

Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative Project Selection Criteria

The Chairperson guides the solicitation process. The Chairperson prepares the annual application for solicitation and receives consensus on the application before the solicitations are initiated before the Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative Committee (herein referred to as the “Committee”).

To the greatest extent possible, all projects must be consistent with the Water Restoration Grant Program as defined in FS 403.885. The Legislature’s preference is towards turn-dirt projects. No more than 10% of the funding for any year should be spent on research, education and monitoring. Land acquisition is allowed if the land will be utilized to further a water quality or habitat improvement project.

Bang for the Buck – Does the proposed project represent tangible and measurable expectations of water quality or habitat improvements to the Loxahatchee River or its tributaries?

Ready to Go – Has the proposed project initiated any and all land acquisitions and local approvals necessary to move forward with the construction phase? If regulatory permits are required – have permits been received? (Lower consideration for projects that have not yet received necessary permits. Lowest consideration for projects that have not yet initiated the permitting process.)

Local Commitment – Does the proposed project have a commitment from the local sponsor of at least 50% cost match (match may be other funding commitments, in-kind or a combination)? Does the sponsor have a record of timely completion?

Re-imbursement for any project cost incurred by a local entity before the execution of a funding contract with the SFWMD, while not prohibited, should be avoided. In no circumstance will a reimbursement be recommended unless the expenditure is pre-approved by the committee by a formal vote.

Projects should be completed within a one-year period (consistent with State policy). Larger projects, which require multi-year implementation, may be broken down to phased projects, but each phase should yield tangible and stand alone results. In no circumstance should contract duration exceed 24 months unless otherwise specifically authorized by the committee and the South Florida Water Management District.

Applications must be submitted by a certain date established by the committee. The committee secretary will transmit the applications for grant funding to committee members two (2) weeks in advance of the committee meeting in which the applications will first be discussed. Applicants will be expected to provide the committee a five (5) minute presentation outlining the merits of the proposed project. After presentations, committee members may propose questions of the applicant. If any question cannot be answered during the presentation period, it may be responded to at any time before the committee votes on applications through the committee secretary. The committee secretary will be responsible for disseminating the responses to all committee members.

A subsequent meeting of the committee will be held and a formal vote will be held establishing a final listing of projects meeting the selection criteria. Afterwards, the committee will rank the selected projects by a formal vote.

A final project list and ranking will be submitted to the Legislative Delegation, SFWMD and FDEP. Projects will be funded in order of ranking until all available funds are encumbered. If a listed project does not receive funding it can be re-submitted the following year.

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