

Gulf Coast Community Foundation Awards \$75,000 to Conservation Foundation

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Grants

The funding is in support of the Quad Parcels re-wilding.

By Staff March 8, 2022



The quad parcels at the Celery Fields.

Image: Courtesy Photo

The Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast recently received a \$75,000 grant from the Gulf Coast Community Foundation in support of its joint project with Sarasota Audubon Society to re-wild the Quad Parcels at the Celery Fields. The grant was made possible through Gulf Coast's Environmental Initiative Fund and is designated to implement strategies from their *Community Playbook for Clean Waterways*.

Released in early 2021, the *Community Playbook for Clean Waterways* is a comprehensive online manual highlighting activities to reduce and remove manmade nutrient pollution in our region's waterways. Conservation Foundation and Sarasota Audubon Society aim to implement activities from five of the *Playbook's* 10 chapters as part of the Quad Parcel re-wilding, which includes improvements to an existing stormwater pond on the northeast

parcel, along with the addition of a stream on the southeast parcel. This will allow for enhanced water filtration and storage, thus improving the water quality that flows into Phillippi Creek and ultimately Sarasota Bay.

The re-wilding also includes extensive plantings of native species, benefitting birds and other wildlife while at the same time enhancing the ability of the soil to naturally process nutrients and retain water. A no-mow shoreline will be established as part of the improvements to the existing pond which will prevent grass clippings from directly entering the water and releasing nutrients that stimulate algae growth. The pond will also serve as a learning tool to demonstrate how effective stormwater ponds can filter pollutants when they incorporate native plants and are sustainably maintained.

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