

**Report to the  
Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Foundation  
Submitted by  
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**Grant:** HBOI Foundation Love Your Lagoon annual proceeds

**Project:** Indian River Lagoon Symposium

**Inception/Term:** FY 2013 to FY2015

## **Specific Aims**

The Indian River Lagoon Symposium (IRLS) is the result of a multi-institutional, multi-agency effort to provide a forum for discussing Indian River Lagoon science and its application to management of the lagoon. The symposium is open to scientists, decision makers, students, education and outreach professionals, and the interested public. The intent is to facilitate better communication among these groups so that the gaps between research and its application can be narrowed. The IRLS was initiated in 2012 (FY2013), with strong encouragement by HBOIF, especially Michael Minton. The IRLS is an important component of FAU Harbor Branch's Indian River Lagoon Observatory (IRLO) and the centerpiece of IRLO's fostering of collaboration and dissemination of scientific information on the IRL.

The goals of the Symposium are to:

- Provide a forum to disseminate current knowledge of the IRL and its management
- Foster collaborations and discussions among scientists, students, education and outreach professionals, and decision makers
- Promote participation of university students and new scientists
- Provide results and discussions that can be used to inform policy related to management of the IRL
- Increase public awareness of the IRL and its ecological and economic importance

## **Organization**

While symposia on the lagoon have been periodically held in the past, they have been infrequent, and not integrated under an organizing framework. Key to the success of the IRLS is the commitment to a recurring annual meeting organized by a Steering Committee with representatives from academic, governmental, and non-profit organizations. The Steering Committee defines the goals, basic outline, and structure for the symposium; identifies potential

participants; and provides guidance, logistical support, and planning for the symposium. The Steering Committee is instrumental in making the symposium a truly collaborative effort within the diverse IRL research community.

The 2015 Steering Committee members were:

- Jeff Beal - Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission
- Patti Gorman - South Florida Water Management District
- Dennis Hanisak - Florida Atlantic University
- Chuck Jacoby - IRL National Estuary Program/St. Johns River Water Management District
- Sea McKeon - Smithsonian Institution
- Mark Perry - Florida Oceanographic Society
- Chris Wilson - University of Florida
- John Windsor - Florida Institute of Technology

## Progress

Each year the symposium's technical sessions consist of oral presentations and posters over a single day in early February. While each year the Steering Committee selects a theme, oral presentations and posters on all aspects of science relating to the Lagoon are encouraged. Although this meeting is open to anyone interested in sharing their knowledge, activities, and ideas, contributions by university students and early-career professionals are encouraged. The public are welcome to register and attend the whole symposium, or may attend the poster session and meet the scientists.

Table 1 summarizes the dates, themes, and attendance details for the IRLS technical sessions for its four years. All programs and abstracts for the four symposia are posted on the IRLS website (<http://indianriverlagoon.org/symposium.html>).

Following the initial success of the first symposium in 2012, the Steering Committee added another half-day to IRLS 2013, *A Forum on Lagoon Health*, to enable direct interactions of the scientific community and the public on lagoon matters. Three speakers (a scientist, an educator, and a citizen) provided brief and differing perspectives on working to establish and sustain a healthy Indian River Lagoon, followed by an open discussion of all attendees on what all of us – scientists, resource managers, decision makers, and the public – can do to improve the lagoon's health. That first forum demonstrated a strong consensus that local communities need to come together and utilize scientific information to address Lagoon issues.

In IRLS 2014, the forum hosted the Indian River Lagoon Counties Collaborative, comprised of county commissioners from five counties that border the IRL. That public session involved several presentations, including one by Holly Greening, Executive Director, Tampa Bay Estuary Program on Tampa Bay's Nitrogen Management Consortia, as well as discussions by the Commissioners on progress and plans for the future on issues of lagoon health, public comment on these matters, and a presentation by U.S. Senator Bill Nelson.

