COASTAL & HEARTLAND NATIONAL ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP

FISCAL YEAR 2026 MASTER WORK PLAN

CHNEP staff, EPA staff, and other partners at Blackbeard's Ranch during the 2025 Program Evaluation site visits.

May 22, 2025
Amended September 25, 2025

1050 Loveland Blvd., Suite D
Port Charlotte, FL 33980
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www.CHNEP.org

The Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership (CHNEP) is comprised of citizens, elected officials, resource managers and commercial and recreational resource users working to improve water quality and ecological integrity of other natural resources in its boundaries. A cooperative decision-making process is used to address diverse resource management concerns in its 5,416-square-mile area. Many of these partners also financially support the Partnership. The governmental entities in the CHNEP and its service area include:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

U.S. Geological Survey

U.S. Department of Agriculture

National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

Florida Department of Agriculture

Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council

Southwest Florida Water Management District

South Florida Water Management District

West Coast Inland Navigation District

Peace River/Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority

Florida Gulf Coast University

University of South Florida

University of Florida

Polk, Sarasota, Manatee, Lee, Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Glades Counties and the incorporated Cities and Towns of Dundee, Haines City, Auburndale, Lake Alfred, Lake Wales, Lake Hamilton, Lakeland, Winter Haven, Eagle Lake, Bartow, Fort Meade, Bowling Green, Wauchula, Zolfo Springs, Arcadia, Venice, North Port, Punta Gorda, Fort Myers, Fort Myers Beach, Cape Coral, Sanibel, Estero, LaBelle, Moore Haven, and Clewiston.

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Citizens Advisory Committee Co-Chairs	**Mr. Aaron Zimmerman**	**& Mr. Harry Phillips**
CHNEP Executive Director	**Ms. Jennifer Hecker**	

FURTHERING NEW FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION PRIORITIES

This annual grant work plan and budget reflects meeting the new federal administration priorities. For the US Environmental Protection Agency, these encompass the following:

Pillar 1: Clean Air, Land, and Water for Every American
Pillar 2: Restore American Energy Dominance
Pillar 3: Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency Partnership
Pillar 4: Make the United States the Artificial Intelligence Capital of the World
Pillar 5: Protecting and Bringing Back American Auto Jobs

The work of the Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership (CHNEP), part of the National Estuary Program, which is administered by the US EPA, supports achievement of Pillar 1: Clean Air, Land, and Water for Every American and Pillar 3: Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency Partnership.

With regards to Pillar 1, the CHNEP supports land and water protection in the "estuaries of national significance" and their watersheds in Central and Southwest Florida. CHNEP directly funds water quality sampling, data analysis and reporting, and dissemination of that water quality data to our state and local governmental members as well as the public through the CHNEP Water Atlas and CHNEP water quality fact sheets. CHNEP has and continues to fund hydrologic restoration projects that reduce flooding to communities while enhancing more natural freshwater flows to tidal rivers and estuaries – essential for maintaining seagrasses, oysters, fish habitats and other economically important marine resources. CHNEP has and continues to fund wetland restoration projects that enhance the ability of these publicly and privately protected areas to naturally cleanse and store stormwater to reduce flooding and provide clean water to downstream communities for recreation, water supply, and commercial use. With the National Estuary Program being funded under Section 320 of the Clean Water Act, we provide critical financial assistance for water resource protection of these estuaries of national significance, which is relied upon and used in combination with other sources of funding to support these natural capital-based communities and economies, ensuring clean land and water for the use and enjoyment of all Americans.

With regards to Pillar 3, CHNEP and the other entities in the National Estuary Program are the finest example of Cooperative Federalism and Cross-Agency Partnership. As a non-regulatory federal program, the National Estuary Program has no role in any regulatory matters including permitting reform. The partnership is governed through the consensus of our members. Our governing board is comprised of local government elected leaders from the 10 counties and many of the cities therein, as well as state and federal agency officials. The federal funding pulls these entities together to work collectively to draft a required 5-year strategic plan, called the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), and to implement that plan through its approval of annual work plans and budgets that undertake projects and initiatives consistent with fulfilling CCMP goals and objectives. This process ensures federal priorities are transferred down to state and local governmental partners and likewise, local community needs and priorities are transferred up to the federal government to ensure that all levels of government are working cooperatively. The CHNEP is the only forum where all levels of government working on water and land protection in Central and Southwest Florida meet together routinely to discuss and collaborate in a cross-agency partnership fashion.

As such, CHNEP is working to ensure that we support the fulfillment of the new administration's priorities with regards to Pillars 1 and 3 in a Cooperative Federalism approach, to showcase how federal government can be more efficient in meeting the needs of its citizens in providing clean water and land for every American.

PREVIOUS YEAR – FY2025 - PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WQ-1: Support a comprehensive and coordinated water quality monitoring and assessment strategy

- Continued coordination of the Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network (CCHMN), providing funding for surface water monitoring and staff support, conducting the annual audits, maintaining project SOPs and QAPP and hosting the annual meeting.
- Supported the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Charlotte Harbor Estuaries Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Network (CHEVWQMN) including updating the Water Atlas Aquatic Preserve pages and CHEVWQMN biannual data updates.
- Co-authored publication on water quality trends in Southwest Florida estuaries using 20+ years of CCHMN data and a novel analysis technique- generalized additive models (GAMs). Publication in Estuaries and Coast scientific journal (ESCO), *Water Quality Trends and Eutrophication Indicators in a Large Subtropical Estuary: A Case Study of the Greater Charlotte Harbor System in Southwest Florida.*

WQ-2: Develop water quality standards, pollutant limits, and clean-up plans

- Drafted and submitted letters of support for "RAPID: Impact of Back-to-Back Major Hurricanes on Antibiotic Resistance Gene Transfer to Autochthonous Bacteria in Estuarine and Coastal Water Systems" to the National Science Foundation.
- Created new water quality tools on the CHNEP Water Atlas that compares the most recent water quality data to individual water quality standards and Total Maximum Daily Load thresholds to indicate current water conditions, as well as tools that can provide assessment of short and long-term water quality trends based on each waterbodies' data.
- Produced updated Water Quality Fact Sheets by Basin, making them available on CHNEP website.

WQ-3: Reduce urban stormwater and agricultural runoff pollution

- Provided public presentations and information on urban stormwater and agricultural runoff pollution.
- Supported partners in the implementation of stormwater and agricultural runoff reduction projects through providing funding resources, technical input and assistance, etc.

WQ-4: Reduce wastewater pollution

- Supported partners in their septic to sewer conversions of those areas that were determined to be high priority.

WQ-5: Reduce harmful algae blooms

- Provided continuous updated harmful algae bloom updates to the public and water managers through the CHNEP Coastal Conditions mapper that displays harmful algae bloom data on the CHNEP Water Atlas.
- Assisted with planning and hosting the Nutrients and Red Tide State of the Science symposium to assess the current state of knowledge, to share updates on new findings and ongoing efforts, and to guide future management and research priorities addressing nutrients and red tide.
- Co-hosted Technical Advisory Committee Macroalgae Working Group meetings to determine data gaps, management and educational needs related to increased macroalgae.
- Co-authored an article on Nitrogen Contributions to Red Tide in the Florida Scientist journal, *An evaluation of the relationships between the duration of red tide (Karenia brevis) blooms and watershed nitrogen loads in southwest Florida (USA).*

HR-1: Conduct data collection, modeling, and analyses to support hydrologic restoration

- Provided technical input into the Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Initiative (CHFI) hydrologic restoration project, which entails application of a model and hydrological restoration planning tool developed by CHNEP and available at the CHNEP Water Atlas. Assisted in gathering additional model input files to inform planned restoration projects.
- Presented overview of the CHNEP and Hydrologic Restoration and Planning for Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission and Florida Gulf Coast University Marine Fisheries Management Symposium.

HR-2: Increase fresh surface water and groundwater availability to support healthy natural systems

- Supported the implementation of recovery strategies and projects related to upholding the Minimum Flows and Levels and Minimum Aquifer Levels in the CHNEP area.
- Provided public educational outreach materials and events to reinforce the need of sufficient freshwater for healthy natural wetlands, rivers, and estuaries.

HR-3: Preserve and restore natural flow regimes

- Provided technical input and resources developed by the CHNEP to the Corkscrew Watershed Hydrological Restoration Initiative, that would restore more natural flow regimes to the southern portion of the CHNEP area.

FW-1: Protect, restore, and monitor estuarine habitats

- Participate in the Southwest Ecosystem Restoration Team (SWERT). SWERT partners focus on the restoration and enhancement of estuarine habitat including coastal marsh, mangroves, oyster reefs and seagrass.
- Added new features and tools, as well as enhancements to the text and documents on existing pages throughout the CHNEP Water Atlas. Some of the updates included the addition of several layers and datasets on the CCMP Map, Waterbody and Basin pages, new Lake Okeechobee Waterbody page, Seagrass pages, and the Trends Analysis page.
- Member of the advisory panel for the Gulf Shellfish Institute, focused on clam and shellfish restoration on Florida's Gulf Coast.

FW-2: Protect, restore, and monitor environmentally sensitive lands and waterways including critical habitat areas

- Held year 1 project meetings for CHNEP TAC- Habitat Conservation Subcommittee and site visit for NOAA technical monitors in coordination with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Bonefish & Tarpon Trust, and Charlotte County for NOAA RESTORE project. The project will include fisheries research, mapping, and modeling as well as the creation of decision-making support tools for county and state governments that prioritize locations for restoration and protection of juvenile snook and tarpon habitat in Charlotte Harbor.

FW-3: Assess and promote the benefits of land, waterway, and estuary protection and habitat restoration

- Co-authored journal article in Ecological Engineering, *A simple approach to estimating the nutrient and carbon storage benefits of restoring submerged aquatic vegetation, applied to Vallisneria americana in the Caloosahatchee Estuary, Florida, USA*.
- Presented on *Lessons Learned from Large Scale Restoration and Watershed Planning* at Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) 2024 Coastal & Estuarine Summit in Washington, D.C.

PE-1: Promote environmental literacy, awareness, and stewardship through expanded education and engagement opportunities for the general public.

- Designed, published, and distributed 26,000 copies of the 2025 Calendar, which included an educational Harbor Happenings insert on positive personal actions that protect natural resources as well as community efforts related to storm preparedness and recovery due to Hurricanes Helene and Milton severely impacting the CHNEP area.
- Organized and hosted a 2-day public Summit, with more than 200 participants who came together to discuss hurricane and other extreme weather conditions, as well as ways to enhance community resiliency through adaptation.
- CHNEP created new funding and seagrass fact sheets, making them available on CHNEP website.

