

II. FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. Five Year Summary of Fiscal Impact:

| Fiscal Years | <u>2012</u> | <u>2013</u> | <u>2014</u> | <u>2015</u> | <u>2016</u> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Grant Expenditures | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Operating Costs | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| External Revenues | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Program Income (County) | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| In-Kind Match (County) | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| NET FISCAL IMPACT | == | == | == | == | == |
| | | | | | |
| # ADDITIONAL FTE POSITIONS (Cumulative) | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

Is Item Included In Current Budget? Yes ___ No ___
 Budget Account No.: Fund ___ Department ___ Unit ___ Object ___

Reporting Category

B. Recommended Sources of Funds/Summary of Fiscal Impact: The impact will be the initial application fee from various departments who decide to apply. However, the total cost of application fees is indeterminable.

C. Departmental Fiscal Review: Pat DeGuzman

III. REVIEW COMMENTS

A. OFMB Fiscal and/or Contract Dev. and Control Comments:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| WS 3-2-12 | OFMB 3/16/12 3/21/12 | Contract Dev. and Control 3-20-12 B. O'Connell |
| <u>[Signature]</u> 3/16/2012 | <u>[Signature]</u> 3/21/12 | <u>[Signature]</u> 3/20/12 |

B. Legal Sufficiency:

Anne Welfant 3/21/12
 Assistant County Attorney

C. Other Department Review:

[Signature]
 Department Director

Welcome to the

Attachment 1

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

MEET

National Association of Counties

NACO



2012 NACO ACHIEVEMENT AWARD APPLICATION



Office of Community Revitalization
Community Connect Initiative

Submitted by the
Office of Community Revitalization

February 2012





OCR'S COMMUNITY CONNECT INITIATIVE




1. Abstract of the Program

The Community Connect Initiative, developed and implemented by the Palm Beach County Office of Community Revitalization (OCR), was designed to increase citizens' access to news and information; increase understanding of local government structure, processes, and funding; enhance citizens engagement and participation in local problem-solving and decision making; and foster a proactive interaction with local government built on trust, reciprocity and understanding.


The initiative is comprised of a website, a monthly e-mail publication, ongoing news and resource alerts, handouts, individual and community meetings, speaking engagements, citizen education, workshops, and a referral program. The initiative has reinforced the County's commitment to promoting an active and informed community, as well as vibrant neighborhoods where residents are active in civic and neighborhood affairs and where programs and services are tailored to meet the needs of neighborhoods.

The initiative, now entering into its third year of implementation, has been very successful in fostering a more informed and involved community, innovative and cost effective services, and greater trust and confidence in local government. It has been especially valuable to our communities because it has given citizens the tools and awareness of existing resources they need to strengthen and bring about positive changes in their communities.

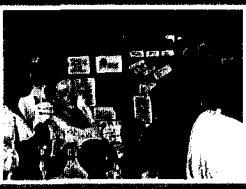
COMMUNITY CONNECT



Educate



Inform



Engage

2. The Problem/Need for the Program

The OCR Community Connect Initiative was developed as a result of a recognized need to better educate, engage, and communicate with the citizens of Palm Beach County, while offering greater opportunities for citizens and government to interact with each other, contribute and listen, and discuss issues that are important to them.

The OCR has provided since its inception a wealth of public engagement and community outreach initiatives, and has been very successful in keeping citizens informed. However, there was a need for a comprehensive, multi-channel initiative to bring residents closer to County government, provide information on county news, activities, and programs on a consistent basis; and provide citizens with the tools and strategies necessary to manage and shape the challenges of neighborhood life. In addition, it has become apparent in the past few years that there is a great need for information on available resources, additional neighborhood organizational tools, technical assistance, and training in core competencies.

Citizens all over the County have expressed a strong desire to obtain more information on the programs and services offered by the OCR and the County in general. They also expressed a need to become aware of how to access available resources, learn how to be more active in their respective neighborhoods, how to cultivate neighborhood leadership and self-sufficiency, how to work together and become engaged in the decisions that affect their community, and how to develop new partnerships and collaborations.

The expressed citizens' desires and needs to learn about County government and available resources, and how to become involved, along with the pulse of current societal issues and strained government budgets, prompted OCR staff to look at what other communities were actively doing to address this need. OCR staff pulled elements of successful programs, and spent time asking citizen groups, other local governments and County employees, what services or programs the County could provide to increase citizens' opportunities to access information, and become engaged. As a result of this process, the OCR's community Connect Initiative was born.

3. Description of the Program

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The OCR Community Connect Initiative commenced in 2009 as an effort to promote an active, engaged, and informed community. The initiative was developed with realistic expectations, and was carefully designed and implemented to achieve three primary objectives: 1) stimulate and encourage residents to gain a better understanding of available programs, services, and resources; 2) provide information to citizens on how to access and use community resources; and 3) achieve a higher level of citizen engagement by strengthening connections with the community, in the community, and across the various actions that local government can take to involve citizens.

Following are the components of the initiative:

- Website presence;
- Community Connect E-mail Publication;
- News and Events E-mail Alerts;
- Community Connection Meetings;
- Individual Meetings;
- Speaking Engagements;
- Resident Education to Action Program;
- Community Connection Workshops;
- Brochures and Handouts; and
- Referral Program
- Referral Program

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

WEBSITE - The development of a web presence was the revamping of www.pbcgov.org/ocr, the official website of the Office of Community Revitalization.

The website's main purpose is to better educate and communicate with citizens. It provides information on OCR programs and services, and a wealth of information and tools to help residents stabilize and revitalize their communities.

