

Locals compete for Pepsi's 'Do Good for the Gulf' grants

Special to The Sun

The E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center is in the running for \$250,000 through the Pepsi Refresh for the Gulf Project. If the Center wins through the most votes, the funds would go towards educating students in the Florida Panhandle about the environmental sciences for the 2010-2011 school year. The E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center is a 501(c)3 registered under the name Nokuse Education, Inc.

The recent oil spill has impacted both the students in the Florida Panhandle and funding sources for the center. To address both of these concerns, the Biophilia Center is incorporating lessons on oil in its curriculum for fourth and seventh grades this school year, while they are aggressively seeking alternative funding sources. The project description for the E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center is "Educate Tomorrow's Leaders" and may be viewed by visiting <http://gulf.refresheverything.com/>, clicking on the \$250,000 tab and scrolling down to the E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center logo.

Viewers may have to click on "Load More" to see the center's project.

To vote for the project you can

also go to <http://gulf.refresheverything.com/educatetomorrows-leaders>. Visitors will have to register before voting.

Please share the link with instructions to your e-mail and Facebook contacts because the center needs all the votes they can get; they are competing against 276 other projects for this funding.

To learn more about the E.O. Wilson Biophilia Center, visit their website www.eowilsoncenter.org.

The center teaches an average of 140 students

every school day and last year served Walton, Bay, Okaloosa, Holmes and Leon school districts. The next date the center is open to the public is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 11.

If you are interested in volunteering at the Center, or have further questions, call 850-835-1824.

The Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation is also in the running for a \$25,000 price. Its goal is to showcase more than 100 Gulf Coast artists at its annual arts festival. The grant would allow them to broaden marketing efforts, enhance the entertainment and offset the loss of sponsorships due to the spill. You can vote for the foundation at <http://gulf.refresheverything.com/mattiekellyartsfoundation.org>.