PE-2: Expand reach of education and engagement opportunities to new target audiences

- Hosted a Kids Fishing Clinic at the Arcadia Rodeo with the assistance of volunteers, participants received Fish Florida rods and tackle boxes after completing four educational stations focused on stewardship, habitat, knot tying, and casting.
- Provided educational outreach booths at the Alligator Creek Festival, Burrowing Owl Festival, Englewood Earth Day, Chalo Nitka Rodeo, and the Water, Wings and Wild Things Festival, as well as other events that reach new target audiences.
- Presented at Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) 2024 Coastal & Estuarine Summit, Nature-Based Solutions Symposium, 34th Annual Southwest Florida Water Resources Conference, Southwest Florida Federal Interagency Resource Exchange (FIRE) and Economic Recovery Workshop and the County Coalition for Responsible Management of Lake Okeechobee, and the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force Working Group/Science Coordination Group meeting.

PE-3: Strengthen partner collaboration in education and engagement programs

- Provided Conservation Grants to numerous area non-profits, including for several volunteer clean-ups, volunteer water quality monitoring, educational interpretive signs, habitat restoration and other activities that implement CHNEP Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan priority actions.
- Supported the Myakka River Management Coordinating Council (MRMCC) to support updates to the MRMCC website, an educational resource about the watershed.
- Created a landing page for sharing post hurricane event resources from partners in the CHNEP region, including lessons learned and potential next steps. Additionally, created Hurricanes Helene and Milton webpages to begin aggregating maps, data and resources related to those events as they become available in response to partner requests.

PE-4: Increase outreach to policymakers to enhance understanding and support for CCMP implementation

- Met with numerous local, state, and federal policymakers to educate them about the CHNEP, its CCMP, and the current research and project funding needs of our partners.
- Co-hosted and facilitated the Southwest Florida Federal Interagency Resource Exchange (FIRE) and Economic Recovery Workshop listening session with the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, resourced from the session were made available on the CHNEP website.

CCMP FOCUS IN FY 2026

The Fiscal Year 2026 Work Plan and Budget reflects the approved 2025 CCMP, which outlines the 5-year organizational strategic plan and has the following visions, goals, objectives, and strategies:

WATER QUALITY

VISION: Waters that meet their designated human uses for drinking, shellfish harvesting, or swimming and fishing, while supporting appropriate and healthy aquatic life.

GOAL: Water Quality Improvement.

OBJECTIVE: Meet or exceed water quality standards for designated uses of natural waterbodies and waterways with no degradation of Outstanding Florida Waters.

STRATEGY: Support comprehensive and coordinated water quality monitoring programs and projects and programs that reduce pollutants entering waterways.

WQ-1: Support a comprehensive and coordinated water quality monitoring and assessment strategy

- CHNEP will continue working with partners to collect water quality monitoring data and uploading it to the CHNEP Water Atlas for access by interested parties and the public.
- CHNEP will work with our partners to develop new information pages on the Water Atlas as needed.
- CHNEP will continue to fund and support the Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network (CCHMN).

WQ-2: Develop water quality standards, pollutant limits, and clean-up plans

- CHNEP will continue to support, providing technical comment as appropriate, the development and implementation of water quality standards, pollutant limits and clean-up plans.

WQ-3: Reduce urban stormwater and agricultural runoff pollution

- CHNEP will continue to provide public presentations and information on urban stormwater and agricultural runoff pollution.
- CHNEP will continue to support partners in the implementation of stormwater and agricultural runoff reduction projects.

WQ-4: Reduce wastewater pollution

- CHNEP will continue to support partners in the implementation of wastewater discharge reduction and reuse projects, as well as septic to sewer conversion projects.

WQ-5: Reduce harmful algae blooms

- CHNEP will continue to provide public presentations and information on harmful algae blooms and nutrient pollution.

HYDROLOGIC RESTORATION

VISION: Natural freshwater flow across the landscape to the estuaries.

GOAL: Enhanced and improved waterbodies with more natural hydrologic conditions.

OBJECTIVE: Adequate aquifer recharge and freshwater volume and timing of flow to support healthy natural systems.

STRATEGY: Support data-driven watershed planning and hydrological restoration projects to preserve or restore natural flow regimes and provide sufficient fresh surface and groundwater to natural systems.

HR-1: Conduct data collection, modeling, and analyses to support hydrologic restoration

- CHNEP will continue to actively participate in gathering data and supporting modeling and analyses as well as fund integrated ground and surface water models to improve decision-making with regards to hydrological restoration projects.

HR-2: Increase fresh surface water and groundwater availability to support healthy natural systems

- CHNEP will continue to promote water conservation and sufficient flows and levels of freshwater to support natural systems.

HR-3: Preserve and restore natural flow regimes

- CHNEP will work with partners to identify funding sources to facilitate capital programs that coordinate water storage, flood control, water quality and disaster planning.
- CHNEP will support implementation of vulnerability assessment and adaptation plan recommendations to protect water quality and hydrology.
- CHNEP will continue participating and providing technical assistance in Everglades restoration through project review, meeting participation and technical comment.

FISH & WILDLIFE HABITAT PROTECTION

VISION: A diverse environment of interconnected, healthy habitats that support natural processes and viable, resilient native plant and animal communities.

GOAL: Natural habitat protection and restoration.

OBJECTIVE: Permanently acquire, connect, protect, manage, and restore natural terrestrial and aquatic habitats.

STRATEGY: Promote and facilitate permanent acquisition and effective protection and management of critical natural habitats including wildlife dispersal areas, movement and habitat migration corridors, wetlands, flowways, and environmentally sensitive lands and estuarine habitats.

FW-1: Protect, monitor and restore estuarine habitats

- CHNEP will continue to work with Southwest Florida Estuarine Restoration Team (SWERT) partners on designing, permitting and constructing seagrass, oyster, and other estuarine restoration projects in CHNEP area.

FW-2: Protect, monitor and restore environmentally sensitive lands and waterways including critical habitat areas

- CHNEP will continue to share the Habitat Restoration Needs report and maps to support the conservation, management and enhancement of environmentally sensitive lands and critical habitat areas necessary for habitat resilience and migration.
- CHNEP will continue to directly engage in funding and project managing habitat restoration projects.

FW-3: Assess and promote the benefits of land, waterway, and estuary protection and habitat restoration

- CHNEP will continue to use its comprehensive regional Economic Valuation study to promote the economic return on investment from land, water and estuarine protection and restoration investments.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

VISION: An informed, engaged public making choices and taking actions that increase protection and restoration of estuaries and watersheds.

GOAL: Public education and engagement.

OBJECTIVE: Increase the proportion of the population that supports and participates in actions to protect and restore estuaries and watersheds.

STRATEGY: Promote environmental awareness, understanding, and stewardship to the general public, new target audiences, and policymakers; and strengthen non-profit partner collaboration in education and engagement programs.

PE-1: Promote environmental literacy, awareness, and stewardship through expanded education and engagement opportunities for the general public

- CHNEP will continue to share information about routine volunteer events to provide environmental education and public engagement opportunities.
- CHNEP will continue to produce free educational materials and distribute them throughout the CHNEP area.
- CHNEP will continue to disseminate information about public engagement opportunities through Constant Contact, on social media, and on the www.chnep.org website.

PE-2: Expand reach of education and engagement opportunities to all communities

- CHNEP will continue to conduct educational workshops and events, as a way to introduce natural resource protection information to all communities in the area.

PE-3: Strengthen partner collaboration in education and engagement programs

- CHNEP will continue to administer a Conservation Grant program to foster community natural resource protection projects and initiatives that support CCMP implementation, including with non-profit partners.
- CHNEP will continue to seek and work with non-profit organizations on collaborative initiatives.
- CHNEP will continue to sponsor events that foster non-profit partner collaboration to educate and engage the public on issues relating to CCMP implementation.
- CHNEP continue to bring partners together, provide resources, and coordinate natural disaster and episodic events response and recovery efforts.

PE-4: Increase outreach to policymakers to enhance understanding and support for CCMP implementation

- CHNEP will continue to meet and send information to interested local, state, and federal policymakers, explaining CHNEP's role in supporting CCMP implementation.

FISCAL YEAR 2026 ANNUAL BUDGET

Table 1: Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Overview

Revenue	
Federal (EPA FY26 Programmatic 320 Funding)	$850,000
Federal (EPA FY22-25 Programmatic 320 Funding)	681,941
Federal (EPA FY26 IIJA Funding)	$909,800
Partner FY26 Contributions (Local)	$143,000
Partner FY26 Contributions (State)	$131~~205~~,000
Total Revenue	**$2,715~~89~~,741**
Expenditures	
Personnel (FY22-25 EPA 320, SWFWMD, FDEP, Local)	$525,000
Overhead Administrative Fees (Local, FY22-25 EPA 320, FY26 EPA 320)	$246,120
Public Outreach (Local and FY26 EPA 320)	$94,500
Research and Restoration (FY26 SWFWMD, Local, FY22-25 EPA 320, & FY26 EPA 320)	$873821~~947,821~~
Research and Restoration (FY26 EPA IIJA Funding)	$909,800
Policymaker Education (Local)	$4,500
FY26 Expenditures	$2,653~~727~~,741
Added to Reserves	$62,000
Total Expenditures	**$2,715~~89~~,741**

Note: The EPA FY26 320 & IIJA Budgets are also in separate Work Plans per EPA Funding Guidance.