Through the website, citizens can provide feedback on OCR programs and services, request assistance, register for workshops and sign up for OCR's Community Connect publication.

OCR staff, through a partnership with the Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas and other local and global partners, offers through the OCR's website a community toolbox. The toolbox includes English and Spanish step-by-step guidelines, real-life examples, checklists and training materials for those who want to create community change and improvement.



The community toolbox provides tools to learn a community-building skill, help residents to get a quick start in doing key activities in community work, solve problems that are common when doing community work, access different sources of information about what works in addressing specific problems or goals related to community health and development, and learn from others. The community toolbox is free.



The OCR has also partnered with Neighborhood Link, a national internet-based community network, to provide free, interactive neighborhood websites to every neighborhood group and association in Palm Beach County. The purpose of this unprecedented and innovative service is to build stronger communities, improve communication between community groups, and support ongoing community outreach efforts.

The service is free to neighborhood groups and does not use public funds. The goal was to enhance the community groups' ability to share resources and build stronger communication with one another and government, while giving OCR another tool to inform residents about ongoing county events and services.

COMMUNITY CONNECT E-MAIL PUBLICATION- The Office of Community Revitalization's Community Connect is an e-mail communication intended to provide Palm Beach County residents and all interested parties with information regarding grant opportunities, relevant community events, tools and information that can be used to assist in community revitalization efforts. The publication is distributed via e-mail to over 1,500 individuals and organizations.

(Description of the Program Continued)

The publication also seeks input from community residents and different organizations regarding available resources, the use of the information provided, and the type of initiatives and/or improvement projects they have been able to implement as a result.

NEWS AND EVENTS E-MAIL ALERTS- These alerts include information on important events, project updates, meeting announcements, volunteer opportunities and other opportunities for neighbors and other community stakeholders to give input or make an impact on their community. Citizens sign up at meetings and other events to receive these e-mails, and they are sent out on an ongoing basis.

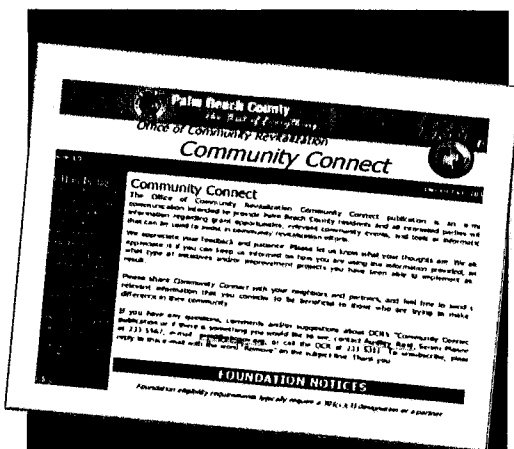
COMMUNITY CONNECTION MEETINGS - The Community Connections meetings are designed to enhance community civic engagement and public participation. The meetings' agenda is comprised of the following segments: a Commissioner's Forum, a mini workshop, department updates, and residents' comments.

During the Commissioner's Forum, the Commissioners respond to questions from their constituents and share their own views on the County's revitalization program and neighborhood empowerment process, as well as how the County can help neighborhoods be successful. OCR's Mini Workshops are designed to engage, inform and educate citizens, and features varied topics of interest to neighborhood organizations and residents alike. They are a great opportunity for neighborhood leaders to interact and learn from one another.

INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY MEETINGS - Individual meetings are typically held to address specific community concerns and provide training or guidance to neighborhood leaders on specific subjects. Community meetings are held throughout the County to seek input on specific issues or projects, provide information on County programs, and bring together a cross-section of viewpoints to exchange ideas and information, identify resources and volunteers, and establish goals and action plans when necessary.

These meetings are a great opportunity to undertake a community dialogue on citizen engagement to identify how citizens wish to be involved in shaping community life and how the local government can contribute to meeting citizen aspirations.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS-The OCR makes presentations to neighborhood groups and civic organizations, schools, and homeowners' associations on a variety of topics, and coordinates with other organizations as needed. These speaking engagements are a great way for residents to learn about the many programs and services offered by the OCR and Palm Beach County.



(Description of the Program Continued)

RESIDENT EDUCATION TO ACTION PROGRAM (REAP)- REAP is a six-week, hands-on educational course designed to help community members develop skills to feel confident and to participate in making meaningful decisions about the future of their community. The program encourages citizens to be knowledgeable about how County government works and its available community resources and services that can be used for neighborhood improvement efforts. REAP supports the formation of neighborhood associations and empowers citizens to seek for themselves a better quality of life that is citizen-driven and focused.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION WORKSHOPS - Workshops are designed to engage, inform, and educate citizens; featuring varied topics of interest to residents and community groups and specific training subjects that may not be included in the REAP curriculum (e.g. grant writing, how to create a neighborhood watch, etc.) The workshops are a great opportunity for neighborhood leaders to interact and learn from one another. Workshops are typically held on a quarterly basis.

BROCHURES AND HANDOUTS- Brochures and handouts are designed and used to inform residents about OCR's programs, important events, meeting announcements, and volunteer opportunities. Templates are also designed and made available to community groups to use in their outreach initiatives.

REFERRAL PROGRAM - The OCR provides referrals to government programs and services, receives citizen complaints about neighborhood issues, and coordinates with other County departments and outside organizations to better serve the public. The OCR provides resource referral and facilitates problem-solving for neighborhood-identified issues. The OCR responds to various concerns by gathering information, examining the issues, and either making referrals or developing options and even implementing solutions.

