


Gulf Coast Community Foundation awards \$10,000 to Sarasota Audubon for water quality testing at the Quad Parcels in future internship program

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Post



Sarasota, FL (May 17,2022) – Sarasota Audubon recently received a \$10,000 grant for water quality testing at the Quad Parcels in a future internship program. The program is a feature of the Re-Wilding the Quad Parcels campaign.

“Working with partners like Sarasota Audubon to improve our environment and include area students in the process is a win-win for our region,” said Jon Thaxton, Senior Vice President of Community Leadership for Gulf Coast Community Foundation. “We are grateful for organizations like Sarasota Audubon Society who conserve and restore our natural ecosystem, creating thriving opportunities for all.”

Water features in the Quad Parcels will undergo regular water quality testing – a huge benefit to wildlife that feeds and shelters at pond edges. Best Practices of stormwater pond management will be used to ensure maximum filtration of pollutants from run off as water enters the ponds.

Sarasota Audubon and Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast, who are partnering to re-wild the Quad Parcels, are working together with site engineers on the concept design.

“Our goals are to improve the water quality by following the Healthy Ponds Collaborative guidelines, to establish an internship program to monitor our changes, and to educate the public about the benefits and vital importance of healthy ponds for our birds, wildlife, and

the community,” said Jeanne Dubi, president of Sarasota Audubon. “The grant will enable us to monitor changes and share data with the public to show how healthy stormwater retention ponds improve water quality.”

Water from the Quads currently flows into Main C canal which then flows into Phillippi Creek and subsequently Roberts Bay. “Safeguarding the quality of our water at the Celery Fields before it heads downstream has been a priority of re-wilding the Quad Parcels design,” said Dubi. “We are looking forward to creating demonstration ponds for our community.”

According to Dubi, students from area high schools and colleges accepted into the paid internship program will learn water quality monitoring techniques from sustainability leaders and academics with expertise in water flow and water quality. Based on the water analysis and data reporting, Sarasota Audubon will monitor the effects of the ponds’ improvements and make adjustments as needed.

Interns will also assist with carbon sequestration monitoring; public park management including the recruitment and managing of volunteers; coordinating with environmental agencies; working with Sarasota County and the academic community; and developing and managing education programs for the general public.

In 2019, the Sarasota County Board of Commissioners gifted a perpetual conservation easement on the NE, SE, and SW Quad Parcels to Conservation Foundation, tasking Sarasota Audubon to manage the habitat and public access. Both organizations are working together on the design of the parcels. To learn more about the re-wilding and concept design, please visit: www.SarasotaAudubon.org/quad.

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About Sarasota Audubon Society: Sarasota Audubon is the local chapter of the National Audubon Society, dedicated to the protection, conservation and enjoyment of birds, wildlife and the environment in Sarasota, Florida. Using a combination of science and education, Sarasota Audubon conserves and restores natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth’s biological diversity. Learn more at SarasotaAudubon.org.

About Gulf Coast Community Foundation: For more than 25 years, together with our donors, Gulf Coast Community Foundation has transformed our region through bold and proactive philanthropy. Gulf Coast is a public charity that was created in 1995 through the sale of the Venice Hospital. Since then, we have become the philanthropic home of over 950 families, individuals, businesses, and organizations that have established charitable funds here. Together, we have invested over \$430 million in grants in the areas of health and human services, civic and economic development, education, arts and culture, and the environment. Learn more at GulfCoastCF.org.

