure but approximately 3000 sq. ft. larger (lower and upper level combined ~6000 sq. ft.) and an outdoor classroom similar to the restroom pavilion structures currently in place near the sound. We anticipate the new structures will be built to code and be in the same general design as the current structures.

Budget: Navarre Beach Marine Science Center
 Project: From the Classroom to Decision-Making: A Collaboration Among Students, Educators, Outreach Specialists, Industry and Resource Managers
 Project Start Date: 2 January 2014
 Project End Date: 1 January 2017

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Reviewed by GRCSO Finance Department
 3/8/13
 * no matching req'd of District.

NBMSS - BP Promotion Grant Budget

Expense Category	Unit	Rate	Months	Total	
Salaries					
Program Director		10%	2500	12	25000
Science Educator		60%	2500	12	30000
Contract Program Mgr.		1	4500	12	54000
Marketing					94000
Evaluation/Reporting					10000
Supplies					63570
Events					15000
Speaker Stipends					12000
Signage					14000
Guided Tours					6000
Outdoor Classroom					150000
Misc.					5100
Total					478670