TIME FRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION - The overall initiative was developed in a year and implementation is ongoing. The time frame for program implementation can be divided into three phases:

Phase I- Development & Marketing – During this phase, OCR staff completed the research and developed the concept for the overall initiative, revamped the OCR's website, created templates for the different E-mail publications, brochures, and handouts, and created the policies and procedures for the REAP program. During this phase, which is still ongoing, OCR staff also publicized the different components of the initiative through media releases, the Internet, e-mail blasts, brochures and handout distributions, and meetings held throughout the year.

Phase II- Management and Implementation –During this ongoing phase, the OCR team manages and implements the different components of the initiative.

Phase III- Evaluation - To ensure the success of the initiative, OCR staff seeks ongoing feedback from community residents, inputs resources identified into a database, evaluates benefits and impacts of each component, identifies areas in need of improvement, and expands and refocuses program components as needed or desired. Benchmarks are used to evaluate the outcomes which include, among others, the number and range of participants, the quality of participation, change in public attitudes, and the extent to which people have come together to resolve important community issues.

CLIENTELE SERVED – The clientele being served by the initiative includes all County residents, with a focus on those living in designated residential neighborhoods in need of revitalization within unincorporated Palm Beach County.

COUNTY'S ROLE–Palm Beach County's OCR developed the initiative and is responsible for the overall management and implementation of each initiative's component. OCR staff implements all phases of the initiative with assistance from community residents, County Departments and partner organizations.

PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS - Before and during implementation, representatives from other County Departments, outside partner organizations, and residents share information and individual program expertise and available resources. This sharing of resources and expertise provides cost reductions to the overall initiative.

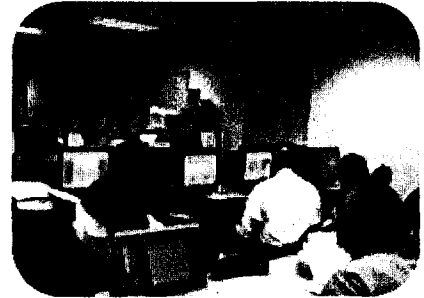
4. Responding to Economic Downturn

At a time of tough budgetary conditions and high demand for services, citizens are demanding more assistance to help them in these difficult times. This has led to an increased need for information, resources, skills development, and collaborations. The OCR's Community Connect Initiative was developed to address those needs and promote an active, engaged, and informed community by using multiple means, and lowering, at least in part, the information sharing and outreach costs through the use of our website and e-mail communication.

5. Use of Technology

A variety of technologies was, and continues to be utilized, during both the design and implementation of the initiative, including:

1. Ms Word to create documents;
2. Adobe Acrobat Scanner to scan documents for easier accessibility;
3. Adobe Dream Weaver to develop and maintain a website;
4. Excel and MS Access to develop and maintain databases;
5. Modular Geographic Information Systems to create maps;
6. MS Publisher and PowerPoint to design handouts, postcard reminders, brochures, and a slide show to describe and market the initiative;
7. MS Outlook to create and distribute the Community Connect publication and individual alerts;
8. Internet to research and disseminate information, as well as create community websites;
9. Computers, laptops, and data projectors for citizen education and community meetings; and
10. Media to further publicize and broadcast the initiative.



6. Cost of the Program

The OCR's Community Connect Initiative is an example of efficiently pooling community and government resources. The initiative is fully administered by existing OCR staff, with assistance from the County Attorney's Office and Public Affairs. Other County Departments, partner organizations, and community residents all contribute information and resources.

The estimated administrative cost which could be anticipated by a County attempting to replicate a similar initiative would be \$154,931 which includes: 1) Development and Marketing - \$79,474; 2) Management/Coordination and Implementation of the Initiative - \$67,213; and 3) Evaluation \$8,244. These costs do not include office supplies, copies of documents, fuel and maintenance for vehicles for community meetings, overhead and depreciations, or the many hours donated by community leaders and County employees. The following table provides a breakdown of the estimated costs for each initiative's component. These costs were estimated based on staff hours allocated to each component.

(Cost of the Program Continued)

Community Connect Initiative Annual Budget

| Components | Development & Marketing | Management & Implementation | Evaluation |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Website | \$12,833.00 | \$9,322.00 | \$1,229.00 |
| Community Connect E-mail Publication | \$17,867.00 | \$2,532.00 | \$1,721.00 |
| News and Events E-mail Alerts | \$7,375.00 | \$14,438.00 | \$1,180.00 |
| Community Connection Meetings | \$5,551.00 | \$3,806.00 | \$634.00 |
| Community Connection Workshops | \$2,976.00 | \$2,537.00 | \$1,352.00 |
| Individual and Community Meetings | \$5,500.00 | \$17,624.00 | \$0.00 |
| Speaking Engagements | \$2,825.00 | \$3,465.00 | \$0.00 |
| Brochures/Handouts | \$2,360.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Resident Education to Action Program | \$19,827.00 | \$9,687.00 | \$2,128.00 |
| Referral Program | \$2,360.00 | \$3,802.00 | \$0.00 |
| Sub Totals | \$79,474.00 | \$67,213.00 | \$8,244.00 |
| Community Connect Initiative | \$154,931.00 | | |

7. The Results/Success of the Program

Since its creation, the OCR's Community Connect Initiative has been a resounding success, and has provided a unique and lasting experience for all involved. Equally important, it has allowed government to increase citizens awareness of County programs and services, and invite citizens to both actively participate in the decision making process and strengthen their neighborhoods. Furthermore, it has helped establish new relationships with individuals, neighborhood groups, and local governments, who are working together to improve the County's communities and quality of life for all.