**Table 1. Indian River Lagoon Symposium, FY2012-2015: Dates, Themes, Presentation and Attendance Data for Technical Sessions.**

Date	Theme	Presentations						Approximate Attendance
		Number					% of Total Made by Students	
		Key Note	Oral - 15 Minutes	Oral - 3 Minutes	Poster	Total		
February 9, 2012	The Indian River Lagoon – Looking Forward	1	20	11	38	70	34.3%	275
	Grant Gilmore, Estuarine, Coastal and Ocean Science, Inc. <i>Historical Biodiversity of the Indian River Lagoon: A Restoration Goal</i>							
February 7, 2013	The Indian River Lagoon – Health of the Lagoon	1	23	15	20	59	16.9%	330
	Joel Steward, St. Johns River Water Management District, <i>Regime Shift? Shifting Baselines? What is the State of the Lagoon?</i>							
February 6, 2014	The Indian River Lagoon – Lagoon Biodiversity	1	16	17	26	60	41.7%	315
	Robert Vrnstein, Seagrass Ecosystems Analysts, <i>Spatial Heterogeneity: A Driver of Biodiversity in the IRL</i>							
February 5, 2015	Indian River Lagoon: Lessons, Challenges, and Opportunities	1	17	20	36	74	47.3%	328
	Mark Perry, Florida Oceanographic Society, <i>Indian River Lagoon: Lessons, Challenges, and Opportunities</i>							

The theme of the public forum in IRLS 2015 was *Engaging the Public: Citizen Science*, with a panel discussion by a cross-section of scientists and educators working in the Lagoon, so the public could learn what opportunities exist to contribute to various research projects and some of the outcomes of these efforts. A number of environmental organizations involved with citizen science, including HBOI, set up informational booths in the Education Center’s gallery to enable the public to learn about the work they do and opportunities for more public involvement.

The IRLS website (<http://indianriverlagoon.org/symposium.html>) has the programs for these forums. Table 2 summarizes the dates, themes, and attendance for the forums.

**Table 2. Indian River Lagoon Symposium, 2013-2015: Dates, Themes, and Attendance Data for Public Forums.**

Date	Theme	Approximate Attendance
February 8, 2013	A Forum on Lagoon Health	230
February 7, 2014	A Forum on Lagoon Health: Indian River Lagoon Counties Collaborative	200
February 6, 2015	Engaging the Public: Citizen Science	200

**Significance**

The successful organizing and hosting of the Indian River Lagoon Symposium is a major achievement for FAU Harbor Branch and Harbor Branch's Indian River Lagoon Observatory. The steady, high attendance for this annual one-day technical meeting indicates a significant, widespread interest and need, and a show of commitment of the broader scientific and management community to IRL research. Similarly the success of the IRLS public forums has demonstrated the importance that Harbor Branch places on community involvement for what is perhaps our community's most treasured local resource: the Indian River Lagoon.

In just four years, the highly visible success of the Indian River Lagoon Symposium has strengthened FAU Harbor Branch's leadership in IRL research and affirmed the commitment of our research institute and our university to directly engage the public in research that addresses important needs of the community. This success is staged to continue to grow in the next few years, with many positive impacts.

**Revenue & Expenses (Data collated and provided by Patrick Boles)**

Table 3 summarizes the revenues received through registration fees and expenses paid directly by HBOI. HBOIF paid directly for catering (lunch, coffee breaks, reception, and tents) from 2012 to 2014. In 2015, revenues from the registration fees (from 2015 and the balance from previous years) paid for the catering expenses.

**Table 3. Indian River Lagoon Symposium, HBOI Revenues and Expenses, 2012-2015**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	Totals
<b>Revenues</b>					
Banner Index H00134	\$4,175	\$80	\$530	\$0	\$4,740
FAUF Account HBO300	\$0	\$4,050	\$5,450	\$5,585	\$15,085
T-Shirt Sales	\$761	\$742	\$469	\$0	\$1,972
SFWMD Donation	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$500
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$4,936</b>	<b>\$4,872</b>	<b>\$6,949</b>	<b>\$5,585</b>	<b>\$22,342</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Banner Indexes H00134/H00019	\$2,016	\$797	\$1,083	\$740	\$4,636
FAUF Account HBO300	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,841	\$6,841
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,016</b>	<b>\$797</b>	<b>\$1,083</b>	<b>\$7,581</b>	<b>\$11,477</b>
<b>Net Revenues</b>					
Over/(Under) Expenses	\$2,920	\$4,075	\$5,866	(\$1,996)	\$10,865*
Previously Reported					\$8,348**
Difference					\$2,517***

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## Expense Line Details

Tee Shirts	\$843	\$797	\$815		\$2,455
Supplies & Materials	\$332		\$268	\$219	\$819
U-Haul	\$468				\$468
Labor	\$373			\$132	\$505
Student Awards				\$300	\$300
Food & Beverages				\$6,930	\$6,930
Total Expense Line Details	\$2,016	\$797	\$1,083	\$7,581	\$11,477

