

**NAVARRE BEACH SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION CENTER, INC. (NBSTCC)
TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. PRE-APPLICATION FORM**

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Name of Individual/Entity/Organization: Navarre Beach Sea Turtle Conservation Center, Inc
FEID# 45-5197646

Brief Description of Background of Individual/Entity/Organization:

The Navarre Beach Sea Turtle Conservation Center, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(C)(3) charitable organization located in Navarre, FL (Santa Rosa County). The NBSTCC was founded for the protection and conservation of threatened and endangered sea turtles and coastal and marine resources. The NBSTCC serves three counties (Santa Rosa, Escambia, and Okaloosa) and is overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors and 90 % powered by volunteers.

The NBSTCC promotes sustainable coastal communities along the Gulf Coast marine ecosystems through community education programs and partnered conservation research. Currently, the NBSTCC is a 2,010 square foot building on Navarre Beach, Navarre, FL, with a 15,000-gallon saltwater main pool exhibit, the Shanna Litterst Education Center, and a gift shop. The Shanna Litterst Education Center takes visitors on a journey through native Northwest Florida and the beautiful Gulf of Mexico while showing them global threats, both human and natural, that sea turtles face. There are no other facilities in Santa Rosa or Escambia County dedicated solely to sea turtle conservation. Through the various outreach efforts, we have demonstrated positive impacts on the community in reducing beach pollution and the number of sea turtle injuries and deaths resulting from human impact on the marine eco-system.

Contact Information:

Primary Contact Information: Cathy Holmes

Title: Founder

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Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program:

**Board of Directors
NBSTCC**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Job</u>	<u>County/State</u>
Tom Anderson	President/Chair	CAO	Escambia/FL
Wendy Hoeflich	Treasurer	CFO	Escambia/FL
Cinnamon Holderman	Secretary	Business Owner	Santa Rosa/FL
Becky Harger	Director	Business Owner	Escambia/FL
Cathy Homes	Founder	Animal Care Director	Santa Rosa/FL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The NBSTCC promotes sustainable marine and coastal communities along the Gulf Coast in the Florida Panhandle. Area schools and organizations, visitors from 50 states and five countries visit the center annually. Over 60% of our visitors are out-of-state and contribute to “heads & beds.” Our activities are designed and marketed to give visitors the unique experience of being part of “conservation in action”. NBSTCC fills a void being 1 of 3 facilities within 272 miles where the public can view sea turtles, with a non-releasable green sea turtle in permanent residence.

A unique feature of the NBSTCC is our capacity to care for non-releasable sea turtles in a natural environment. The main exhibit pool area currently is home to the Center’s new resident green sea turtle, Sweet Pea. Sweet Pea is a juvenile green sea turtle that stranded on Ono Island in Alabama. She was entangled in fishing line, had a severe injury to the rear area of her carapace and the underlying musculature, a broken bone in the left rear flipper that had healed incorrectly and caused paralysis of that flipper. Her left front flipper had to be amputated due to the fishing line that had cut through her tendons, ligaments and into the bone. She stayed in a sea turtle rehabilitation facility for 1.5 years. Her injuries healed but she was deemed non-releasable by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission.

Vital to the NBSTCC’s continued conservation and education mission is the expansion of our physical space. The Center has been forced to turn away multiple school groups of 95 to 145 children due to lack of available space. This represents both lost revenue and missed opportunity to act on our mission. We have identified a remarkable location for expansion opportunities on Highway 87, a burgeoning business corridor to the Gulf Coast beaches in Navarre and 3 miles from our current location. ***We are requesting \$1.8 million to purchase the land, remodel, construct facilities for new outreach programs, train and secure staff for the new center.*** Our full proposal will include a full construction budget with: utilities; demolition and site preparation costs; architectural and design consultant fees; permits and construction costs; construction management; remodeling per square foot; new construction per square foot; landscaping.

We have not secured any other sources of funding for this project. Yet, NBSTCC demonstrates potential leveraging through:

- Building and maintaining strong relationships with supporters and instrumental organizations in our industry. This has yielded several benefits including broadening awareness, reducing overall costs and expanding the scope of several key projects: over 120 general volunteers, 10% being key personnel; organized and brought together community members to remove a half-ton of marine debris annually from Navarre Beach since 2014; strong partnerships with leaders in our industry (Institute for Marine Mammal Studies, Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center, Gulf Marine Specimen Lab, NOAA and the University of Florida); and maximize networking within our community to amplify a cost-savings of \$272,358 on construction of the existing residential sea turtle pool.
- Volunteers have brought in new skills to include an event coordinator who has planned and scheduled a fund raiser in December 2018, and a grant writer to prepare applications for an array of funding opportunities in 2018. Specifically, Sunday’s Child and Impact 100 are submitted for 2018-2019; pending release of RFP are Florida State Wildlife Grants Program, NFWF Sea Turtles Program, and Florida’s Sea Turtle Specialty License Plate grant.