Table 2: Fiscal Year 2026 Administrative Budget

Funder	Title	Amount
EPA 320 FY22-25	Host Fees	$174,120
EPA 320 FY26	Materials and Supplies / Printer Lease	$10,000
EPA 320 FY22-25	Materials and Supplies / Printer Lease	$15,000
EPA 320 FY26	Travel	$25,000
Local	Meeting Support	$10,000
EPA 320 FY26	Communication Software & Fees	$12,000
	Total	**$246,120**

Table 3: Fiscal Year 2026 SWFWMD Budget

Task	Project	SWFWMD	Project Total
~~1 (Work Plan Task 3.1)~~	~~CCHMN - Upper Charlotte Harbor~~	~~$ 74,000~~	~~$ 74,000~~
2 (Work Plan Tasks 3 & 4)	Staff Support	$ 56,000	$ 112,000
	Total	**$ 130,000**	$ 186,000

Table 4: Fiscal Year 2026 Cooperative Funding Revenue

Funding Source	2026 Budget	Type
Federal:		
EPA Section 320 Funding	$ 850,000	Clean Water Act Section 320 Grant
EPA IIJA Funding	$ 909,800	EPA IIJA Funding
Total Federal:	**$ 1,759,800**	
Sarasota County	$ 25,000	County Appropriation
Charlotte County	$ 25,000	County Appropriation
Lee County	$ 25,000	County Appropriation
Polk County	$ 25,000	County Appropriation
Manatee County	$ 5,000	County Appropriation
DeSoto County	$ 500	County Appropriation
Hardee County	$ 500	County Appropriation
City of Cape Coral	$ 7,500	City Appropriation
City of Fort Myers	$ 5,000	City Appropriation
City of Punta Gorda	$ 5,000	City Appropriation
City of Sanibel	$ 2,500	City Appropriation
City of Fort Myers Beach	$ 2,500	City Appropriation
City of Venice	$ 2,500	City Appropriation
City of North Port	$ 1,000	City Appropriation
City of Winter Haven	$ 1,500	City Appropriation
Village of Estero	$ 5,000	Village Appropriation
City of Arcadia	$ 500	City Appropriation
City of Bartow	$ 500	City Appropriation
Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority	$ 3,500	District Appropriation
Total Local Government Revenue	**$ 143,000**	
FDEP	$ 75,000	District Appropriation
SWFWMD	$ 56~~130~~,000	District Appropriation
Total State/District Revenue	**$ 131~~205~~,000**	
Non-Federal FY26 Revenue	$ 274~~348~~,000	
Total FY26 Revenue	**$ 2,033 ~~107~~,800**	
Non-Federal Match Requirement	$ 850,000	SFWMD-funded project(s)

Table 5: Fiscal Year 2026 Travel Budget

Date	Conference/Meeting Entity	# Staff	Location	Length of Stay	Travel Mode	Reg. Fee	Estimated Cost
Nov. 2025	Coastal Estuarine Research Federation	1	Richmond, VA	4	Air	$900	$3,000
Jan. 2026	Everglades Coalition	1	TBD, FL	4	Auto	$ --	$1,300
Feb. 2026	American Water Resources Association	2	Fort Myers, FL	-	Auto	$ --	$200
Mar. 2026	NEP/EPA	1	Washington, DC	4	Air	$300	$2,400
April 2026	League of Env. Educators of Florida	1	Ocala, FL	2	Auto	$150	$600
April 2026	Gulf of America All Hands	1	TBD	4	Air	$200	$1,300
September 2026	Resiliency Florida	1	TBD, FL	3	Auto	$500	$1,200
Oct. 2025 - Sep. 2026	Local Travel: Meetings/Mileage	5	Various	1 to 2	Auto	$800	$12,150
					Subtotal	$2,850	$22,150
					Total		**$ 25,000**

Table 6: Fiscal Year 2026 Public Outreach Budget

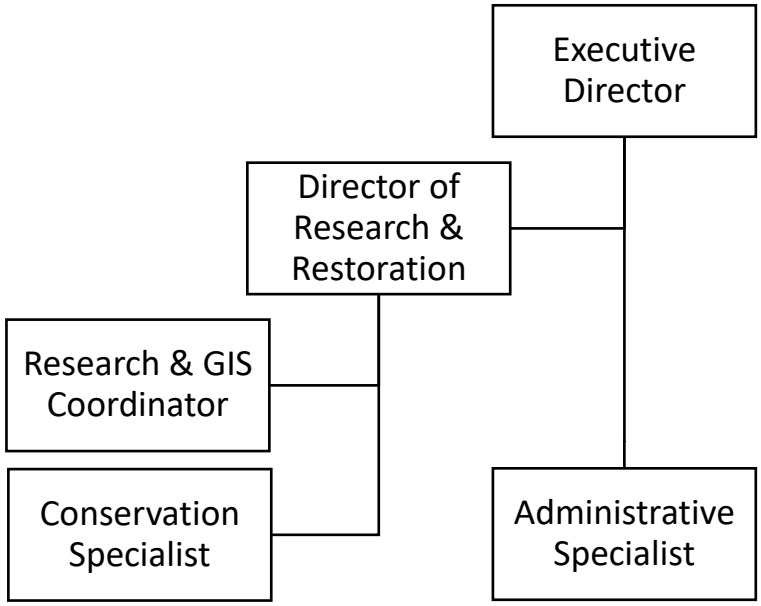
Funder	Title	Amount
Local	CHNEP Sponsorships	$5,000
Local	CHNEP Conservation Grants	$30,000
EPA 320 FY26	CHNEP Publications (Calendar)	$50,000
Local	CHNEP Publication Support (Contractor)	$5,000
Local	CHNEP Events	$14,500
	Total	**$94,500**

Table 7: Fiscal Year 2026 Research and Restoration Projects Budget

FY	Funder	Project Title	Amount
2022	EPA IIJA	Pine Island Restoration Project	$113,450
2022	EPA IIJA	Charlotte County Vulnerability Assessment*	$200,000
2022	EPA IIJA	Lee County Vulnerability Assessment	$200,000
2022	EPA IIJA	Tiki Point Living Shoreline Project	$320,000
2022	EPA IIJA	Yucca Pens Hydrological Restoration Project Phase I	$76,350
		EPA IIJA FY22 Total	**$909,800**
2023	EPA IIJA	Polk County Vulnerability Assessment	$200,000
2023	EPA IIJA	Highlands County Vulnerability Assessment*	$200,000
~~2023~~	~~EPA IIJA~~	~~CHNEP Water Atlas Maintenance & Improvements*~~	~~$130,588~~
2023	EPA IIJA	Yucca Pens Hydrological Restoration Project Phase I	$346,170
		EPA IIJAFY23 Total	**$746,170~~876,758~~**
~~2024~~	~~EPA IIJA~~	~~CHNEP Water Atlas Maintenance & Improvements*~~	~~$81,453~~
2024	EPA IIJA	DeSoto County Vulnerability Assessment*	$200,000
2024	EPA IIJA	Hardee County Vulnerability Assessment*	$200,000
2024	EPA IIJA	Yucca Pens Hydrological Restoration Project Phase I	$327,480
2024	EPA IIJA	Hendry County Vulnerability Assessment	$20,200
2024	EPA IIJA	Water Quality Trend Assessment and Dashboard Tool	$70,667
		EPA IIJA FY24 Total	**$818, 347~~99,800~~**
2025	EPA IIJA	Sarasota County Vulnerability Assessment	$200,000
2025	EPA IIJA	Manatee County Vulnerability Assessment	$200,000
~~2025~~	~~EPA IIJA~~	~~CHNEP Water Atlas Maintenance & Improvements*~~	~~$121,348~~
2025	EPA IIJA	Hendry County Vulnerability Assessment	$179,800
2025	EPA IIJA	Glades County Vulnerability Assessment	$200,000
		EPA IIJA FY25 Total	**$788,452~~899,800~~**
2026	EPA 320 FY22-25	Lower CCHMN – Water Quality Monitoring	$13,000
2026	~~SWFWMD~~EPA 320 FY22-25	CHNEP Water Atlas Improvements ~~Upper CCHMN – Water Quality Monitoring~~	$50~~74~~,000
2026	Local	TBD Project Money to cover unanticipated costs	$20,000
2026	EPA 320 FY22-25	CHNEP Water Atlas Maintenance	$87,821
2026	EPA 320 FY26	Clean Water Research & Restoration TBD Project(s)	$70~~5~~3,000
		EPA, SWFWMD, & Local FY26 Total	**$873,821~~947,821~~**
2026	EPA IIJA FY26	Peace River Basin Water Pollution Hotspot Assessment	$119,000
~~2026~~	~~EPA IIJA FY26~~	~~CHNEP Water Atlas Improvements~~	~~$50,000~~
2026	EPA IIJA FY26	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation and Water Quality Restoration	$260,000
2026	EPA IIJA FY26	Clean Water Research & Restoration TBD Project(s)	$530~~480~~,800
		EPA IIJA FY26 Total	**$909,800**
		FY26 Total Research & Restoration Project Budget	**$1,783,621~~857,621~~**

STAFF ORGANIZATION CHART AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The FY26 CHNEP staffing plan includes five full-time professionals, including the following positions:



Executive Director: Responsible for overall program management including cultivating and strengthening partnerships and soliciting funding, as well as is the liaison to Policy and Management Committees.

Director of Research & Restoration: Responsible for management of research and restoration projects and initiatives, as well as is the staff liaison to Technical and Citizens Advisory Committees.

Research & GIS Coordinator: Responsible for GIS coordination, assisting project management of scientific research projects and initiatives, as well as drafting the technical content for articles, grant proposals and reports.

Conservation Specialist: Responsible for providing a variety of public outreach and engagement duties, including environmental education programs, volunteer and member support, marketing, etc.

Administrative Specialist: Responsible for providing a variety of administrative support functions relating to payroll, database management, donation processing, meeting preparation, etc.

CLEAN WATER ACT (CWA) CORE PROGRAM GOALS

1) Establishing water quality standards
2) Identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans
3) Permitting discharges of pollutants from point
4) Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution
5) Protecting wetlands
6) Protecting coastal waters
7) Protecting large aquatic ecosystems
8) Ensure clean and safe water for all communities
9) Protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds

CLEAN WATER ACT CORE PROGRAM SUPPORT FUNCTIONS

CHNEP supports the Clean Water Act (CWA) core programs through direct funding of projects, staff assistance to partners and partner activities. Provided below are representative activities of CHNEP support for CWA core programs during Fiscal Year 2026.

