

CRF Launches A National Student Challenge To Design Ways To “Battle The Biofoul” In The World’s Biggest Coral Nursery

Coral Restoration Foundation™ is inviting students across the United States to enter a STEAM-based design challenge to win an aquarium for their school

TAVERNIER, FL, UNITED STATES, December 8, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Coral Restoration Foundation™](#) is inviting students across the United States to enter an exciting STEAM-based design challenge for the chance of winning a state-of-the-art aquarium for their school. In the organization’s third annual student design challenge, students in grades K through 12 are being asked to come up with a way to help the team reduce the amount of time they spend “battling biofouling” in the biggest Coral Tree Nursery in the world.



CRF diver cleans a Coral Tree in the biggest Coral Tree Nursery in the World (Credit: Zach Ransom/Coral Restoration Foundation)

Coral Restoration Foundation™ manages the largest coral restoration effort on the planet. The organization is working to save and restore Florida’s Coral Reef – a national treasure that is on the brink of extinction. They have already restored over 10,000 square meters of Florida’s Coral Reef, but there is so much more to do, and they can’t do it alone.

This year Coral Restoration Foundation™ is inviting students to help them tackle the problem of biofouling. The organization has over 750 Coral Trees in their ocean-based Coral Tree Nurseries. These Coral Trees are the structures that allow the team to raise more than 45,000 reef-ready corals every year. But, in the open ocean, these Coral Trees are also a great habitat for other types of marine life including algae, barnacles, and hydroids. These organisms weigh the trees down and compete with the corals for space and nutrients, creating less-than-ideal conditions for the corals to thrive. This accumulation of organisms is called “biofouling”. The Coral Restoration Foundation™ team goes out every day to “battle the biofoul” in their nurseries. Each tree takes between 45 minutes to an hour to clean. This means that the team spends almost

2,000 hours every year battling biofouling in Tavernier Coral Tree Nursery alone. By reducing the time it takes to clean the Coral Trees, Coral Restoration Foundation™ could return many more corals to the reef every year.

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So, they are asking students to come up with a design solution that would enable them to battle the biofoul more efficiently. The winning students will receive a state-of-the-art educational aquarium for their school, sponsored by Titan Aquatic Exhibits. The Challenge closes on May 5th, 2021 and the winners will be announced on World Oceans Day, June 8th, 2021.

For more information and to enter the [National Battling Biofoul Student Challenge](#), go to www.coralrestoration.org/battling-biofoul-challenge

Alice Grainger
Coral Restoration Foundation
+1 4157708952

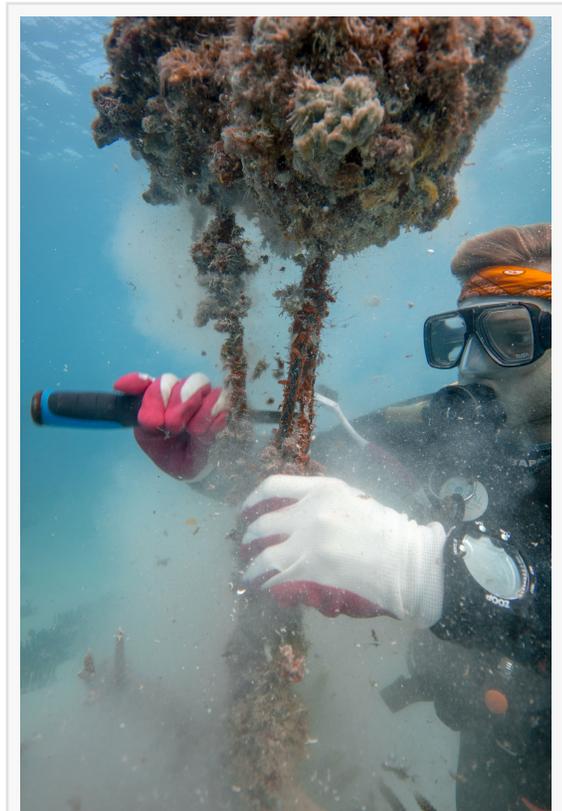
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Biofoul weighs down the Coral Trees and competes with coral for space and nutrients (Credit: Alexander Neufeld/Coral Restoration Foundation)

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