A summary description of the proposed project, including transformational impact, is as follows:

The land is 1.8 acres, utilities include, electric, propane, city water and a deep freshwater well, irrigation system throughout the 1.8 acres, and repairable structures. The infrastructure will be remodeled to offer:

- Four saltwater pools. One (1) will house Sweet Pea and three (3) will provide an opportunity for a safe, healthy environment for other non-releasable sea turtles. Medical advances in sea turtle rehabilitation areas have resulted in increased successful sea turtle rehabilitations and releases. However, some sea turtles have injuries or medical conditions that make them unable to survive in the wild. As a result, the number of turtles needing permanent placement has outgrown the number of available facilities. One salt water pool limits our ability to provide homes for non-releasable sea turtles.
- There are seven species of sea turtle that inhabit our oceans, five of which are found in Florida waters. Each species has distinct physical characteristics as well as nesting and feeding habits. All seven of these species are either endangered or threatened with extinction. The sea turtle pools allow visitors to observe and learn about these amazing reptiles and the environment they live in.
- Expanded exhibit space by rehabilitation of a large building on the property, an outdoor marine ecosystem, and an "Ocean Zone" splash pad ADA playground. The additional space will enhance the visitor experience with an array of educational and enrichment opportunities, and create an interactive learning environment for all children, including those with special needs. The new space will increase capacity for visitors and immediately multiply the number of education opportunities for adults and schoolchildren.
- The location of the new facility is in the heart of economic growth in Navarre and the Gulf Coast. The Florida Department of Transportation is in the final phases of expanding Highway 87 into a 4-lane north-south corridor from I-10. Highway 87 is one of two business corridors that link Navarre to Emerald Coast tourism (Highway 98 runs east-west from Gulf Breeze to Panama City). The NBSTCC also strives to engage local businesses in conservation efforts. Our presence on the Highway 87 corridor will enhance and diversify the current businesses in the stretch between Holley-Navarre, thereby promoting the economy of the area. Also, we will build a coalition of businesses dedicated to green business practices and community-based conservation initiatives. Coalitions provide strength in numbers, which increases the visibility and public awareness of conversation, and promotes utilization of local businesses and economic recovery.

Community impacts anticipated include:

- Appreciably greater involvement from the community in coastal and marine resource protection.
- Development of jobs and internships for marine biology students and retired veterans as drivers of NBSTCC "Shurtle", the shuttle to and from beach hotels.
- Increase opportunities for local vendors in an expanded Seamore Store gift shop.
- Growth in green practices among local businesses.
- Economic growth in an integral gulf coast tourism area.
- Partnership with large organizations for research and solutions into issues affecting our local area.

Time Line

Event	When	Actions
Board meeting	Upon release of funds	Project planning to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ property purchase, coordinate clean-up; ○ on-site engineer/design/builder to assess remodeling and design new facility; ○ release of bids for remodel as designed per above; ○ hire contractor and obtain permits; ○ new educational program development discussions/presentations; ○ determine and secure implementation staff for new/revised programs; ○ prepare scholarship/fellowship qualifications and announcement for posting at local higher education for grad students to lead innovative programs; ○ purchase 10-person shuttle buses and hire drivers.
Coordinate with FWC	Property secured within 2 months of offer	Secure permits for new pools for non-releasable sea turtles.
Construction	Begins within 2 months of accepting bid	Per design and contractual obligations specified in accepted/negotiated bid.
Highway 87 coalition	New facility under contract within 2 months of accepting construction bid.	Board members and volunteers meet with local business to develop partnership along Highway 87.
Test facility systems	9 months after construction start	Ensure pools, electrical, water, "Ocean Zone" splash pad ADA playground and all systems a safe go.
Moving Day	12 months after start	Coordinate with FWC and marine centers to safely transport animals; hire movers and engage volunteers to move non-life forms.
Grand Opening	1 month after moving to work out bugs in new facility.	Huge Event with Highway 87 coalition businesses participating