Water Quality Monitoring for Water Quality Standards

The CHNEP coordinates the Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network (CCHMN), a regional partnership of agencies that collect monthly water quality data using consistent, technically-sound sampling design. The long-term random sampling of strategically located stations allows for the scientific assessment of water quality status and trends. The CCHMN was created to fill gaps in coastal water monitoring and initiate a unified sampling approach throughout the CHNEP area. CHNEP also contributes to this project by assisting in funding support for the monitoring of upper and lower Charlotte Harbor within the project area. CHNEP creates and maintain the EPA approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and Standard Operating Procedures for the CCHMN, conducts annual field audits and meetings, contracts and assists with field sampling, and compiles and analyzes collected water quality data through the CHNEP Water Atlas. CHNEP and CCHMN partners also participate in the Regional Ambient Monitoring Program (RAMP) which holds quarterly meetings. RAMP participants share current water quality field and laboratory issues and conduct quality assurance field sampling and laboratory analyses. CHNEP provides ongoing support to the CCHMN and the Charlotte Harbor Estuary Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Network (CHEVWQMN), as their data is entered into the state Watershed Information Network (WIN) database and is used to evaluate status and trends of state, regional, and local estuarine conditions. The data is used locally by CHNEP to develop future water quality targets and numeric nutrient data. Charlotte Harbor is also a Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) priority Water Body.

The continuation of consistent data collection throughout this project area will help to assess impairments, determine total maximum daily load limits (TMDL), and develop basin management action plans for the watershed. The gathering of water quality data results in valuable information that is used for guidance on the improvement of water quality based on records starting in 2000.

Controlling Non-Point Sources

The CHNEP funds projects educating or implementing non-point source pollution reduction. Examples include fertilizer restriction brochures and signs, native landscaping workshops, marine debris reduction, rain gardens, etc.

The CHNEP also hosts the CHNEP Water Atlas site, a web-based resource center providing both technical users and interested community members and policy makers with a one-stop shop to find local data on water quality, flow, and habitat to information about educational events and volunteer resources in Central and Southwest Florida. The site includes up to date and historical data, trend analysis, historical maps and studies, water resource maps, and much more. It is a readily accessible way to find more information about local waterways.

Protecting Wetlands and Coastal Waters

The CHNEP undertakes Research and Restoration Projects that support water quality improvement and restored hydrology including implementing living shorelines, flowways and wetland restoration, oyster and seagrass restoration, and other activities.

Task 1 Management Conference: Administration, Finance, Operations

Objective: Provide committee structure that supports the implementation of the CCMP; support administration of CHNEP; ensure compliance with grant and agreement requirements as awardee and awarder; and seek additional funding support for identified projects.

Description: This ongoing task provides staff support to the Management Conference, furnishes operations and finance support, ensures compliance with Administrative Host procedures, secures funding from partners, and assists partners seeking grants and contracts to implement the CCMP.

CCMP Elements Implemented: All

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Management Conference committee meetings for 4 committees (3x/yr) each
- Management Conference adoption of Annual Work Plan before June 1, 2025
- GPRA Reporting through EPA's NEPORT, by September 14, 2025
- Administration of Program Office's operations and finances, ongoing
- Collaborate with partners on CCMP implementation, ongoing
- Compliance with Host Agency finance and procurement requirements, ongoing
- Compliance with Funders' grant reporting requirements, ongoing

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22-25 Programmatic 320 Funding	
Personnel (Salaries & Benefits)	$392,000
Overhead Host Administrative Fees	$174,120
EPA FY26 Programmatic 320 Funding	
Staff Travel	$ 25,000
Communications Software and Fees	$ 12,000
SWFWMD FY26 Funding	
Personnel (Salaries & Benefits)	$ 56,000
FDEP FY26 Funding	
Personnel (Salaries & Benefits)	$ 75,000
Local FY26 Funding	
Personnel (Salaries & Benefits)	$ 2,000
Meeting Support	$ 10,000
Total Task Budget	$746,120

Outcomes

- Fully informed and engaged CHNEP Management Conference that coordinated water resource protection across jurisdictional boundaries at a watershed scale
- Support for other federal, state, and non-profit grants to fund CCMP implementation
- Increased participation, understanding and support of NEP mission by partners
- Continued commitment from partners to fund CHNEP and CCMP activities
- Funding opportunities and assistance provided to partners to implement initiatives and projects that further CCMP implementation.

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: Potentially all.

Task 1.1 Materials and Supplies

Project Objective: To provide the necessary supplies for the program office to function

Project Description: This ongoing task purchases needed materials and supplies to operate the CHNEP program office.

CCMP Elements Implemented: All

Outputs/Deliverables/Estimated Milestones

- Printed materials available for all CHNEP public meetings, including CHNEP Management Conference committee meetings
- Printed materials sent to all CHNEP member entities, as well as to local, state, and federal elected leaders in the CHNEP area
- Printer/Copier leasing fees

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22-25 Programmatic 320 Funding	$ 15,000
EPA FY26 Programmatic 320 Funding	$ 10,000
Total Task Budget	$ 25,000

Outcomes

- Increased public awareness of CHNEP and CCMP
- Maintained and expanded CHNEP partnerships
- Engaged and educated decision-makers and policymakers
- Efficient and organized operations

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (8) Ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) Protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 2 Public Engagement

Work Plan Objective: Provide essential ongoing communications so CHNEP can address specific requirements and issues associated with the CCMP; as well as to support the CHNEP Management Conference and partners' public outreach initiatives to further CCMP implementation.

Description: This ongoing task provides continuous support of the overall program include website, social media, and regular media. They range from events (workshops, festivals, and trainings) to publications (magazines, calendars, and books), to videos and target audience initiatives.

CHNEP Staff create all the public education and engagement content for the following:

- YouTube: Videos and talks (PDF files with linked with audio) posted share presentations online
- Facebook/Instagram: Routine posts promote CHNEP projects
- Constant Contact: Notices of Management Conference meetings and events are sent to subscribers
- CHNEP website: The CHNEP.org website provides current information about projects, meetings, grant opportunities, and volunteer activities

CCMP Elements Implemented: PE-1, PE-2, PE-3, and PE-4.

Partners and their roles: CHNEP is the lead in conducting its public outreach activities, doing so in cooperation with and in support of its partners.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Updated website for Management Conference meetings and activities
- EventBrite messages to promote and handle registrations for events
- Constant Contact messages to announce Management Conference meetings
- Monthly communications through various CHNEP media channels

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22-25 Programmatic 320 Funding	Staff Time
FDEP FY26 Funding	Staff Time

Outcomes

- Educated and engaged citizenry who are knowledgeable about the CHNEP and the natural environment of southwest Florida.
- Educational resources and events that enhance protection of natural resources and CCMP implementation
- New partnerships and strengthened existing partnerships through funding opportunities for projects that implement the CCMP

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) Ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) Protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 2.1 Conservation Grants

Objective: To implement the CCMP through award of funding to community partners for CCMP-related community projects and initiatives.

Description: This ongoing task is to solicited applications and award $500 to $9,999 to selected citizens, organizations, businesses, government agencies, schools or universities that are undertaking activities outlines in the CHNEP CCMP.

CCMP Elements Implemented: All

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Outputs vary with project, but all projects submit a final deliverable with supporting documentation
- All payments are expected to be processed by September 30, 2026

FY26 Budget

Local Funds	$30,000
Total Task Budget	$30,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Strengthened and expanded partnerships to protect and restore the CHNEP area
- Engaged citizens assisting in environmental education, research, monitoring, and restoration activities
- Expanded CHNEP outreach and education
- Enhanced natural resource protection

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: Potentially all 1) Establishing water quality standards, 2) Identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans, 3) Permitting discharges of pollutants from point, 4) Addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, 5) Protecting wetlands, 6) Protecting coastal waters, 7) Protecting large aquatic ecosystems, 8) Ensure clean and safe water for all communities, 9) Protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 2.2 CHNEP~~2026~~ Publications

Project Objective: Educate, motivate, and engage the public and partners through creating an annual nature calendar and other periodic publications that showcase the importance and variety of native wildlife and natural environments, as well as raise awareness of CHNEP and its efforts to implement the CHNEP CCMP.

Project Description: This ongoing task designs, publishes, and distributes an annual calendar with an educational insert section, with images donated by citizens. Additionally, the CHNEP also produces periodic publications including fact sheets on CHNEP activities and progress towards implementing the CCMP.

CCMP Elements Implemented: PE-1, PE-2, PE-3, and PE-4.

Partners and their roles: Articles and images are donated by interested citizens and Management Conference partners. The calendars are distributed in multiple ways, including U.S. Mail to individual citizens and in bulk to 200+ partners that volunteer to redistribute in their area and at events.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- CHNEP periodic publications/fact sheets
- CHNEP annual Calendar with educational insert

FY26 Budget

EPA FY26 Programmatic 320 Funding	
Publications	$50,000
Local FY26 Funding	
Publications Support	$ 5,000
Total Task Budget	$55,000 + Staff Time

Outcome: Informed public and CHNEP partners all become more knowledgeable and engaged in the stewardship of the natural environment in which they live.

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, and (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems.

Task 2.3 Public Engagement Events

Project Objective: Support projects, initiatives, and workshops that educate and engage people about the issues that affect the natural environment in the CHNEP area, so they become better stewards.

Project Description: This ongoing task provides information and activities for various audiences, ranging from citizens to environmental professionals to decision-makers. Events also provide opportunities for partners to network, collaborate and learn about projects and solutions to environmental issues. CHNEP organizes and hosts a large annual regional event that involves presentations followed by resource-protection activities. For 2026, it is the triennial *Watershed Summit* - a long-standing event CHNEP has organized and hosted to convene regional water and land managers to come share new research, restoration techniques, and other information necessary for improving resource management and advancing restoration.

CCMP Elements Implemented: PE-1, PE-2, PE-3, and PE-4.

Partners and their roles: CHNEP Management Conference members, other partners and the public participate in all of these events. Local nonprofit and non-governmental partners provide support.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Plan, promote and facilitate at least 1 public educational event annually
- Participate in at least 10 community educational events annually

FY26 Budget

Local FY26 Funding	$ 14,500
Total Task Budget	$ 14,500 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Increased understanding of how personal actions affect the environment
- Enhanced sense of stewardship in natural resource protection
- Increased numbers of partners conducting activities that help fulfill the CCMP
- More professional exchange and technological information transfer amongst partners

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (8) Ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) Protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 2.4 Sponsorships

Project Objective: Implement of CCMP through support of CCMP-related conferences, workshops, and events.

Project Description: This ongoing task supports educational environmental conference, workshops, symposia, etc., which support implementation the CHNEP CCMP.

CCMP Elements Implemented: All

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- CHNEP acknowledged as event sponsor, with logo on event materials
- All funds awarded, obligated and payments processed by September 30, 2026.

