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**SARASOTA BAY ESTUARY PROGRAM LAUNCHES ONLINE DIGITAL MAP  
SHOWING COMPLETED, CURRENT AND PLANNED RESTORATION PROJECTS**

**SARASOTA, FL** – The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP) has launched a new digital map on its website showing completed, current and planned restoration projects throughout Sarasota Bay. Since its inception in 1989, SBEP has participated in more than 200 projects related to habitat restoration or water quality improvement within the watershed in Manatee and Sarasota County. A dozen restoration projects are currently in planning, permitting or construction phase. The digital map has pop ups with details including public amenities such as trails, kayak/canoe launches, public restrooms, and more.

SBEP serves as project manager, bringing together the partners and contractors with expertise in planning, permitting and construction. The Habitat Restoration page on the SBEP website also has a list of the 31 local, regional and national organizations that have served as partners with SBEP on various restoration projects.

The three primary habitats critical to Sarasota Bay are (1) wetlands (freshwater and saltwater), (2) seagrass, and (3) hard bottoms (oysters and reefs). Restoring and protecting these interdependent habitats is essential to the vitality of Sarasota Bay and its tributaries.

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(Hotlink to the new page: <http://www.sarasotabay.org/habitatrestoration.html>)

***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.