Through its implementation, the initiative has helped to:

- ★ Effectively convey to residents information on available County programs and services and how to become involved in the decision making process;
- ★ Share information while offering the opportunity for citizens and government entities to interact with each other, contribute and listen, and discuss issues that are important to everyone;

(The Results/Success of the Program Continued)

- ★ Encourage residents to come together and work in partnership with County government to resolve issues and energize all involved to move forward;
- ★ Empower resident groups and mobilize residents and other neighborhood resources to improve their communities and help individuals in need;
- ★ Create a large pool of volunteers that possess the necessary tools and resources to assist in neighborhood improvement efforts; and
- ★ Increase the level of communication and promote the formation of a strong partnership, between neighborhood residents and County government.

A few highlights of specific accomplishments and results are provided below.

- ★ Since the revamping of our website, at the beginning of 2010, the number of hits has increased from 2,000 to over 20,000 hits per year.
- ★ Since October of 2010, the OCR facilitated over 200 Community Connect events to engage and inform residents, provide technical assistance, training, and referral services. The OCR has met with civic organizations, homeowner's associations and professional organizations to educate the public about its services. Through speaking engagements and exhibit opportunities, the Community Connect Initiative has become an integral part of improving how the County serves the public.
- ★ With regards to the Resident Education to Action Program (REAP), the number of program participants has increased from 30 to 200 participants per year since its creation. The success of the program has led to two (2) participants becoming City Commissioners and several participants being awarded federal grants totaling over \$1,000,000. In addition, fourteen (14) community groups have become 501.c.3 organizations.

While similar programs exist throughout the State and the nation, the OCR's Community Connect Initiative is the first initiative of this type that the County undertakes as part of an overall community outreach effort. Through this initiative, Palm Beach County has been able to give citizens the tools and support they need in order to become involved in government and neighborhood affairs, as well as bring about positive change in the County's neighborhoods. Experience gained from the implementation of the initiative can be, undoubtedly, replicated in other jurisdictions. The initiative proved to be a very effective community outreach, engagement and information strategy, and can be used as a model that could be transferred and applied to any other community. This initiative could be useful when there is a need or desire to:

- ★ Encourage civic engagement and foster education and citizen participation;
- ★ Assess what government is trying to accomplish through citizen outreach and engagement and consider whether it is willing and able to listen to, and act on what is heard;
- ★ Encourage citizen involvement and leverage resources to help others in need and revitalize their own neighborhoods;
- ★ Encourage partnerships between residents and County government that result in projects and activities that benefit a community, as well as promote neighborhood enhancements; and
- ★ Foster a proactive interaction with local government built on trust, reciprocity and understanding.

8. Worthiness of an Award

The OCR's Community Connect Initiative merits the highest level of recognition for demonstrating how a proactive government initiative can:

- ⇒ Help identify what and how to contribute to meet citizens needs and desires;
- ⇒ Educate and enable citizens to act and be part of the decision making process, thus achieving a higher level of citizen engagement;
- ⇒ Increase opportunities for residents to gain a better understanding of County government, and to access available programs, services, and resources; and
- ⇒ Provide the necessary tools, skills and resources residents need to bring about trust, enhance problem solving, shape community life and support their community initiatives.

A summary of the benefits of this initiative to both the County and community residents, are provided below:

- ★ The initiative shifts the government's role from reacting to problems with piecemeal corrective measures to a proactive position following community definitions and needs, as well as investing in community solutions.
- ★ Educating, informing, and enabling citizens to act and become empowered have expanded the capacity for engagement.
- ★ Participation and shared responsibility among staff members has been achieved in their internal operations which are helping to foster a positive climate and skills development for citizen engagement, outreach and assistance.
- ★ Community residents are inspired to get involved in the decision making process and be better neighbors by sharing resources and information, and help others in need.

Furthermore, the initiative and OCR staff efforts towards its development and implementation, together with the County's efforts in cultivating and ensuring broad community outreach, engagement and participation through a collaborative process, have reestablished the accountability, responsiveness and effectiveness of County government.



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District 4

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District 1

Paulette Burdick
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District 5

Jess R. Santamaria
District 6

Priscilla A. Taylor
District 7

County Administrator
Robert Weisman

Deputy County Administrator
Verdenia C. Baker



Houston L. Tate
OCR Director

Ruth Moguillansky
OCR Principal Planner

Duane Gainer
Senior Planner

Chrystal Mathews
Senior Planner

Audley Reid
Senior Planner

William Wynn
Planner II



City of South Bay

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Commission

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Vicenta Del-Bosquez-Taylor, Human
Resource Director

February 13, 2012

NACO Achievement Awards

To Whom It May Concern:


It is my pleasure to write in support of the Palm Beach County Office of Community Revitalization's (OCR), application for the NACO achievement award. The Community Connect Initiative implemented by the OCR has proven extremely beneficial to the Glades area in general, and the City of South Bay in particular.

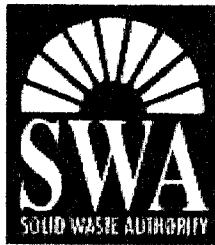
Reference to the Glades generally pertains to the Tri City Communities of Belle Glade, Pahokee, and South Bay, each an independent municipality. However, in an effort to address challenges and opportunities to this Western Palm Beach County agricultural region, the three communities deliberate as the Tri Cities Association.