FY26 Budget

Local FY26 Funding	$5,000
Total Task Budget	$5,000

Outcomes

- Strengthened and expanded partnerships to implement the CCMP
- Engaged scientists, researchers, stakeholders, and decision-makers in events that educate and inform about research, monitoring, and restoration activities relevant to CHNEP
- Informed general public, potential partners, and targeted audiences about CHNEP's mission

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, and (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems.

Task 3 Research Coordination

Work Plan Objective: To ensure collection, reporting and access to consistent region-wide, technically sound water quality and biological data throughout the CHNEP area. To identify and resolve gaps in scientific data and address emerging research needs through partnerships and innovative research.

Description: This ongoing task entails coordinating water quality sampling as well as works with partners to identify and resolve gaps in water quality and biological data, specifically through refinements to the Monitoring Strategy. In addition, CHNEP assists partners with compiling, analyzing, mapping, and conveying complex technical information in an understandable manner so it can be used to implement effective resource protection and restoration projects. The resulting data is used to assess resource status and trends, to be incorporated into resource management plans.

CCMP Elements Implemented: WQ-1, WQ-2, HR-1, FW-2, and PE-1.

Partners and Roles: outlined below in the respective subtasks

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- CHNEP Water Atlas: Review and assess uploaded water quality sampling data
- Water Quality Monitoring: Monthly water quality data, quarterly RAMP participation, and CCHMN annual field audits and meetings
- Seagrass Monitoring: Annual seagrass data
- Seagrass Aerial Mapping: Biennial and 6-year seagrass aerial mapping
- Data Management: Biannual up-dates of water quality data
- Data Access: Ongoing access to water quality data, graphing and analyses and response to data requests
- Data Analysis and Use: Annual up-dates of water quality contour maps and, and periodic refinement of Research Needs Inventory and environmental indicators

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22-25 Programmatic 320 Funding	Staff Time
FDEP FY26 Funding	Staff Time
SWFWMD FY26 Funding	Staff Time

Outcomes

- Consistent region-wide, technically sound water quality and biological data needed to assess resource status, trends, and complex interactions
- Public access to water quality and seagrass data to partners via CHNEP Water Atlas
- Increased data analyses, maps, and graphs to enhance and evaluate protection and restoration efforts
- Increased collaboration of monitoring, mapping and management among resource managers and agencies from throughout the CHNEP Area
- Expanded used of data by partners to assess resource conditions, manage resources and implement effective and efficient management programs and restoration projects

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: All

Task 3.1 Water Quality and Seagrass Monitoring and Mapping Programs

Project Objective: To ensure collection, reporting and mapping of consistent, technically sound long-term water quality and seagrass data throughout the CHNEP estuaries and tidal creeks. The resulting data is shared with partners to be used for assessing resource status and trends and implementing effective management programs and restoration projects.

Project Description: This ongoing task involves CHNEP's participation in four coastal water quality and seagrass monitoring and mapping programs. CHNEP coordinates the Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network (CCHMN), which is a partnership of agencies that provides monthly water quality data using a probabilistic sampling design. CCHMN field and laboratory partners collect and analyze water samples from 60 randomly selected field sites throughout 10 waterbodies each month, including: Lemon Bay, Cape Haze/Gasparilla Sound, Charlotte Harbor, Pine Island Sound, Matlacha Pass, San Carlos Bay, Estero Bay, Tidal Myakka, Peace, and Caloosahatchee Rivers. CHNEP coordination activities for the CCHMN include developing and updating Standard Operating Procedures and field Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), conducting annual field audits, hosting annual meetings, participating in quarterly Regional Ambient Monitoring Program (RAMP) quality assurance meetings, providing access to the data through the CHNEP Water Atlas, including data graphing, mapping, and reporting, and assisting with field sampling and equipment repair as needed. Additionally, CHNEP supports the Charlotte Harbor Estuaries Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Network (CHEVWQMN) by uploading and analyzing data collected by on the CHNEP Water Atlas. CHNEP also supports the Aquatic Preserve seagrass monitoring program and seagrass aerial mapping including reviewing draft results and providing maps of the seagrass results on the CHNEP Water Atlas.

CCMP Elements Implemented: WQ-1, WQ-2, HR-1, FW-1, FW-2, FW-3, PE-1, and PE-3.

Partners and Roles: In addition to CHNEP staff: Charlotte County, Lee County, Cape Coral, FDEP, FWRI, SWFWMD (RAMP Water Quality Monitoring), FDEP EBAP, Friends of CHAP, and Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center (CHEVWQMN Water Quality Monitoring), FDEP CHAP, EBAP, & South District (Seagrass Sampling Transects), and SWFWMD & SFWMD (Seagrass Aerial Mapping).

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- CCHMN: Monthly water quality data, annual field audit results, annual meeting, and quarterly RAMP participation
- CHEVWQMN: Monthly water quality data and biannual quality assurance results
- Seagrass Monitoring: Annual seagrass transect data
- Seagrass Aerial Mapping: Seagrass aerials and maps from SWFWMD every 2 years and from SFWMD every approximately 5-6 years
- RAMP: participation in quarterly meetings

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22-25 Programmatic 320 Funding	$13,000 + Staff Time
~~SWFWMD FY26 Funding~~	~~$74,000~~
Total Task Budget:	$13~~87~~,000

Budget Details including In-kind Contributions:

CCHMN Water Quality Monitoring

$13,000	EPA FY26 Programmatic 320 Funding (Lower CCHMN)
~~$74,000~~	~~SWFWMD FY26 Funding (Upper CCHMN)~~

In-kind	Charlotte County, Lee County, Cape Coral, SWFWMD, FDEP
RAMP Water Quality Monitoring	
In-kind	Charlotte County, Lee County, Cape Coral, FDEP, FWRI, SWFWMD
CHEVWQMN Water Quality Monitoring	
In-kind	FDEP CHAP, EBAP
In-kind	Friends of CHAP and EBAP
In-kind	Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center
Seagrass Sampling Transects	
In-kind	FDEP (CHAP, EBAP, & South District)
Seagrass Aerial Mapping	
In-kind	SWFWMD, SFWMD

Outcomes

- Coordinated monthly water quality sampling
- Consistent region-wide, technically sound water quality and seagrass data needed to assess resource status, trends, and complex interactions
- Technical comment provided on appropriate resource management actions and regulatory programs

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (1) establishing water quality standards, (2) Identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.2 CHNEP Water Atlas Maintenance

Project Objective: To ensure continuing access to technical data and information gathered from throughout the CHNEP area to provide to scientists, resource managers and users, elected officials, and the public through a user-friendly web-based tool. The resulting data, maps and graphs are easily accessible for use to evaluate resource conditions, answer site and topic specific questions, and convey scientific information in an understandable manner to support effective management programs and restoration projects.

Project Description: This ongoing task involves maintenance and enhancement of the CHNEP Water Atlas, a web-based, data management and mapping system that provides historical information, scientific data, water resource maps, resource management actions, volunteer opportunities and current events from throughout the CHNEP area. Tools are available to map, analyze and graph data related to specific locations and topics to assists partners with identifying, prioritizing, and implementing projects that address CCMP water quality, habitat, hydrology, and stewardship goals.

CCMP Elements Implemented: WQ-1, WQ-2, HR-1, FW-1, FW-2, FW-3, PE-1, and PE-3.

Partners and Roles: All entities creating publicly accessible water quality data.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Post and provide access to water quality data updates every 6 months.
- Post and provide access to data analyses, maps and graphs as requested.
- Annual Update of WBID Boundaries and NNC Values
- Conducting trend analysis on water quality data annually and providing in user friendly format
- Conducting analysis on seagrass data annually and providing in user friendly format

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22-25 Programmatic 320 Funding	$87,821
Total Task Budget	$87,821 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Data publicly provided to public and resource managers to assess effectiveness of protection and restoration efforts
- Increased coordination on sampling and monitoring efforts amongst resource managers and agencies in the CHNEP area
- Access to water quality, seagrass, and algae data to partners via CHNEP Water Atlas

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.3 Charlotte County Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment

Project Objective: To identify vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure in Charlotte County, Florida.

Project Description: This ongoing task is to use a state-mandated vulnerability assessment process and conduct public workshops, data analysis, and modeling to identify vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure in Charlotte County, Florida. The Consultant will gather and update the County's vulnerability assessment utilizing new elevation data, updated water levels and shoreline information, capital project data, and stormwater management data. Vulnerability modeling will look at what assets are vulnerable to flooding in 100-year rainfall events. This project will produce a final Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment for Charlotte County that meets all Florida Statutory requirements. This will qualify Charlotte County to access additional state funding resources.

CCMP Elements Implemented: potentially all CCMP elements

Partners and Roles: CHNEP (Funder), Charlotte County

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Data Collection and Analysis of Critical Assets and Infrastructure
- Vulnerability Modeling and Analysis

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22 IIJA Funding	$ 200,000
Total Task Budget	$ 200,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment for Charlotte County that meets statutory requirements and therefore, makes Charlotte County eligible for additional state funding

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans to restore them, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.4 Lee County Adaptation Action Planning

Project Objective: To identify priority at risk critical assets and infrastructure in Lee County, Florida from 100-year rainfall events; to develop specific recommended strategies and projects in Adaptation Action Plans for reducing those risks through the modification of those assets and infrastructure.

Project Description: This ongoing task is to use state recommended adaptation planning processes to conduct public workshops, data and engineering analysis, and modeling to develop recommended Adaptation Action Areas (AAA's) for Lee County. The Consultant will utilize the County's vulnerability assessment data including elevation data, updated water and shoreline information, capital project data, and stormwater management data. The contractor will then use these analyses to develop proposed adaptation strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure. One of the foundational concepts of Fla Stat 380.093 and FEMA's CRS program is to assess the flood risk of a community using best available tools, data, and methodologies. The larger goal of both programs is to capture multiple types of weather-related scenarios to project and model how various flood risks would affect the community.

CCMP Elements Implemented: potentially all CCMP elements

Partners and Roles: CHNEP (Funder), Lee County

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Adaptation Planning, Modeling, and Analyses
- Proposed Priority Adaptation Action Area Strategies and Projects

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22 IIJA Funding	$ 200,000
Total Task Budget	$ 200,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- List of strategies and projects to reduce risks and vulnerabilities to Lee County's priority critical assets and infrastructure, which can be used to garner additional state funding

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans to restore them, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.5 Polk County Vulnerability Assessment Enhancements

Project Objective: To identify added vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure from 200 and 500-year rainfall events in Polk County, Florida; in order to reduce those risks through modifying the assets and infrastructure.

