



GULF COAST HERITAGE TRAIL

The Gulf Coast of Florida is rich in culture and history—offering a wide range of distinctive recreational and educational experiences. On the Gulf Coast Heritage Trail, area residents and tourists can visit environmental, cultural and historical gems throughout the region. Points of interest along the trail include nature walks, bicycle paths, scenic trails, museums, historical monuments, wildlife viewing sites, and mapped kayak and canoe trails.

The recommended routes are segmented into three loops, each accessible by car. The North auto tour loop winds through Manatee County's downtown waterfronts and along the scenic Manatee River. The Central route takes visitors to points of interest in the City of Sarasota and northern Sarasota County, including the area's cultural district, exceptional beaches and Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. The South tour focuses on the cultural treasures in southern Sarasota County, among them Osprey Fishing Pier and Historic Spanish Point.

Users Guide to Area Map

The Gulf Coast Heritage Trail is the purple line that is shown on the Project Area Map. The highlighted projects represent the comprehensive range of projects that comprise the mission of the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program.

The map delineates such priorities as seagrass coverage, habitat restoration sites, artificial reefs and oyster restoration projects. Historic and cultural points of interest are described and depicted along the trail in the Gulf Coast Heritage Trail Brochure, available at the tourist information centers.

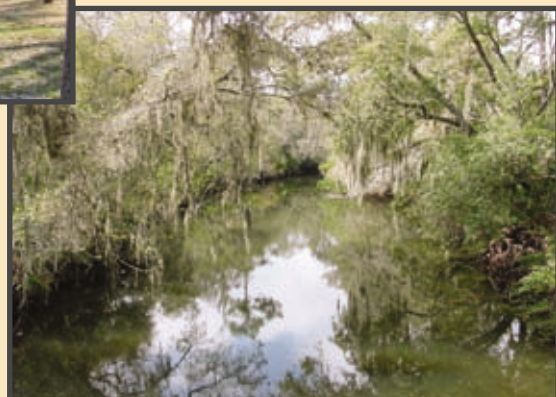
The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program continues to make progress in its efforts in Manatee and Sarasota counties to restore Sarasota Bay, our area's greatest natural treasure.



Towles Court is an artist colony in downtown Sarasota, site #77 on the Gulf Coast Heritage Trail.



Ray's Canoe Hideaway located on the Upper Manatee River, site #10 on the Gulf Coast Heritage Trail.



South Creek, a tributary of the Sarasota Bay estuary, runs through Oscar Scherer State Park, site #93 on the Gulf Coast Heritage Trail.



Look for road signs like these to guide you along the Gulf Coast Heritage Trail.

The continued restoration of Sarasota Bay includes the removal of such exotic species as Australian Pine (seen here) that infest our coastal systems and alter the beauty and productivity of native habitats.

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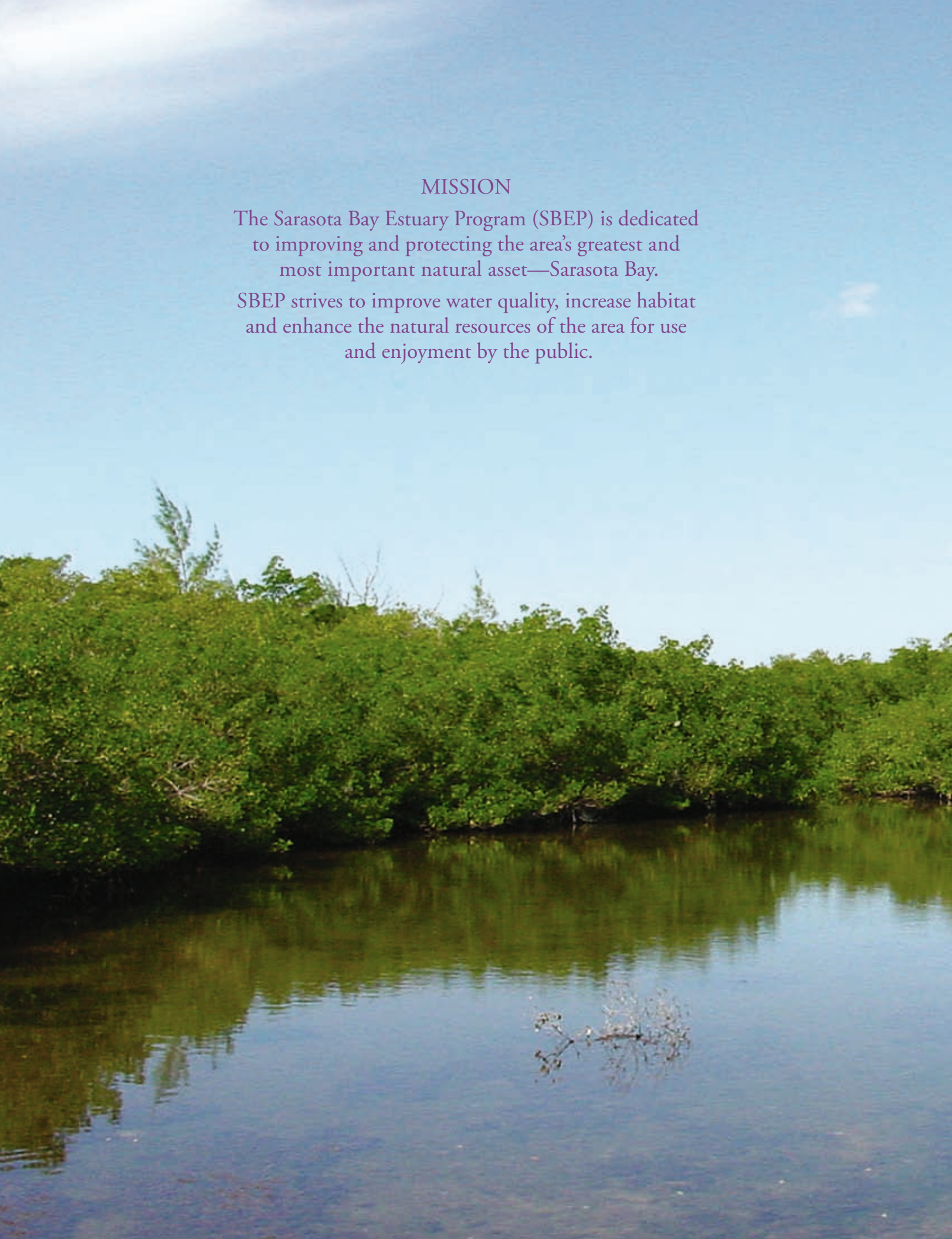
Celebrating Our Greatest Natural Asset



SARASOTA BAY
ESTUARY PROGRAM



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MISSION

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP) is dedicated to improving and protecting the area's greatest and most important natural asset—Sarasota Bay.

SBEP strives to improve water quality, increase habitat and enhance the natural resources of the area for use and enjoyment by the public.