The OCR has instituted varied approaches to serve as catalyst for governments, businesses, and residents becoming more informed, and activated to find constructive solutions to regional challenges. One such initiative is the Glades Technical Education Committee, which promotes a collaborative process for such purpose. The continuous engagement of the OCR in varied activities in the Glades area serve to improve intergovernmental relations among the Tri Cities, and between the Cities and County.

Here in the City of South Bay, the OCR has joined with its Department of Community Development in the facilitation of a community organizing effort. This initiative is designed to result in a community that is better educated, safer, more prosperous, and an improved quality of life.

The forgoing discussion consists of a most limited presentation of reasons to support the Office of Community Revitalization's application for the NACO Achievement Award. It is difficult to conceive of a more worthy recipient.


Respectfully,
Arthur W. Anderson, Ph.D.
Director of Community Development



YOUR PARTNER FOR
SOLID WASTE SOLUTIONS

Feb 10, 2012

To: NACO Achievement Awards
Subject: OCR Community Connect Initiative

As a representative of the Solid Waste Authority the OCR community Connect Initiative has helped to share with residents that we service for garbage , Trash, vegetation and recycling. The Customer Service Department is able to give even better service by getting to know the caller and sharing the services and opportunities that are available to them when and if they need them. The partnership of our programs has given many new opportunities to service the residents of Palm Beach County.

OCR Community Connect has shared many opportunities with our community improvement partners such as Paint Your Heart Out Palm Beach County , Rebuilding Together of the Palm Beaches and Adopt a Spot programs. OCR has provided many of our volunteer groups that make improvements to our residents in need throughout Palm Beach County. The funding opportunities are endless with the Community Connect Initiative. They do the research and share with all of our residents and Non Profit organizations. The residents of Palm Beach County are so much more informed the OCR Community Connect in place.

The Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County, Rebuilding Together of the Palm Beaches and Paint Your Heart out would like to recommend the OCR Community Connect Initiative for the NACO Achievement Awards. There are so many residents and groups that have gained so much from the information shared by this program.

Always Thankful

Joanna Aiken

Community Service Coordinator

Solid Waste Authority

(561)697-2700 ext 4701

From: Debra Gale [lunawuf8@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2012 2:50 PM
To: Office of Community Revitalization
Subject: NACO Achievement Awards

To Whom it may concern,

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for my recent assistance received through Community Connect Initiative Program.

A month ago I finally secured my own home rental after over a year of difficult roommate situations. With my personal expense of rental finances and securities required, I had absolutely No furniture in my new rental.

Nor would I be able to afford any for quite some time due to hardships and circumstances that have plagued me for nearly two years.

I contacted your agency for a referral and assistance.

A contact came through for Faith Farm Ministries Thrift Furniture store, through a dedicated ANGEL on your staff, Ruth Moguillansky.

Ruth took her personal time to go with me to purchase some of my most needed items for my new rental.

It has created a "Home" instead of just a house.

I am sincerely appreciative for your agency's efforts and dedication.

Thank you for your outstanding program to help those, like myself, who had fallen on hard times but refused to give up and therefore found help at your door.

Should I be of any help with your volunteer programs please contact me and I will be there to lend my time and efforts.

Sincerely,

Debra Gale 561 509-4062

From: Dennis W. Conway [dwconway@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2012 4:15 PM
To: Office of Community Revitalization
Subject: OCR's Community Connect Initiative

To Whom It May Concern:

The Community Connect Initiative has been a great benefit to our community, Cabana Colony. This is an older community, which has seen many problems in the past. At one point, a few years ago, many of the houses were in bad repair, the crime rate was high and the young people of the community had no productive activities to engage in, so they vandalized houses. We had a number of drug dealers in our community. By working with the Office of Community Revitalization, many of our problems have been solved. This relationship also led us to a partnership with the Sheriff's Office, Solid Waste Authority and the Board of County Commissioners.

We have no HOA, so we formed a non-profit organization for community improvement and began working with OCR.

We now have a county park, a youth center, speed bumps and street lights. Our youth center offers a number of athletic programs sponsored by the Police Athletic League. They also offer tutoring and homework assistance and a mentoring program. The youth of our community no longer engage in negative activities. Their performance in school has improved greatly and many are now participating in athletic programs also.

In addition, the overall appearance of the community has improved. With help from the County we have been able to repair and paint houses, clean up yards, repair sidewalks and get Code Enforcement involved to assist us with the problems we cannot solve on our own. Our youth center also has an office for our Community Policing Officer. Our crime rate has been reduced by 92%.

I believe that Cabana Colony is one of Palm Beach County OCR's greatest successes. The homeowners here are very grateful.

Dennis W. Conway
President
Cabana Colony Resident's League, Inc.

1. Abstract of the Program

The Palm Beach County (PBC) Department of Environmental Resources Management (ERM) has implemented a state-approved plan to protect the Florida manatee, a large, aquatic mammal found in Florida's coastal waters. Ongoing efforts include collaboration with law enforcement to increase patrols in manatee protection speed zones which provide safe havens for manatees as they traverse county waters in search of food and warm water. Since the program was initiated in 2008, officers from ten law enforcement agencies have logged 7,190 hours in addition to their regular patrols, made 10,259 educational contacts, and issued 691 manatee zone citations. The increased law enforcement presence improves speed zone compliance reducing risks to manatees and boaters. This collaboration also provides an opportunity to train officers to assist the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) with the rescue of manatees injured by boats or that are in distress due to cold temperatures, illness, or disease. ERM, in cooperation with the Marine Animal Rescue Society (MARS), the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), and FWC, organized workshops to train marine officers and other first responders to become active participants in the program. Since the manatee rescue component was initiated in 2009, local law enforcement has provided critical assistance to FWC at a time when funding for trained rescuers has been cut back.