Project Description: This ongoing task is to model 200 and 500-year rainfall events to determine the flood risks and vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure in Polk County Florida.

CCMP Elements Implemented: potentially all CCMP elements

Partners and Roles: CHNEP (Funder), Polk County, Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Model results of 200 and 500-year rainfall event's flooding impact on critical assets and infrastructures
- Visualizations and rendering of projected impacts to assist in public and policymaker understanding of risks and vulnerabilities to critical assets and infrastructure from severe weather events

FY26 Budget

EPA FY23 IIJA Funding	$ 200,000
Total Task Budget	$ 200,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Added information regarding risks and vulnerabilities to Polk County's priority critical assets and infrastructure, which can be used to garner additional state funding

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans to restore them, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystem, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.6 Highlands County Adaptation Action Planning

Project Objective: To identify priority at risk critical assets and infrastructure in Highlands County, Florida from 100-year rainfall events; to develop specific recommended strategies and projects in Adaptation Action Plans for reducing those risks through the modification of those assets and infrastructure.

Project Description: This ongoing task is to ongoing task is to use state recommended adaptation planning processes to conduct public workshops, data and engineering analysis, and modeling to develop recommended Adaptation Action Areas (AAA's) for Highlands County. The Consultant will utilize the County's vulnerability assessment data including elevation data, updated water and shoreline information, capital project data, and stormwater management data. The contractor will then use these analyses to develop proposed adaptation strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure. One of the foundational concepts of Fla Stat 380.093 and FEMA's CRS program is to assess the flood risk of a community using best available tools, data, and methodologies. The larger goal of both programs is to capture multiple types of weather-related scenarios to project and model how various flood risks would affect the community.

CCMP Elements Implemented: potentially all CCMP elements

Partners and Roles: CHNEP (Funder), Highlands County, Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Adaptation Planning, Modeling, and Analyses
- Proposed Priority Adaptation Action Area Strategies and Projects

FY26 Budget

EPA FY23 IIJA Funding	$ 200,000
Total Task Budget	$ 200,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- List of strategies and projects to reduce risks and vulnerabilities to Highlands County's priority critical assets and infrastructure, which can be used to garner additional state funding

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans to restore them, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.7 DeSoto County Adaptation Action Planning

Project Objective: To identify priority at risk critical assets and infrastructure in DeSoto County, Florida from 100-year rainfall events; to develop specific recommended strategies and projects in Adaptation Action Plans for reducing those risks through the modification of those assets and infrastructure.

Project Description: This ongoing task is to use state recommended adaptation planning processes to conduct public workshops, data and engineering analysis, and modeling to develop recommended Adaptation Action Areas (AAA's) for DeSoto County. The Consultant will utilize the County's vulnerability assessment data including elevation data, updated water and shoreline information, capital project data, and stormwater management data. The contractor will then use these analyses to develop proposed adaptation strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure. One of the foundational concepts of Fla Stat 380.093 and FEMA's CRS program is to assess the flood risk of a community using best available tools, data, and methodologies. The larger goal of both programs is to capture multiple types of weather-related scenarios to project and model how various flood risks would affect the community.

CCMP Elements Implemented: potentially all CCMP elements

Partners and Roles: CHNEP (Funder), DeSoto County, Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Adaptation Planning, Modeling, and Analyses
- Proposed Priority Adaptation Action Area Strategies and Projects

FY26 Budget

EPA FY24 IIJA Funding	$ 200,000
Total Task Budget	$ 200,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- List of strategies and projects to reduce risks and vulnerabilities to DeSoto County's priority critical assets and infrastructure, which can be used to garner additional state funding

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans to restore them, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.8 Hardee County Adaptation Action Planning

Project Objective: To identify priority at risk critical assets and infrastructure in Hardee County, Florida from 100-year rainfall events; to develop specific recommended strategies and projects in Adaptation Action Plans for reducing those risks through the modification of those assets and infrastructure.

Project Description: This ongoing task is to use state recommended adaptation planning processes to conduct public workshops, data and engineering analysis, and modeling to develop recommended Adaptation Action Areas (AAA's) for Hardee County. The Consultant will utilize the County's vulnerability assessment data including elevation data, updated water and shoreline information, capital project data, and stormwater management data. The contractor will then use these analyses to develop proposed adaptation strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure. One of the foundational concepts of Fla Stat 380.093 and FEMA's CRS program is to assess the flood risk of a community using best available tools, data, and methodologies. The larger goal of both programs is to capture multiple types of weather-related scenarios to project and model how various flood risks would affect the community.

CCMP Elements Implemented: potentially all CCMP elements

Partners and Roles: CHNEP (Funder), Hardee County, Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Adaptation Planning, Modeling, and Analyses
- Proposed Priority Adaptation Action Area Strategies and Projects

FY26 Budget

EPA FY24 IIJA Funding	$ 200,000
Total Task Budget	$ 200,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- List of strategies and projects to reduce risks and vulnerabilities to Hardee County's priority critical assets and infrastructure, which can be used to garner additional state funding

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans to restore them, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.9 Sarasota County Adaptation Action Planning

Project Objective: To identify priority at risk critical assets and infrastructure in Sarasota County, Florida from 100-year rainfall events; to develop specific recommended strategies and projects in Adaptation Action Plans for reducing those risks through the modification of those assets and infrastructure.

Project Description: This ongoing task is to use state recommended adaptation planning processes to conduct public workshops, data and engineering analysis, and modeling to develop recommended Adaptation Action Areas (AAA's) for Sarasota County. The Consultant will utilize the County's vulnerability assessment data including elevation data, updated water and shoreline information, capital project data, and stormwater management data. The contractor will then use these analyses to develop proposed adaptation strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure. One of the foundational concepts of Fla Stat 380.093 and FEMA's CRS program is to assess the flood risk of a community using best available tools, data, and methodologies. The larger goal of both programs is to capture multiple types of weather-related scenarios to project and model how various flood risks would affect the community.

CCMP Elements Implemented: potentially all CCMP elements

Partners and Roles: CHNEP (Funder), Sarasota County

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Adaptation Planning, Modeling, and Analyses
- Proposed Priority Adaptation Action Area Strategies and Projects

FY26 Budget

EPA FY25 IIJA Funding	$ 200,000
Total Task Budget	$ 200,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- List of strategies and projects to reduce risks and vulnerabilities to Sarasota County's priority critical assets and infrastructure, which can be used to garner additional state funding

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans to restore them, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.10 Manatee County Adaptation Action Planning

Project Objective: To identify priority at risk critical assets and infrastructure in Manatee County, Florida from 100-year rainfall events; to develop specific recommended strategies and projects in Adaptation Action Plans for reducing those risks through the modification of those assets and infrastructure.

Project Description: This ongoing task is to use state recommended adaptation planning processes to conduct public workshops, data and engineering analysis, and modeling to develop recommended Adaptation Action Areas (AAA's) for Manatee County. The Consultant will utilize the County's vulnerability assessment data including elevation data, updated water and shoreline information, capital project data, and stormwater management data. The contractor will then use these analyses to develop proposed adaptation strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure. One of the foundational concepts of Fla Stat 380.093 and FEMA's CRS program is to assess the flood risk of a community using best available tools, data, and methodologies. The larger goal of both programs is to capture multiple types of weather-related scenarios to project and model how various flood risks would affect the community.

CCMP Elements Implemented: potentially all CCMP elements.

Partners and Roles: CHNEP (Funder), Manatee County

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Adaptation Planning, Modeling, and Analyses
- Proposed Priority Adaptation Action Area Strategies and Projects

FY26 Budget

EPA FY25 IIJA Funding	$ 200,000
Total Task Budget	$ 200,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- List of strategies and projects to reduce risks and vulnerabilities to Manatee County's priority critical assets and infrastructure, which can be used to garner additional state funding

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans to restore them, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.11 Hendry County Adaptation Action Planning

Project Objective: To identify priority at risk critical assets and infrastructure in Hendry County, Florida from 100-year rainfall events; to develop specific recommended strategies and projects in Adaptation Action Plans for reducing those risks through the modification of those assets and infrastructure.

Project Description: This ongoing task is to use state recommended adaptation planning processes to conduct public workshops, data and engineering analysis, and modeling to develop recommended Adaptation Action Areas (AAA's) for Hendry County. The Consultant will utilize the County's vulnerability assessment data including elevation data, updated water and shoreline information, capital project data, and stormwater management data. The contractor will then use these analyses to develop proposed adaptation strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure. One of the foundational concepts of Fla Stat 380.093 and FEMA's CRS program is to assess the flood risk of a community using best available tools, data, and methodologies. The larger goal of both programs is to capture multiple types of weather-related scenarios to project and model how various flood risks would affect the community.

CCMP Elements Implemented: potentially all CCMP elements.

Partners and Roles: CHNEP (Funder), Hendry County

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Adaptation Planning, Modeling, and Analyses
- Proposed Priority Adaptation Action Area Strategies and Projects

FY26 Budget

EPA FY25 IIJA Funding	$ 179,800
EPA FY24 IIJA Funding	$ 20,200
Total Task Budget	$ 200,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- List of strategies and projects to reduce risks and vulnerabilities to Hendry County's priority critical assets and infrastructure, which can be used to garner additional state funding

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans to restore them, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.12 Glades County Adaptation Action Planning

Project Objective: To identify priority at risk critical assets and infrastructure in Glades County, Florida from 100-year rainfall events; to develop specific recommended strategies and projects in Adaptation Action Plans for reducing those risks through the modification of those assets and infrastructure.

Project Description: This ongoing task is to use state recommended adaptation planning processes to conduct public workshops, data and engineering analysis, and modeling to develop recommended Adaptation Action Areas (AAA's) for Glades County. The Consultant will utilize the County's vulnerability assessment data including elevation data, updated water and shoreline information, capital project data, and stormwater management data. The contractor will then use these analyses to develop proposed adaptation strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and risks to critical assets and infrastructure. One of the foundational concepts of Fla Stat 380.093 and FEMA's CRS program is to assess the flood risk of a community using best available tools, data, and methodologies. The larger goal of both programs is to capture multiple types of weather-related scenarios to project and model how various flood risks would affect the community.

CCMP Elements Implemented: potentially all CCMP elements.

