



Natural Resources Management Department

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Inter-Office Memo

TO: The Tourism Development Council (TDC)
THROUGH: Virginia Barker, Director, Natural Resources Management (NRM)
FROM: Matt Culver, Environmental Section Supervisor, NRM
DATE: July 25, 2022
SUBJECT: Funding Request to Remove More Derelict Vessels from the Indian River Lagoon

The Natural Resources Management Department would welcome \$97,675 more Tourism Development Tax (TDT) funds for Derelict Vessel removals, however additional funding requires at least ¾:1 match.

Background:

Brevard County is constantly combating the abandonment of vessels within our Indian River Lagoon (IRL) system. Once left deserted and/or discarded within our waterways, the remnants of these vessels become debris that is a hazard to recreation, navigation and the environment. Vessel Debris Removal provides immediate improvement to the health of the IRL and a positive impact to local tourism. Removal of derelict vessels improves recreational access and restores waterway habitat through debris removal at waterway destination areas. Our project goals align with the TDC Tourism & Lagoon Missions of Litter Control, Habitat Restoration, and Waterway Destinations & Access.

Previous FY 21-22 Funding:

\$49,300 was requested and approved for the removal of at least 6 vessels between the 528 Causeway and Micco. This work has already been completed and final documentation submittal is underway.

Match Requirement per Brevard County TDT Ordinance:

"Beach improvement and maintenance projects are to receive full funding as the top priority. As the second priority, lagoon- and estuary-related projects shall only receive up to \$1,000,000.00 per year starting in fiscal year 2019, and any such project with a total expected cost that exceeds \$50,000.00 must obtain matching funds from one or more source(s) at a minimum ratio of 3/4:1, 75 percent match prior to receiving tourist development tax revenue."

Two Match Options to Consider:

1. Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission is about to spend around \$100,000 removing large Derelict Vessels from the IRL in Brevard. County staff is involved in helping to make this project successful, but the state will pay the removal contractor directly. If this state investment in derelict vessel removal from the IRL in Brevard can be considered as match, Matt can proceed simultaneously with additional removals funded by the TDT.
2. There are 2 grant programs offered each year by the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) for Derelict Vessel removal but they require local match and vessels must be cleared by law enforcement for removal before applying for the FIND grants. If the TDC allows NRM to pledge a pre-determined amount of TDT funds as the County's local match, the TDT could leverage FIND DV grant funds that would meet the match requirement of the TDT ordinance. TDT funds would not be accepted until the FIND grant(s) is/are contracted. The FIND small grant program requires \$10,000 of county funding to match \$30,000 of FIND funding. The FIND large grant program provides 50:50 match, so either or both FIND grants would provide sufficient funds to satisfy the match requirements of the TDT ordinance.