2. The Problem/Need for the Program

The FWC Manatee Stranding and Rescue Program for the southeast Florida area covers seven counties: St. Lucie, Okeechobee, Martin, Palm Beach, Broward and Dade Counties and a portion of Monroe County. With a staff of only three employees (2 fulltime and 1 part-time), FWC recognized early on that it needed better coordination with other agencies that could assist with manatee rescues and releases of rehabilitated animals.

In January 2008, ERM initiated a new program, the Manatee Law Enforcement Program, and began working with as many as ten law enforcement agencies through a grant/contract program to increase awareness and compliance with manatee speed zones countywide. ERM saw an opportunity to expand this newly created Manatee Law Enforcement Program to promote intergovernmental cooperation and coordination to address the need for resources to rescue manatees and other marine mammals in South Florida that have been injured by boats or are in distress due to cold temperatures, illness or disease. For the past four years the Manatee Law Enforcement Program has become an integral part of the FWC Manatee Stranding and Rescue Program and the MARS Marine Mammal Stranding Team. It is this partnership – the Manatee Enhanced Patrol Program - that is the focus of the Achievement Award application.

3. Description of the Program

The partnership between ERM, law enforcement agencies, FWC, DEP and MARS began in 2008 after the PBC Manatee Protection Plan (MPP) was approved. Attracted by warm water sources, as many as 800 manatees occur in PBC during the winter with a smaller year-round population. Manatees are listed as endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act. One of the primary

threats to manatees is boat strikes. Over 40,000 boats are registered in the county, and the threat from these and other transient boats can be reduced by slower speeds in areas where manatees and boats occur together. Since January 2008, PBC has provided annual funding for additional on-water law enforcement in the County's waterways as part of the MPP efforts. Ten law enforcement agencies signed agreements to increase awareness and compliance with manatee speed zones countywide. The goal is to increase law enforcement's presence on the water during the winter when the majority of manatees occur in southeast Florida.

The law enforcement program and associated training has generated improved interagency relationships. It was recognized that since the agencies were already spending time on the water, they could become ideal first responders to injured or stranded manatees. The plan to utilize these resources for manatees and marine mammal rescues was developed by ERM. The objective was simple: incorporate law enforcement officers and first responders in current state and non-profit stranding networks desperately in need of assistance. For the past four years, PBC's Manatee Law Enforcement Program has become a vital part of FWC's Manatee Stranding and Rescue Program, and the Marine Mammal stranding program. This assistance came at a time when Florida was experiencing record high manatee mortality due to unusually cold winters. In 2011 more than 100 rescues were performed statewide by FWC.

Since special training is required to assist these rescue groups ERM, in cooperation with MARS, FDEP and FWC, organized workshops in 2009, 2010, and 2011, entitled "Marine Mammal Protection and Rescue Basics." Participants were trained to handle marine mammal strandings (dolphins and whales) and manatee rescues. The workshops were well attended by US Coast Guard staff, US Coast Guard Auxiliary members, local law enforcement, lifeguards, FWC staff, and volunteers.

When FWC or MARS receives a call about an injured manatee, dolphin or whale in PBC, they contact ERM staff who put together a search and rescue team of trained officers and first responders. A typical manatee rescue team is comprised of eight crew members and the captain of the FWC rescue boat. A safety boat with two additional crew members on board is also dispatched. Once the crew is assembled by directly contacting different law enforcement marine units, directions are given to the officers where to meet the stranding team and the rescue is performed. The animal is then transported to a rehabilitation facility like SeaWorld or Miami Seaquarium. Since the program's inception, officers have assisted FWC with more than 15 manatee rescues, and responded to two mass whale strandings. The officers have also responded to dozens of calls for searches of injured mammals all over the PBC, have responded to strandings outside the County on a volunteer basis, and helped with manatee releases once the animal is rehabilitated at one of the critical care facilities around the state. This direct, hands-on experience in saving manatees has personalized the officers' experience, provided them with a much greater understanding of the threats, and made them better environmental emissaries in their contact with the public.

Through active participation in the Miami-Dade/Broward/Palm Beach Manatee Awareness Group (MAG), a multi-agency group comprised of governmental agencies, educational institutions and community organizations, ERM has expanded the concept of cooperation and coordination of its

manatee rescue efforts to adjacent counties. A solid network of rescuers now exists in the Tri-County area and beyond. Officers from PBC's Manatee Law Enforcement Program have helped the state stranding teams as far north as Vero Beach in Indian River County. Recently, the Martin County Sheriff's Office joined the rescue network. Several articles about manatee protection and the law enforcement program have been posted to the PBC and ERM websites and published in the *Lake Worth Lagoon E-news*, the ERM newsletter, and local newspapers. In addition, rescue efforts have received local television coverage. Several examples are attached as "Supplemental Materials" for this award application.

Prior to implementation of the Manatee Enhanced Patrol Program, many law enforcement marine units worked independent of other similar agencies. This improved interagency coordination that the program has created has generated additional benefits for other law enforcement missions. It is expected that the strengthened relationships will foster a more cooperative approach when dealing with the primary responsibilities of law enforcement marine units which include boater safety, drug enforcement, and illegal immigrant interdiction.

