

Save Our Seabirds

Avian Hospital – Expansion of Services

Save Our Seabirds' mission to rescue and rehabilitate sick and injured birds with the goal of releasing them back into their natural habitats is exhibited by its track record of rehabilitating and releasing over 6,000 birds back into the wild in the past ten years. The proposed ***Avian Hospital – Expansion of Services*** initiative will expand its geographic service area, improve the quality of medical care given to birds, and allow the Avian Hospital to be open 14 additional hours per week, resulting in the ability to treat 25% more birds annually.

The total initiative budget of \$130,300 includes \$20,800 of the amount beyond the Impact100 SRQ grant, which will be funded with unrestricted funds. The Impact100 SRQ grant will fund a new hospital technician for \$62,700 and 12 paid interns for \$46,800 over the two-year grant period. To sustain this initiative, Save Our Seabirds' leadership is committed to growth, continued fundraising, and having a greater impact on avian conservation. Its growth and expansion strategy includes a plan to rebuild the campus with a new state of the art Avian Hospital.

Birds have a far-reaching benefit to the community and environment, playing a vital role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. They control insects, pollinate plants, disburse seeds, and help to reduce the spread of disease by acting as natural scavengers. Nearly every North American bird species is in decline, with 25% of the seabird species officially considered "at risk." Fishing lines and lures; strikes from cars and boats; flying into windows; accidental poisoning from rodenticides; and invasive species, including free-roaming cats, all contribute to the demise of birds in our community. Every adult bird Save Our Seabirds releases back into the wild can contribute to our community's ecosystem and environment and can produce offspring, helping to keep their populations vibrant and growing.

Over the past ten years, Save Our Seabirds has treated 307 of the more than 500 bird species in Florida. The addition of a new hospital technician and 12 interns will enable Save Our Seabirds to expand its geographic area, serving further north into Manatee County, east of I-75 and south toward Venice in Sarasota County. This expansion will add 14 hours per week to the hospital schedule, enabling staff to serve 25% more birds annually. By offering additional internships, Save our Seabirds will attract some of the best and brightest local students pursuing careers in Wildlife Care, investing in the next generation of avian specialists.