

Coastal Resilience Grants for Coastal Communities



With almost half of the nation's population living near the coast, repeated losses associated with severe weather and flooding are greatly impacting America's economy.

Communities use Coastal Resilience Grants to develop projects that save lives, protect property, reduce damage to infrastructure, and benefit ecosystems and the economy. These projects connect agencies and organizations across regions, include a variety of public- and private-sector partnerships, and require a nonfederal dollar match. The grants are structured so that each applicant can request the help most needed by their community.

HIGH DEMAND: Since 2015, NOAA received 411 proposals requesting \$327 million in federal funds, while NOAA funded 48 projects totaling \$35.8 million in federal funds, with \$22.3 million in matching funds.

WIDE BENEFITS: Coastal Resilience Grants are benefiting around 550 communities in 20 states and are restoring almost 3,500 acres of habitat.

WHAT THE PROJECTS TELL US

A review of the applications to the grant program sheds light on the actions that communities are taking to address weather-related challenges. The following summarizes the most common aspects of the projects and showcases the forward-thinking solutions found at the state and local levels.

- **Natural and nature-based infrastructure.** Wetlands, coral reefs, mangroves, and dunes provide natural protection for coastal communities as well as other economic benefits, including habitat for commercially important fish. Nature-based infrastructure approaches mimic natural processes. Many of the grant applications use some form of natural or nature-based infrastructure.
- **Post-disaster recovery.** Communities are figuring out the coordination and processes needed to help people and the economy begin functioning as soon as possible. Ensuring that reconstruction efforts incorporate risk reduction is an important part of this planning effort.
- **Assessing risk, prioritizing actions.** Widespread vulnerability is making detailed risk assessment a necessity. These assessments help communities determine which activities and locations are a priority for protection and recovery efforts.

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PROJECT EXAMPLES

- Georgia's Coastal Management Program is engaging emergency managers and coastal planners in community redevelopment efforts. Disaster recovery and redevelopment plans are complete for four coastal counties, and, with NOAA's support, Georgia will become the first state in the country to have local post-disaster recovery plans for all coastal counties. Using these plans after the next disaster will get the economy going faster and prevent future losses.
- The town of Exeter, New Hampshire, removed the obsolete Great Dam, which restored a historic natural resource and reduced flood risk. Removing this dam opened access to more than 21 miles of habitat for river herring and reduced flooding depth and severity for almost 1,000 acres, of which 200 acres will no longer be subject to the 100-year flood.
- The Gulf of Mexico Alliance is a successful regional partnership working to sustain natural resources in the Gulf of Mexico. A Coastal Resilience Grant provided to the alliance was used to partially fund 10 different projects. One of those projects included the purchase of a large-capacity storm water pump for Florida's New Port Richey. The recent storm season proved the effectiveness of this decision. Hurricane Hermine in 2016 caused floodwaters to overflow lakes and rivers, which flooded roads, closed shops, and damaged roads. In 2017, in preparation for Hurricane Irma, the city used the new pump to lower water levels, which drastically cut flood damages.
- The San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative, a strong local and regional partnership, is working to protect 70 miles of coastline that contains an estimated \$2.4–\$2.8 billion in vulnerable infrastructure. The grant was used to fill in key information gaps and provide additional legal, scientific, and economic analyses. This project is helping seven cities develop coordinated sea level rise strategies to reduce future economic losses.

RESILIENCE GRANTS OVERVIEW

	2015/2016	2017	Total
Proposals Submitted	244	167	411
Proposals Funded	29	19	48
Funding Requested	\$192 M	\$135 M	\$327 M
Federal Funding	\$21 M	\$13.8 M	\$35.8 M
Match Funding	\$14 M	\$8.3 M	\$22.3 M
# of States/Territories	13	14	20
# of Communities	~200	~350	~550
# of Acres Restored	~2390	~1,100	~3,490

For additional information, visit coast.noaa.gov/resilience-grant