



SARASOTA BAY
ESTUARY PROGRAM
Restoring Our Bays

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(Photos included in separate digital files. Please credit Bob Thill if you use either image.)

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SBEP COMPLETES NORTH LIDO BEACH RESTORATION PROJECT

SARASOTA, FL – Local contractors working with the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program have completed the development of a new tidal tributary at North Lido Park adjacent to the beach access. The restoration project will improve about 30 acres on the 70 acre site. The major effort launched in September removed non-native vegetation, excavated the tidal wetland, contoured the upland area, created dunes, and planted thousands of native plants.

The tidal wetland was created to provide essential habitat for estuarine dependent fish species, according to Jay Leverone, PhD, SBEP's staff scientist. "The restoration also provides improved habitat for birds, reptiles and other wildlife," he added. "Local citizens have already reported seeing eagles, ospreys, a gopher tortoise, and numerous schools of small fish in the park."

Florida Native Nursery recently planted more than 8,700 plants on the newly created shores. More than 500 additional plants will be added this summer by volunteers with the Bay Guardians, a volunteer group supported by SBEP and Around the Bend Nature Tours.

Major funding for the restoration project comes from Southwest Florida Water Management District and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Other project partners include the City of Sarasota and Sarasota County. Individuals and organizations supporting the project include the Lido Shores Property Owners Association, Lido Key

Residents Association, Sarasota Audubon Society, and Captain Jeffrey Karr with the Sarasota Police Department.

Since its inception in 1989, SBEP has been involved with more than 200 projects related to habitat or water improvement within the Sarasota Bay watershed spanning Sarasota and Manatee County. A dozen projects are currently in planning, permitting or construction phase.

Inquires are welcome at 941-955-8085 or sara@sarasotabay.org.

***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.*

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