



Apalachicola Bay System Initiative (ABSI) – Update (November 27, 2018)

This is an update to the full Apalachicola Bay System Initiative application submitted April 20, 2018, and the 12-page application addendum submitted on May 24, 2018 (both can be found at this link <https://www.myfloridatriumph.com/proposal-details/534/>).

Ultimate Impact of ABSI in Practical Terms - Significant job creation and economic development in Franklin County and adjacent regions will be achieved through improved fisheries and enhancement of a broad spectrum of ecosystem services in the Bay.

Overarching Goal of ABSI - Effect a long-term improvement in the health and resilience of the Apalachicola Bay with particular emphasis on the previously highly productive oyster reef system.

Participants - The Florida State University Coastal & Marine Laboratory (FSUCML), located in Franklin County, and allied units and infrastructure of FSU will carry out the effort. ABSI will be guided by a Community Advisory Board (CAB):

- CAB will be constituted with input from the Triumph Gulf Coast Board of Directors.
- The on-going activities of the CAB will be assisted by the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium (FCRC) Consensus Center. The FCRC Consensus Center is housed at FSU and is under the leadership of Dr. Robert Jones who will work to facilitate development of a shared vision among CAB members and other stakeholders throughout the effort.
- There will be representation of the broader scientific community in the form of working groups focused on specific technical topics.

The ABSI effort will be conducted in collaboration with local, state, federal and NGO partners as is documented by letters of support in the full ABSI application (found in pages 112-127 of the application).

Major Deliverables of ABSI – Working on parallel tracks, the ABSI effort will:

- Develop a science-based plan of action for restoration of the oyster reef system and an overall management plan for the Apalachicola Bay.
- Partner with the Franklin County community members as well as government, academic and NGO stakeholders to build lines of communication with the appropriate Federal and NGO entities and then work to secure the necessary resources required for bay restoration.
- The restoration partnership will then implement the restoration plan and monitor its progress using the resources which were leveraged using Triumph Gulf Coast funds and the initial FSU cost-share and long-term commitment to ABSI.

Use of Triumph Gulf Coast Funds – Triumph funds, in conjunction with \$1.5 million in funding from FSU, will be used to:

- Hire scientific and other personnel directly linked to the ABSI goals
- Enhance facilities at FSUCML needed to achieve the scientific objectives of ABSI
- Construct a pilot-scale oyster hatchery to
 - a) Produce larvae and spat on cultch for experimental trials;
 - b) Enhance existing and develop techniques for oyster hatchery culture;
 - c) Serve as a prototype and catalyst for a private-sector, industrial scale hatchery in the Apalachicola Bay region.
- Conduct research activities, data integration and creation of publicly accessible research products for oyster management
- Provide extensive outreach to the broader community including workshops and internship opportunities for citizens of the region
- Breakdown of proposed expenditures in broad budget categories follows:

<u>ABSI 5-Year Budget</u>	
Permanent staff	\$2,846,958
Temporary staff	\$515,773
Consultants	\$305,947
Systemic enhancements to FSUCML in direct support of ABSI objectives	\$750,000
Experimental, pilot-scale oyster hatchery	\$3,350,000
Research & outreach operations	\$1,480,000
Contingency	\$250,000
Total project cost	\$9,498,678
FSU cash cost-share	(\$1,500,000)
Triumph Gulf Coast Inc. request	\$7,998,678

FSU Financial Commitment – The FSU financial commitment to the ABSI effort is substantial. At a minimum it will include:

- \$1,500,000 in cash
- Waived indirect costs (IDCs). These are real costs associated with administering and providing infrastructure for this effort (in excess of \$1M).
- FSUCML leading the ABSI effort.
 - a) FSUCML facilities and infrastructure such as boats will be available.
 - b) FSUCML scientific and support staff will allocate a portion of their effort to ABSI which is, in effect, an institutional cost-share.
- At the end of the five-year period of Triumph Gulf Coast support, FSU will assume the salaries of all permanent staff hired using Triumph funds so that the work can continue.
- Current and new research faculty hires obtaining external funding in support of the broader scientific focus of ABSI during the period of Triumph funding and, most importantly, after Triumph funding ends. This will ensure the ongoing success of the proposed ABSI effort as we continue to monitor the long-term health of the Bay and the oyster industry. *It is noteworthy that FSU has been extraordinarily successful in the pursuit of external funding for its research enterprise; FY18 awards were ~ \$226M and exceeded \$1 billion dollars over the last 5 years*