## Notes on revenue:

- All revenue is for registration fees to attend the technical sessions. Regular registration fees are \$20 and \$10 for students; late registration fees are \$25 and \$15, respectively.
- Registration in 2012 was through Jill Sunderland and credited to the Marine Education Auxiliary account (H00134).
- In 2013 and 2014, registration was primarily done online via FAUF with revenue credited to FAUF Account HBO300, which facilitated registration and reduced the work load of Jill Sunderland.
- By 2015, all registration was done online via FAUF with revenue credited to FAUF Account HBO300.

## Notes on expenses:

- T-shirts were not purchased in 2015.
- Supplies and materials are typical meeting expenditures (e.g., ID badges, poster display supplies, easel pads).
- U-Haul charges in 2012 were to pick up and return poster display boards from the main Boca campus.
- Most labor in all years was supported by E&G and also the *Save Our Seas* IRLO grant; the labor charged here was for non-E&G support staff who provided assistance for the event (i.e., pick up and return poster display boards, set up and break down for the event, and day-of-event staffing).
- Student awards (\$100 each) recognizing excellent presentations were made in 2014 and 2015.
- As noted above, in 2015, registration revenues were used to pay for catering expenses.

## Note on funds shown on balance above:

\*\$10,865 the revised calculated balance from FY2012-FU2015 including t-shirt sales and SFWMD Donation

\*\*\$8,348 the previous calculated balance remaining from FY2012 to FY2015 was awarded by HBOIF to FAU Harbor Branch as part of the financial support for the FY2015 Love Your Lagoon project on the Development of a Seagrass Nursery project.

\*\*\*\$2,157 difference in the previous and revised calculated balance. Recommend that these funds be used for 2016 IRLS and the up to \$10K pending award from HBOIF be reduced by this amount

## Plans for IRLS 2016

IRLS 2016 is scheduled for February 11-12, 2016. We will have a new dedicated FAUF account for all 2016 symposium revenues and expenses. This will enable registration fees collected, the funding being provided by HBOIF, the balance from FY2012-FY2015, and expenses paid to be in one place to facilitate tracking. A proposed budget based on revenues and expenses in 2014 and 2015 and anticipated expenses for IRLS 2016 is provided in Table 4.

**Table 4. Proposed Budget for IRLS 2016**

<b>Revenue</b>	
Registration Fees	\$5,518
Balance from FY12-FY15	\$2,517
HBOIF Support	\$7,483
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b><u>\$15,518</u></b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Food & Beverages	\$7,515
Tent, Table, Chairs	\$5,206
Labor for facilities and cleaning (est.)	\$1,146
Student Awards	\$400
Meeting Supplies	\$251
Contingency	\$1,000
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b><u>\$15,518</u></b>

### Notes on Revenue:

- Registration Fees: This estimate is based on the average of 2014 and 2015 registration revenue.
- HBOIF Support: \$7,483 is anticipated (\$10,000 minus balance \$2,517).

### Notes on expenses:

- Food & Beverages: This estimate is based on \$6,930 paid for catering (2015 HBOIF actuals) + \$366.32 paid for beverages HBOIF (2014 actuals) + 3% increase.
- Tent, Table, Chairs: This estimate is based on doubling the \$2,527 2014 HBOIF actuals for 150 people + 3% increase; that cost was previously split by HBOIF between the IRLS and the Love Your Lagoon events.
- Labor: This is the estimate of cost for set up and tear down for the event and cleaning during and after the event (it is our understanding that HBOIF covered these costs as part of LYL and may have estimates available from previous events); other labor costs will be supported by E&G for regular E&G staff (primarily Jill Sunderland) and by the *Save Our Seas* IRLO grant for any IRLO staff involved with running the meeting; PI's Hanisak time for IRLS will be part of his 20% *Ensuring Faculty Excellence* funds.

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- Student Awards: This estimate is based on 4 awards @\$100 each.
- Meeting Supplies: This estimate is based on the 2014/2015 average of \$244 (HBOI actuals) + 3% increase.
- Contingency: \$1,000 is budgeted to cover any shortfalls with less than anticipated registration revenue or unanticipated increases in costs, which is prudent to do for scientific meetings.