Partners and Roles: CHNEP (Funder), Glades County

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Adaptation Planning, Modeling, and Analyses
- Proposed Priority Adaptation Action Area Strategies and Projects

FY26 Budget

EPA FY25 IIJA Funding	$ 200,000
Total Task Budget	$ 200,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- List of strategies and projects to reduce risks and vulnerabilities to Glades County's priority critical assets and infrastructure, which can be used to garner additional state funding

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans to restore them, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.13 Water Quality Trend Assessment and Dashboard Tool

Work Plan Objective: To support a comprehensive and coordinated water quality monitoring and assessment strategy by providing additional analysis and information on water quality trends for individual monitoring stations and hydrologic regions throughout CHNEP estuaries where data is collected monthly by agencies, municipalities and community science programs. This data will be shared through the CHNEP Water Atlas to ensure continuing access to technical information from the CHNEP Area to scientists, resource managers and users, elected officials and the public through a user-friendly web-based tool. The resulting data, maps and graphs are easily accessible for use to evaluate resource conditions, answer site and topic specific questions, and convey scientific information in an understandable manner to support effective management programs and restoration projects.

Project Description: This ongoing task is to make updates of water quality data to the CHNEP Water Atlas, a web-based, data management and mapping system scientific communication tool that the program also funds and maintains. The Water Atlas can be utilized for research and science communication; it provides historical information, scientific data, water resource maps, and analysis tools. This project would involve data mining and cleaning to create a complete period of record dataset suitable for both traditional and novel trend analysis methods using long-data available through the state assessment database FDEP WIN (Watershed Information Network) and its predecessor STORET. A Trend Analysis for individual stations, strata and parameters will be conducted and shared via user-friendly maps and graphs using an open science data visualization tool. Code used to run these programs and analyses would be publicly available and the analyses could be conducted on an annual basis when new data is made available by sampling agencies.

CCMP Elements Implemented: WQ-1, WQ-2, WQ-3, FW-1, FW-2, PE-1, and PE-4.

Partners and Roles: All entities creating publicly accessible water quality data

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones:

- Full Period of Record dataset for water quality monitoring stations and strata suitable for trend analyses as well as instructions and other metadata
- Trend analysis on water quality data for individual stations, strata and parameters provided in user friendly format as well as code used to run trend analyses.

FY26 Budget

EPA FY24 IIJA Funding	$70,667
Total Task Budget	$70,667 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Data publicly provided to public and resource managers to assess effectiveness of protection and restoration efforts
- Increased coordination on sampling and monitoring efforts amongst resource managers and agencies in the CHNEP area

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 3.14 Peace River Basin Water Pollution Hotspot Assessment

Project Objective: To support a comprehensive and coordinated water quality monitoring and assessment strategy by providing additional analysis and information on water quality trends for individual monitoring stations and hydrologic regions throughout CHNEP estuaries where data is collected by agencies, and municipalities. This data will be shared through the CHNEP Water Atlas to ensure continuing access to technical information from the CHNEP area to scientists, resource managers and users, elected officials and the public through a user-friendly web-based tool. The resulting data, maps and graphs will be easily accessible for use to evaluate resource conditions, answer site and topic specific questions, and convey scientific information in an understandable manner to support effective management programs and restoration projects.

Project Description: This new IIJA-funded task involves data mining and cleaning to create a complete period of record dataset suitable for both traditional and novel trend analysis methods to understand trends in nutrient concentrations and load using long-term water quality data available through the state assessment database FDEP WIN (Watershed Information Network) and its predecessor STORET and flow data available through state and federal agency sources such as the USGS National Water Information System, Water Management District hydrologic data portals, and others.

CCMP Elements Implemented: WQ-1, WQ-2, WQ-3, FW-1, FW-2, PE-1, and PE-4.

Partners and Roles: CHNEP (Funder), and all entities creating publicly accessible water quality data

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Full Period of Record dataset for water quality monitoring and flow stations and strata suitable for trend analyses as well as instructions and other metadata.
- Trend analysis on water quality and flow data for individual stations, strata and parameters provided in user friendly format as well as code used to run trend analyses.

FY26 Budget

EPA FY26 IIJA Funding	$ 119,000
Total Task Budget	$ 119,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Data publicly provided to public and resource managers to assess effectiveness of protection and restoration efforts
- Increased coordination on sampling and monitoring efforts amongst resource managers and agencies in the CHNEP area

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, and (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems,

Task 3.15 CHNEP Water Atlas Improvements

Project Objective: To add features to the CHNEP Water Atlas to ensure continued access to accurate updated technical data in a user-friendly web-based tool. The resulting data, maps and graphs are easily accessible for use to evaluate resource conditions, answer site and topic specific questions, and convey scientific information in an understandable manner to support effective management programs and restoration projects.

Project Description: This new IIJA-funded task involves maintaining and enhancing the CHNEP Water Atlas, a web-based, data management and mapping system that provides historical information, scientific data, water resource maps, resource management actions, volunteer opportunities and current events from throughout the CHNEP area. Each year, new data becomes available that can be added into the CHNEP Water Atlas to allow for more holistic assessment of waterbody conditions and needed resource management actions. This task would be to make improvements and enhancements including to the home page design, database, as well as to add new features. New Water Atlas Features/Improvements planned for 2026 include: Vulnerability Assessment Layers on CCMP Map, Lake Okeechobee & Caloosahatchee Estuary Tracker Updates, Algae Data on Seagrass Pages and Interactive Map, Waterbody Pages Water Quality Chart Improvements, Expand FIB Parameters on Water Quality Contour Maps, Expand FIB Parameters on Water Quality Trend Analysis, Sarasota Creek Conditions Banners, Menu Header Redesign, and Storm and Resiliency Layers on CCMP Map.

CCMP Elements Implemented: WQ-1, WQ-2, HR-1, FW-1, FW-2, FW-3, PE-1, and PE-3.

Partners and Roles: All entities creating publicly accessible water quality data.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Updated Lake Okeechobee ecological health envelope displayed.
- Seagrass interactive map viewer with spatial algae data from FDEP/FWC.
- Charts for Dissolved Inorganic Nitrogen and True Color added to the water quality sections.
- New water quality contour maps for *Escherichia coli, Enterococcus,* and *True Color*.
- Water Quality Trends map updated with results for 2025 and pages for additional parameters.
- Updated Station Details and CCMP maps to show latest annual trend analysis results.
- New functional menu headers, with appropriate pages and tools nested under each.
- Elevation data, hurricane related layers, and SSURGO soils layers added to CCMP Maps.

FY26 Budget

EPA FY26 IIJA Funding	$50,000
Total Task Budget	$50,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Increased coordination on sampling and monitoring efforts.
- Access to updated water quality and algae data for better resource management.
- Added new maps and information to understand waterbody conditions.
- More user-friendly and intuitive website design for users to facilitate increased utilization.

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 4 Watershed Coordination

Work Plan Objective: To coordinate partner efforts around protection and restoration on a watershed scale.

Description: This ongoing task involves coordinating protection and restoration efforts including mapping, monitoring, reporting (including in the annual development of the Government Performance and Review Act (GPRA) report). Additionally, CHNEP staff will provide technical support in watershed initiatives such as: Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA) Recovery Strategy, Minimum Flows and Levels, Reasonable Assurance Plans, Basin Management Action Plans, Southwest Florida Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan, Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Initiative, Lehigh Watershed Initiative, South Lee County Watershed Initiative, and Caloosahatchee River Watershed Protection Plan. Southwest Florida Estuarine Restoration Team (SWERT) facilitates region-wide estuarine habitat restoration that addresses endangered small-tooth sawfish critical habitat. CHNEP also participates in state and federal processes to identify landscape scale conservation corridors with public and private partnerships to provide habitat and species migration and climate change adaptation. Additionally, CHNEP participates in Everglades Restoration projects relevant to the CHNEP Study Area; this includes participating on the Science Coordination Group on behalf of Southwest Florida. As opportunities arise, CHNEP also assists partners in conducting restoration activities.

CCMP Elements Implemented: All

Partners: CHNEP, Big Waters Land Trust, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida SeaGrant, Coastal Wildlife Club, Lee County Parks and Recreation Department, Lee County Department of Natural Resources, Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, Friends of Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves, Lee County Conservation 2020 Program, Calusa Land Trust, City of Fort Myers, Mote Marine Lab, Sarasota Estuary Program, Tampa Bay Estuary Program, University of Florida and others.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- GPRA Report
- Technical support for Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Initiative, Lehigh Watershed Initiative, & South Lee County Watershed Initiative

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22-25 Programmatic 320 Funding	Staff Time
FDEP FY26 Funding	Staff Time
SWFWMD FY26 Funding	Staff Time

Outcomes

- Improved resource management
- Annual summaries of partners' restoration activities through the GPRA report
- Increased number and effectiveness of Best Management Practices (BMPs), plans and restoration activities

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans to restore them, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds of the EPA Strategic Plan.

Task 4.1 Pine Island Flatwoods Preserve Wetland Habitat Enhancement

Project Objective: This project will increase the area of restored wetland habitat through hydrological restoration. Wetlands naturally filter out pollutants and provide freshwater base flow to maintain healthy salinity levels in tidal creeks and estuaries. As a result of increasing wetlands on-site, cleaner, and more appropriate flows of freshwater will be flowing across and off-site — supporting healthier and more abundant aquatic life downstream

Project Description: This ongoing task involves restoring the Pine Island Flatwoods Preserve (part of the Lee County Conservation 20/20 Program), a 919-acre passive area which supports 134 wildlife species. This project is identified in the Pine Island Flatwoods Preserve Land Stewardship Plan, to control exotic plant species, provide freshwater to wildlife outside of the wet season, and restore hydrology of the site. The proposed 1.27-acre project area presently includes four abandoned shrimp farm ponds surrounded by multiple earthen spoil berms. The planned construction activities include the removal of these berms, construction of 100 feet of new berm to ensure wetland water retention, and re-contouring of the current shrimp pond area to create two distinctive water management areas for habitat enhancement purposes. Following construction, the enhanced freshwater marsh will be approximately 2 to 2.5 feet deeper and will connect to the Pine Island Sound estuary through an estuarine pond and outfall. Restoration of these old shrimp ponds will provide wetland habitat and a freshwater source to wildlife year-round. The project will also improve water quality and flows downstream.

