



George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*[™] Education Fund

Background

Origin of the George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*[™] Education Fund

In honor of President George H.W. Bush, Bass Pro Shops Founder and CEO Johnny Morris donated \$125,000 in 2014 to bring conservation education and fishing experiences to Hispanic families in key metro areas of Texas and Florida. The George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*[™] Education Fund supports the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation's (RBFF) Hispanic initiative, *Vamos A Pescar*[™]. Bass Pro Shops has continued their funding support each year. With the help of generous donations from Bass Pro Shops, Brunswick Corporation, and other companies and organizations, this fund has continued to grow and expand nationally and is available to all 50 states and the District of Columbia to keep future generations educated about the joys of fishing and boating and the importance of conservation.

Why Fishing is So Important

Fishing provides an opportunity for families to spend time together, away from the distractions and stress of everyday life. It's when parents can become teachers, both in fishing skills and life lessons. It's an activity the entire family can join in, from the youngest of kids to the eldest of grandparents. Spending quality time together fishing in the great outdoors helps families relax and de-stress, and in today's world, that's a benefit in and of itself. Connecting with each other through the sport of fishing, whether it's grandfather-to-grandson, mother-to-son or father-to-daughter, is a wonderful way to get back to what's important: the family.

Participation in fishing and boating also helps fund state conservation efforts to keep our waterways clean and fish populations healthy. Through fishing license purchases, boat registrations, fishing gear and boat fuel sales, anglers and boaters play an important role in protecting our nation's aquatic natural places and the wildlife that lives there.

Recent research conducted by RBFF and Responsive Management supports the importance of providing urban fishing programs and reaching out to Hispanic families and underrepresented demographic groups. America is becoming more urbanized, and the American general population is becoming more diverse. It's important to bring the fishing experience directly to the growing populations of Americans.

Program Framework

The George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*[™] Education Fund supports state and local efforts to educate and engage families in high-density Hispanic communities through urban fishing programs, classes and fishing activities. To further the reach and facilitate partnerships at the local level, the George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*[™] Education Fund provides funds for state agencies to match and sub grant to local organizations to support programs with multiple fishing and boating experiences.

Research supports the importance of providing multiple opportunities for program participants. Programs that provide initial trial experiences along with additional skills development and next step opportunities are more effective in supporting participants along the pathway to becoming an angler.

RBFF and Responsive Management released [research](#) to assist state agencies, organizations and industry partners in scoring grant proposals and prioritizing angler recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) programs to fund and



George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*[™] Education Fund

support. The research informed the development of a scorecard, which will guide the grants selection process. In scoring grants, results indicate the importance of programs having an evaluation component, established goals and objectives, and defined metrics to measure.

Program Parameters

Programming must be:

- Family-focused: Program will encourage participation across multiple generations and gender.
- Focused on Multiple Opportunities: Program will provide multiple opportunities for the same audience to participate in fishing and/or boating.
- Metro-centric: Program will encourage focus in metro areas. Greater consideration will be given to programs in urban areas.
- Ethnically-inclusive: While a majority of participating families will be Hispanic, the event will be open to families of all races/ethnicities.
- Evaluated: Program will collect participant information and conduct program evaluation surveys.

Grant Guidelines

Funding and Matching

- There will be up to \$100,000 in grant funds available for the 2025 grants program. Grant funding is from 100% non-federal sources. Minimum of \$5,000 required for grant program applications.
- State agencies receive and sub grant funds to local organizations.
 - Government agencies and 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations/non-political groups are eligible to receive funds from the state agencies. Religious groups are eligible only if non-religious, fully-inclusive activities are planned.
- State agencies must provide a minimum 1:1 cash match. Greater consideration will be given to programs that provide greater than required cash and/or in-kind match. Source of matching funds can be Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) dollars, private donors, federal funds, state funds and/or NGO contributions.
- State agencies manage process to request, review and recommend applications for funding.

Education Fund Advisory Board

- State agencies review all grantee applications received within their state and provide only the grantee applications recommended for state matching and funding to RBFF. Final selection of grantees will then be made by the Education Fund Advisory Board.
- Members include representatives from fishing industry, boating industry, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA), major donors, and RBFF staff.

To be Considered for Funding

- Applicants should plan programming any time from February 1 to August 31.
- Program will provide multiple opportunities for the same audience, to educate youth and their families to participate in fishing and boating and promote good stewardship of the state's aquatic resources.
 - Program will include, for each participant, multiple hands-on and on-the-water learning opportunities to fish from shore or fish from a boat.



George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*[™] Education Fund

- Program will:
 - introduce fishing and/or boating to youth and/or families
 - provide hands-on fishing skills development
 - teach and reinforce water safety and/or safe boating behaviors
 - provide hands-on conservation and aquatic stewardship activities
- Program is designed to connect with urban communities through organizational partnerships and affiliations, family programming, and if possible, existing events and access points near targeted audiences.
- Program will conduct pre- and post- program evaluation surveys and collect participant contact information.
- Program will highlight successes, challenges, lessons learned and testimonials in reporting.

Greater Consideration will be Given to Programs that

- Occur in urban areas
- Include bilingual capabilities
- Provide greater than required cash and/or in-kind match
- Demonstrate cost effectiveness and minimize overhead costs
- Encourage continued participation beyond programmatic participation
- Follow up with participants to provide additional opportunities and ongoing engagement, demonstrating the principles of recruitment, retention and reactivation
- Promote TakeMeFishing.org and VamosAPescar.org as resources for program participants

Application Guide

The following provides guidance for completing the Grant Application Form.

