



SARASOTA BAY
ESTUARY PROGRAM
Restoring Our Bays

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Photo option: The new tower at Neal Preserve in Manatee County.
Photo credit: Sandy Hamer

**BAY GUARDIANS TO PLANT NATIVE PLANTS AT NEAL PRESERVE IN
BRADENTON OCTOBER 15**

SARASOTA, FL – The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Bay Guardian volunteers, site managers from Manatee County’s Natural Resources, and naturalist guides from Around the Bend Nature Tours will plant native plants at Neal Preserve Saturday, October 15. The volunteer outing will run for three hours beginning 9am followed by lunch. A prior Bay Guardian volunteer event in late March removed invasive plants at the Preserve.

Neal Preserve is located at 12301 Manatee Avenue West in Bradenton. It’s the newest preserve maintained by Manatee County’s Natural Resources Department. The preserve was purchased in 2005; it’s notable for its natural beauty and archaeological significance related to early Native American tribes. Neal Preserve is expected to open in 2012. SBEP provided funding to support design plans.

Volunteers are encouraged to wear work clothes and closed-toe shoes. Please bring work gloves and a small portable chair if available for lunch. Parking is limited at the site so please car pool if possible. Registration is required and it can be made through the SBEP website at sarasotabay.org. Inquires about Bay Guardians are welcome at 941-955-8085 or sara@sarasotabay.org.

The Sarasota Bay Guardians is a family-friendly volunteer program that SBEP manages in partnership with Around the Bend Nature Tours. The program was established to attract volunteers interested in helping restore Sarasota Bay’s habitat. The program is a

fun way to volunteer while learning more about the Bay. New volunteers receive a t-shirt featuring the Bay Guardians logo.

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The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program is dedicated to restoring the area's greatest natural asset—Sarasota Bay. Its unique program strives to improve water quality, increase habitat and enhance the natural resources of the area for use and enjoyment by the public. Sarasota Bay is one of 28 estuaries in the United States that have been named by the U.S. Congress as an "estuary of national significance." Partners include Sarasota County, Manatee County, City of Sarasota, City of Bradenton, Town of Longboat Key, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Southwest Florida Water Management District, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.