



The Return on Your Science Investment: New Jobs, Business Development, Tax Savings

Florida Sea Grant, one of 32 programs in the National Sea Grant College Program of NOAA, provides over \$2 million in federal funding per year in Florida. With our partners in University of Florida (UF) Extension and the 15 other Florida universities, Sea Grant and cooperating Florida counties:

- ✓ provide solutions to real-world problems.
- ✓ produce and maintain jobs.
- ✓ support the development of new small businesses.
- ✓ provide millions of dollars in local and regional tax savings.
- ✓ produce relevant products to save lives and property.
- ✓ provide on-the-ground support for people, businesses and communities during times of crisis.

Communities ask; Sea Grant responds with solution-oriented research, outreach

Florida Sea Grant has a Congressional base budget of \$2.1 million a year, which multiplies to over \$5.1 million by leveraging other federal funds and dollars from the private sector and county governments. This happens because we are a highly collaborative, highly relevant program for Florida's coastal governments, resource management agencies and the private sector. Sea Grant's research and education has led to the development of many novel methods and products, including:

Clam farming research and outreach, in cooperation with UF Extension and the USDA, supported the creation of over 560 jobs, supports \$25 million a year in income, and generates \$19 million a year in sales from the private sector. Sea Grant funded research is also exploring the culture of new clam species to diversify and strengthen the industry.



The sponge industry has adopted Sea Grant research demonstrating that changes in harvesting techniques can greatly increase the sustainability of Florida's commercially valuable marine sponges.

'If it was not for Florida Sea Grant, there would be no commercial sponge industry in Florida.'

– James Cantonis, President, ACME Sponge and Chamois, Tarpon Springs
(natural sponge industry leader, 45 employees)

Florida's \$3 million commercial sponge fishery benefits from a more effective harvest method that improves its sustainability. As a result, spongers supported changing harvest rules to implement the technique. In addition, an area that had historically been closed to sponge harvesting was reopened following Sea Grant research that showed current harvesting effort would be sustainable. To improve sustainability and survival of reef fish caught in deep water, Sea Grant funded research to refine a venting tool and venting procedures. At least six small businesses in Florida are making tools based on the Sea Grant design. Venting tools are now used by commercial and recreational fishermen through the Gulf of Mexico.

(continued)



Florida Sea Grant research is significantly reducing property damage by helping the construction industry strengthen homes and businesses vulnerable to hurricane-force winds. (NWS photo)

'New roofing technology developed with funding from Sea Grant will create about 15 businesses and 150 jobs throughout Florida and the US when it is commercialized.'

**– Arindam Chowdhury, Research Professor,
International Hurricane Center,
Florida International University**



Florida Sea Grant developed processing methods for safer raw oysters that averted pending regulatory closures that would have cost the industry over \$100 million per year.

'Your seafood safety program has made us the best and there are not enough words to express our gratitude.'

**– Gib Migliano, President,
Save On Seafood, St. Petersburg**
(fresh seafood distributor, over \$50 million annual sales)

A Florida Sea Grant study of economic benefits associated with artificial reef programs in Southwest Florida shows that artificial reef-related activities generated more than \$225 million in economic outputs, and supported almost 2,600 full- and part-time jobs. Fishermen and divers who use Southwest Florida's artificial reef sites spend more than \$250 million in the region annually. Sea Grant has led the science and outreach related to artificial reefs in Florida.

Implementation of the UF/Sea Grant 'Regional Waterway Management System' in Southwest Florida waterways has cut red tape in the permitting process for canal dredging, saving taxpayers an estimated \$3 million dollars since 2006. Ongoing work by our legal specialists in a program called 'from red tape to green tape' aims to streamline the permitting process for homeowners who want to protect their waterfront property with 'living shorelines.'

During the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, Florida Sea Grant and UF Extension responded quickly and effectively, providing on-the ground outreach to coastal residents, businesses and communities. Sea Grant extension staff helped fishermen and business owners file claims and provided support for volunteers. Sea Grant is working with the Gulf of Mexico Land Grant Universities to ensure the safety of seafood, and to work with families facing economic crisis because of the disaster.

During these challenging economic times, Florida Sea Grant will continue to ensure that our federal funds are used wisely, to support initiatives that are relevant, that help foster economic recovery, and that are responsive to the needs of Florida businesses and residents.

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