CCMP Elements Implemented: HR-3, FW-1, FW-2, FW-3

Partners and Roles: Lee County is the site owner manager as well as permit applicant, FWC will serve as a project consultant, and CHNEP is the restoration project funder and manager.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- CEI (construction engineering and inspection) support services for construction
- Site construction plans, mobilization, earthwork, and demobilization tech memo
- Native planting and maintenance technical memo

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22 IIJA Funding	$113,450
Total Task Budget	$113,450 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Increased protection and restoration of natural systems and habitats
- Restoration and success monitoring methods will be available to designing and implementing future restoration project
- Collaboration and technical information exchange will be enhanced between partners
- Identified CHNEP Habitat Restoration Needs plan activities for the area will be addressed

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 4.2 Tiki Point Harborwalk Living Shoreline Pilot Project

Project Objective: To create the Tiki Point Harborwalk (TPH) living shoreline project, working with the City of Punta Gorda. The project will increase resilience and mitigate the risks of flooding, protecting infrastructure using a hybrid nature-based solution to improve habitat and water quality, reduce erosion, and buffer storm effects as outlined in the. It will include data collection, final design and permitting, and construction. CHNEP will also assist in raising public awareness and engage and educate local partners and citizens on the benefits of living shorelines, using this project as an example.

Project Description: This ongoing task involves developing solutions to mitigate/adapt to the risks of flooding along the Charlotte Harbor shoreline by implementing nature-based features. Application of these nature-based solutions will decrease wave energy along the shorefront and assist in providing a buffer to flooding for the historic downtown district of Punta Gorda and US 41, a primary evacuation route for the region which is susceptible to flooding. CHNEP will work alongside the City of Punta Gorda, who will be procuring both CEI (construction engineering and inspection) support services for construction and the construction contractor, to educate and hold public workshops for the citizens of Punta Gorda. This will allow education as to why living shorelines are so important in the region. The Vulnerability Assessment (VA), included in the 2019 City of Punta Gorda Adaptation Plan, implemented a GIS-based analysis of the City's public infrastructure using tropical storm surge elevations. The project site is within the VA's Historic Downtown Focus Area and is identified as a low-lying flood prone area. This shoreline includes a waterfront promenade connecting two City parks. The project will be partially funded by CHNEP along with FDEP and the City of Punta Gorda.

CCMP Elements Implemented: HR-3, FW-1, FW-2, FW-3.

Partners and Roles: City of Punta Gorda is the site owner manager as well as permit applicant, CHNEP will assist with funding design and permitting of project as well as with public outreach.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Construction Plans
- Pictures/Videos of before and after construction
- Fact Sheet on benefits of nature-based solutions such as a hybrid living shoreline

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22 IIJA Funding	$320,000
Total Task Budget:	$320,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Mitigated flooding, erosion, and sea level rise along a portion of the Charlotte Harbor waterfront
- Collection of data needed for final design and permitting of a nature-based solution, such as a hybrid living shoreline outlined
- Creation of a more resilient public park space with flood protection, habitat, and eco-tourism benefits

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 4.3 Yucca Pens Hydrological Restoration Project Phase I

Project Objective: To conduct monitoring and modeling as well as created final design and permitting for a large-scale hydrologic restoration project in the Yucca Pens Unit State Wildlife Management Area (located in the Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods area in Charlotte and Lee Counties).

Project Description: This ongoing task is to plan, engineer and design water management features on the Yucca Pens Wildlife Management Area (WMA) to restore more natural freshwater retention and sheet flow across the property. Using the existing Plan modeling and recommendations, additional hydraulic and hydrologic local-scale modeling will inform the final design, which will include 1) earthen ditch blocks in smaller ditches that will increase storage and surface water hydrology (a green solution), 2) the re-establishment of connections to several tidal creeks to the west of Yucca Pens Unit will be designed with concrete low water fords installed through existing off-road vehicle ruts and ditches in Yucca Pens (a green-gray solution providing additional stability as well as access for management vehicles and recreational users) and, 3) a groundwater seepage barrier is planned at the southern boundary of Yucca Pens Unit along the Gator Slough Canal (to address the significant effects the canal has on the local water table). The intent is for the project to be 'shovel-ready'. The CHNEP has already created a Lower Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Strategic Hydrologic Restoration Plan, as well as a preliminary conceptual surface and groundwater hydrologic model that simulates appropriate timing and quantity of water flows required to improve wetland habitat conditions, minimize erosion and offsite flooding, improve groundwater recharge, and reduce the risk of wildfires. This task is implementing one of the recommendations of that Plan.

CCMP Elements Implemented: WQ-3, HR-1, HR-3, FW-2, and FW-3.

Partners and Roles: FWC (site owner, permit applicant), CHNEP is the planning and design project funder and manager. The USFWS as well as the SWFWMD and SFWMD will serve as project consultants.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Construction Plans
- Cost Estimates and Implementation Phasing Plan
- State, Local and Federal Permits

FY26 Budget

EPA FY22 IIJA Funding	$76,350
EPA FY23 IIJA Funding	$346,170
EPA FY24 IIJA Funding	$327,480
Total Task Budget	$750,000 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Data collected and modeling conducted for design and permitting for large-scale hydrological restoration
- Flood reduction as well as water quality and habitat improved Resilience and ecosystem functions of important wetlands and tidal creeks enhanced, as well as aquifer recharge
- Improved flow to approximately 8,000 acres of wetlands, which will increase fresh surface water and groundwater availability and substantially improve hydrology.

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 4.4 Submerged Aquatic Vegetation and Water Quality Restoration

Project Objective: To ensure development of technically sound Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) restoration initiatives and projects which restore and protect SAV throughout the CHNEP estuaries and tidal rivers. This project is to undertake seagrass restoration and research that will provide the comprehensive data needed to inform nature-based solutions for stormwater water quality management. This supports the goals of improving water quality naturally without compromising flood control.

Project Description: This new IIJA-funded task is to conduct research and restoration using Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (*Vallisneria americana)* in a canal in the Charlotte Harbor and Caloosahatchee basins. Once approval(s) are obtained and the planting of the *Vallisneria* occurs, water quality monitoring as well as vegetation, biological and benthic surveys will be conducted to determine the nutrient removal efficiency of *Vallisneria americana*. Research findings and restoration documentation will be included in a final project report, outlining the efficacy of using *Vallisneria americana* as a nature-based solution for nutrient removal in stormwater systems based on data collected as a part of the project. The results are intended to demonstrate the return on investment for the potential adoption of such strategies as a best management practice.

CCMP Elements Implemented: FW-1, FW-2, PE-1, PE-2, and PE-3.

Partners and Roles: Counties that manage stormwater canals will be the restoration site owners, CHNEP will fund the restoration, university and non-profits will assist with monitoring and results analyses. CHNEP coordinates the TAC subcommittee and other SAV working groups including the SWERT and SWFLSWG. Other partners in the TAC or working groups include: FDEP Charlotte Harbor and Aquatic Preserves, Florida Sea Grant, FWC, SWFWMD, SFWMD, Lee County, Charlotte County, Sarasota County, SCCF, and FGCU.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Technical report and exchange of information related to SAV restoration and use as a nutrient reduction best management practice (BMP)
- Reporting and showcasing success of SAV restoration projects
- Restoration of SAV in a man-made canal will create critically important habitat for fish and wildlife and will improve water quality by reducing erosion and removing nutrients from the water column.

FY26 Budget

EPA FY26 IIJA Funding	$260,000
Total Task Budget	$260,000+ Staff Time

Outcomes

- Increased protection and restoration of natural systems
- More region-wide water quality, biological and physical data
- Advancement of SAV restoration and monitoring techniques
- Adaptation of SAV restoration projects based on lessons learned

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 4.5 Clean Water Research & Restoration TBD Project(s)

Project Objective: To solicit and award funding for a restoration/research project that addresses the CCMP Water Quality and Hydrology Priority Actions has long-term applicability and serves as a model for addressing watershed restoration.

Project Description: This new task is to fund restoration/research project(s) that implements CCMP Priority Water Quality and Hydrology Actions, has long-term applicability, and serves as a model for addressing watershed restoration. Assurances of long-term conservation use of the area after restoration/research is completed is an essential component of the project, as are monitoring restoration success and informing and educating the public about habitat values and restoration/research methods. Proposed projects should address at least one Priority Water Quality or Hydrology Action, be transferable, demonstrate value to the community, and include monitoring and educational components.

CCMP Elements Implemented: Will be determined upon award.

Partners and Roles: Will be determined upon award.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Protect will further water quality improvement and/or more natural hydrological conditions
- Restoration/research techniques will be transferable to other projects and locations following completion of the project.
- Success monitoring methods, results and educational tools will be available to guide design and implementation of additional cost-effective restoration following completion of the project.

FY26 Budget

EPA FY26 Programmatic 320 Funding	$ 753,000
EPA FY26 IIJA Funding	$ 480,800
Local FY26 Funding	$ 20,000 for Project Contingency
Total Task Budget	$1,253,800 + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Restoration and success monitoring methods available for design of future restoration projects.
- Enhanced collaboration and technical information exchange between partners.
- Identified CHNEP Water Quality and Hydrology research and/or restoration needs filled.

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (7) protecting large aquatic ecosystems, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds.

Task 5 Policymaker Education

Work Plan Objective: Support policymaker education and legislative activities to support the implementation of the CCMP; as well as through implementing the Policy Review Procedures.

Description: This project is to support staff time to conduct policymaker education that implements the CCMP. Additionally, membership dues ($4,500) in the Association of National Estuary Programs (ANEP).

CCMP Elements Implemented: PE-4.

Outputs/Deliverables/Milestones

- Letters of support for legislation as directed
- Meetings with policymakers to educate them about CHNEP and its CCMP, as well as funding and support needed for its implementation
- Continue ANEP membership
- Provide input on CCMP topics as requested by policymakers on the Management Conference
- Legislative updates to Management Conference as appropriate
- Hire a contractor to assist with policy maker education

FY26 Budget

Local FY26 Funding:	$4,500
Total Task Budget:	$4,500 (Local $ only) + Staff Time

Outcomes

- Informed policymakers as the CHNEP and the CCMP recognized and utilized as a resource by legislators (local, state, and federal) and their staff
- Improved policies and funding that assist in implementing the CCMP

CWA Core Program Goals/Objectives Addressed: (1) establishing water quality standards, (2) identifying polluted waters and developing restoration plans, (4) addressing diffuse, nonpoint sources of pollution, (5) protecting wetlands, (6) protecting coastal waters, (8) ensure clean and safe water for all communities, and (9) protect and restore waterbodies and watersheds of the EPA Strategic Plan.