4. Use of Technology

Communications between the law enforcement officers and ERM are often transmitted via email or text messaging. Global Positioning System data is used to plot manatee and boat locations. Digital maps of each rescue site are quickly compiled and sent to various responding agencies along with instructions for the equipment needed for the rescue (i.e. diving suit, gloves, scuba boots etc.). Using Microsoft Excel, data is collected on a monthly basis from each law enforcement agency regarding the number of educational contacts and manatee speed zone citations and warnings. At the end of each manatee season, ERM creates a newsletter summarizing the statistics for the season and using digital pictures to highlight rescues and release efforts. Using data collected by aerial observers on a related research project, ERM also coordinated the creation of manatee location maps using Google Earth and provided those maps to program partners via email.

5. The Cost of the Program

Since January 2008, the PBC Board of County Commissioners has provided \$200,000 annually (\$150,000 for FY 11-12) to fund contracts with law enforcement agencies for additional on-water law enforcement in county waterways as part of the MPP efforts. The program costs include the officers' staff time, equipment and vessel operation, and maintenance costs. ERM staff costs to administer the contracts, training and intergovernmental training associated with the program have averaged \$16,000 annually. In addition to the on-water law enforcement cost described above, approximately 90 law enforcement officers and 50 volunteer community law enforcement aides have received at least eight hours of marine mammal rescue training provided by FWC, DEP and MARS staff. This translates into approximately 1,120 hours of training. Assuming \$60/hour (includes personnel services and overhead for paid officers) as an average rate, this equals \$43,200 in officer training costs. The training venues were free, and the cost to reproduce training materials was nominal (less than \$100). This investment of \$43,200 provided training for law enforcement's response to 25 rescues and releases. An average rescue/release event requires ten officers for about

six hours/event. In summary, the law enforcement staff cost of each event is roughly \$3,600 for each of the 25 events responded to so far. This cost is absorbed by the participating agencies, and FWC, DEP and MARS get the benefit without increased costs to their individual programs.

6. The Results/Success of the Program

ERM's Manatee Enhanced Patrol Program has produced impressive results on paper and in the field. Since the program was initiated in 2008, law enforcement officers have logged 7,190 hours in addition to their regular patrols, made 10,259 educational contacts, and issued 2,720 manatee zone warnings and 691 manatee zones citations. The real success of the program is measured not only by the increased law enforcement presence and the number of manatee rescues and releases conducted (15 rescues and 10 releases since the program started) but also by the intergovernmental cooperation and coordination created by the program aimed at filling gaps in the existing budgets of state stranding teams.

Law Enforcement Activity - January 2008 through March 2011

| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Total |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Total Citations | 255 | 362 | 239 | 292 | 1,148 |
| Manatee Zones Citations | 153 | 199 | 151 | 188 | 691 |
| Educational Contacts | 789 | 1326 | 3276 | 4868 | 10,259 |
| Written warnings | 293 | 539 | 815 | 856 | 2503 |
| Verbal Warnings | 274 | 542 | 1047 | 1389 | 3252 |
| Manatee Zone Warnings | 165 | 410 | 872 | 1273 | 2720 |
| TOTAL HOURS | 10300 | 16536 | 23441 | 21923 | 7190 |

7. Worthiness of the Award

The partnership between ERM, the State and local law enforcement agencies, the FWC Manatee Stranding and Rescue Program, and the Marine Mammal Stranding teams continues to grow and flourish. The program has significantly improved intergovernmental coordination at the state, county, and municipal levels and brought considerable benefits to PBC and its citizens. Compliance with manatee speed zones has risen making the waterways safer for residents and visitors including local and transient boaters and reduced the number of watercraft-related manatee deaths. Training provided for the rescues has increased law enforcement officers' knowledge of environmental issues and threats to manatees, improved their commitment to the program, and enabled them to provide environmental education in their encounters with the public. With these law enforcement officers providing the manpower to perform manatee rescues and releases, often on their own time and on a volunteer basis, the Manatee Enhanced Patrol Program has filled manpower and budget gaps existing statewide. This program would be fairly simple to duplicate in other counties throughout the state provided there is dedicated funding for the law enforcement contracts which provides the catalyst for the agencies to meet, train and work together towards a common goal.



Share |

Palm Beach County Recognized for Manatee Protection Efforts

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■
**Palm Beach County
Board of County
Commissioners**

**Shelley Vana
Chair**

**Steven L. Abrams
Vice Chair**

**Karen T. Marcus,
Paulette Burdick**

Burt Aaronson

Jess R. Santamaria

Priscilla A. Taylor

County Administrator

Robert Welsman

*"An equal opportunity
Affirmative Action
Employer"*

Electronic Press Release

Palm Beach County's Department of Environmental Resources Management (ERM) was recently awarded a certificate of appreciation from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) in recognition of exceptional manatee protection efforts. ERM takes year-round action to help protect manatees.



On behalf of ERM, Environmental Analyst Alessandra Medri and Environmental Restoration and Enhancement Division Director Daniel Bates accept a certificate of appreciation presented by FWC Manatee Biologist John Cassidy (center).

These efforts include publishing a brochure with manatee speed zone maps, installing educational kiosks at local boat ramps, habitat restoration and enhancement projects, and a law enforcement program to increase compliance with manatee speed zones countywide.

ERM also assists FWC with manatee rescues and releases when needed. For example, "Celebrity," a nine-foot, 1,500-pound female manatee was rescued on Feb. 3 from a residential canal in Boynton Beach. Her name reflects her popularity with the public and the media who covered her story.

The injured and pregnant mammal was driven to the Miami Seaquarium for rest and treatment for injuries sustained from a boat strike. Celebrity was released into the Intracoastal Waterway/Lake Worth Lagoon on Feb. 15 so she could give birth naturally in the wild.