Community Background

- Provide a snapshot of your community's current situation. Describe what's happening at the community-level in terms of population, participation trends, demographics, etc.
 - Consider the following factors:
 - Cooperative environment (groups or individuals who have a vested interest in your objectives and mission)
 - Competitive environment (anyone/group competing with you for resources)
 - Economic, social, political and legal environment
 - How do those environments impact your community with respect to fishing opportunities?

Outreach

- Describe your outreach strategies and how you plan on reaching your target audience.
 - Consider the following factors:
 - How will you communicate with potential participants (i.e., advertising, newsletter, social media, email, flyer, word of mouth)?
 - What materials will be used?
 - What existing partners and resources (including your state agency) can you leverage to support your outreach efforts?



George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*[™] Education Fund

- Will you be asking participants to reach out to their peers (i.e., bring a friend or family member)?
- Do you plan to reach out to volunteers, potential partners and/or community/angler representatives?

Goals & Objectives

- Provide detailed goals and objectives that focus on reaching your target audience and cover the grant guidelines described above.
 - Goal Example #1: Increase fishing opportunities and participation for Hispanic families in the urban communities of Los Angeles, CA.
 - Objective Example #1: By August 31, 2025, at least 100 participants will have attended our first Activity, as measured by registrations.
 - Objective Example #2: By August 31, 2025, the number of returning participants will be increased by 50% from our first to our last Activity, as measured by registrations.
 - Goal Example #2: Increase fishing knowledge for Hispanic families in the urban communities of Los Angeles, CA.
 - Objective Example #1: By August 31, 2025, over 50% of participants will report increased knowledge about fishing skills, as measured by post-event surveys.
 - Objective Example #2: By August 31, 2025, over 70% of participants will demonstrate increased knowledge of fish identification, knot tying, and casting techniques, as measured by post-event surveys.

Program Details

- Indicate the Proposed Date(s) by exact dates (if possible) or by month. Do not indicate by quarters or TBD.
- For the Activity Description, consider the following factors:
 - Type of fishing (i.e., bait, fly)? Saltwater or freshwater? Fishing from shore, pier or boat?
 - Fishing skills being taught (i.e., water/boat safety, fish handling, casting, knot tying)
 - Other educational concepts being taught (i.e., conservation of aquatic natural resources; aquatic stewardship)
- Will participants from Activity #1 be invited to attend other Activity #(s)? If so, which ones and/or which dates?
 - Consider the following factors:
 - Will you provide multiple activities/opportunities to your target audience? If so, how?
 - Is this activity/event an initial trial experience, with additional skills development and next step opportunities?

Evaluation

- Describe your plan for evaluating the success of your program goals.
 - Consider the following factors:
 - Do you plan to collect pre and/or post assessments?
 - What is the method/tool to collect this data (i.e., paper-based, online survey, mobile data app)?
 - Do you plan to ask for comprehension of fishing/boating knowledge, water safety/safe boating behaviors and/or conservation of aquatic natural resources?



George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*[™] Education Fund

- Provide details regarding your plans for following up with participants. What is the process for collecting participant contact information? Will there be registration?
 - Consider the following factors:
 - How do you plan on tracking participants?
 - How will you be collecting contact information (i.e., registration form)?
 - What will be the method of communication when following up with participants (i.e., phone, email, mail)?
 - Will your communications invite participants to attend your next activities and/or other activities in the future?

Process Overview

To Apply

State agencies lead efforts within their state to distribute request for grant applications from local organizations. Applicants must complete the Grant Application Form and send via email to the state point of contact no later than date TBD by the state agency in accordance with the following overall process timeline.

Process Timeline

- RBFF announces availability of grant funding to state agencies and provides Grant Application Form and State Cover Page Form by October 22, 2024.
- State agency reviews information, discusses granting process with fiscal staff and identifies point of contact to manage application process and provides point of contact information to RBFF contact.
- State agency provides public notification of grant opportunity and makes RBFF contact aware.
- State agency receives Grant Applications and reviews for funding consideration.
- State agency ranks Grant Applications and determines recommendations for funding for the Advisory Board's review. State point of contact submits only the recommended Grant Application(s), along with their State Cover Page(s) with their proposed matching funds, to RBFF contact by December 9, 2024.
- Advisory Board selects final grant recipients.
- RBFF notifies state agency points of contact by January 27, 2025.
- State agency alerts recipients and follows up with grant agreement and deadlines for reports. RBFF progress, event and final report and case study templates will be provided to state agencies to disburse.
- State agency provides RBFF with detailed information on payee and address.
- RBFF provides grant funding to the state agency (or approved designated recipient) by January 31, 2025.
- State agency provides funding and matching funding to individual grantees to support programs. It is imperative grantees receive program funding support as close to January 31, 2025 as possible. Time is of the essence.
- Programs run any time from February 1 to August 31, 2025.
- Progress reports to be sent to state agency and provided to RBFF contact by April 15 and July 15. RBFF provided progress and event report templates are to be completed for compliance.



George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*[™] Education Fund

- Final reports to be sent to state agency by September 15, 2025. Final and event report templates to be completed.
- State agency reviews and provides approved final report to RBFF contact for inclusion in Annual Report/Donor Report and for Advisory Board by September 30, 2025.
- Case studies to be sent to state agency by October 15, 2025. RBFF case study template to be utilized.
- State agency reviews and provides approved final case study to RBFF contact by October 31, 2025.

Components for State Agency Grantee Agreement

RBFF will provide state agencies with pass through information for grantees, including requirements for progress and final reports, how grantees need to thank/recognize the George H.W. Bush *Vamos A Pescar*[™] Education Fund and logo access information.

RBFF Contact

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