To learn more about manatees, visit www.pbcgov.com/erm/lakes/ecology.

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Protecting an Endangered Species

Marine Patrols Protect Manatees and the Public

Protecting Manatees

Increased law enforcement marine patrols for manatee protection resumed on November 15, 2011. Law enforcement presence on the water improves speed zone compliance and reduces risks to both manatees and boaters. Eight law enforcement agencies renewed their commitment to the County's manatee law enforcement program this season. Personnel received manatee protection training and are active participants in the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWCC) Manatee Stranding and Rescue Program.

Protecting People

The manatee law enforcement program benefits much more than manatees. A recent routine patrol by Boynton Beach Police Marine Unit officers to educate boaters about the start of manatee season led to the discovery of nearly 1,300 pounds of marijuana valued at more than \$1 million. The officers were patrolling the Lake Worth Lagoon near the South Lake Worth (Boynton) Inlet. They noticed a 30-foot boat strike two sand bars and sustain some engine damage. The officers intercepted the boat at a local boat ramp and obtained verbal consent to board the vessel. At that point the boaters fled on foot but were quickly apprehended.

By Alessandra Medri

Manatees By The Numbers



4,834
manatees counted during the 2011 aerial surveys conducted by FWCC



100
manatees rescued in 2011



453
confirmed manatee deaths in 2011

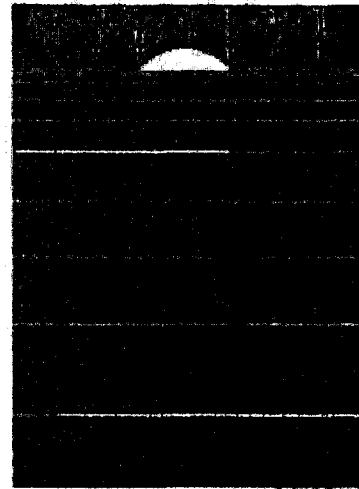


1-888-404-FWCC
call to report injured or dead manatees



November 15, 2011 to March 31, 2012
the start and end of the manatee law enforcement program

WANT MORE INFO? Visit www.pbcgov.com/erm/coastal/manatees/.



Participants in Law Enforcement Marine Patrols Program

Village of Tequesta

Town of Jupiter

City of Riviera Beach

City of West Palm Beach

Town of Lantana

City of Boynton Beach

Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission



Six Year Lake Worth Lagoon Sea Turtle Study Completed

ERM and researchers from Inwater Research Group have completed Phase III of a six year study on the Lake Worth Lagoon's sea turtle population. Researchers focused on the area around Little Munyon Island in the northern lagoon and the Boynton Inlet in the south county. More than 200 sea turtles were observed near Little Munyon Island, with five animals documented in the southern lagoon. This study shows that the lagoon southeast of Little Munyon Island is a valuable developmental habitat for juvenile green turtles.

Along with population numbers, this study also documented cases of fibropapillomatosis (FP). FP is a disease that causes tumors on a turtle's body. Approximately 43% of the turtles captured during Phase III showed external signs of FP. Sea turtles serve as an indicator species of the overall health of the lagoon. Much like a canary in a coal mine, sea turtles can help us learn about the positive and negative impacts we have on the lagoon ecosystem.

Phase III was funded by a \$9,460 grant from the Florida Sea Turtle Grants Program. Grant funding is critical for the continued success of Palm Beach County's sea turtle research. Displaying a sea turtle license plate on your car is a great way to show your support for these magnificent creatures. For more information about the sea turtle license plate, visit www.helpingseaturtles.org.

The public is invited to attend a presentation summarizing this project on Thursday, February 16 at 2 pm at ERM's office in West Palm Beach. Please contact Jacey Biery at jbieri@pbcgov.org for more information.

RESOLUTION NO. R-2012-

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DESIGNEE TO SUBMIT NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES AWARD APPLICATIONS AND OTHER SIMILAR FORMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE APPLICATION TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties holds an annual non-competitive awards program that recognizes innovative county government programs; and

WHEREAS, many county departments submit National Association of Counties Award Applications to the National Association of Counties annually; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties Award Applications require submittal by the chief executive officer; and

WHEREAS, authorizing the County Administrator or designee to submit the National Association of Counties Award Applications on behalf of the chief executive officer will streamline the agenda process; and

WHEREAS, the submittal of the National Association of Counties Award Applications does not constitute policy-making decisions and are ministerial functions which the Board of County Commissioners wishes to delegate.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA, that:

1. The Board of County Commissioners hereby delegates authority to the County Administrator or designee to submit National Association of Counties Award Applications to the National Association of Counties and other similar forms associated with the application on behalf of the County.
2. This Resolution is effective upon its adoption by the Board of County Commissioners.

The foregoing Resolution was offered by Commissioner _____, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner _____, and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

| | |
|--|---|
| Commissioner Shelley Vana, Chair | - |
| Commissioner Steven L. Abrams, Vice Chairman | - |
| Commissioner Karen T. Marcus | - |
| Commissioner Paulette Burdick | - |
| Commissioner Burt Aaronson | - |
| Commissioner Jess R. Santamaria | - |
| Commissioner Priscilla A. Taylor | - |

The Chair thereupon declared the Resolution duly passed and adopted this _____ day of _____, 2012.

PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA, BY ITS
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

SHARON R. BOCK, CLERK & COMPTROLLER

By: _____
Deputy Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM
AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY

By: _____
Assistant County Attorney