

The Quad Parcels Are Officially Public Lands - Forever!



— SARASOTA —
AUDUBON SOCIETY

It was a historic moment when the Quad parcels legally became protected forever under a Conservation Easement held by the Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast. In this three-fold public/private partnership, restoration and management of the Quad will be the responsibility of Sarasota Audubon. After intense public input, public hearings, multiple letters and emails, and almost a year of working out the terms with the County, the Quad parcels officially became public lands with a quiet stroke of the pen on October 6th.

This is a win - win – win for all of us. **It is a win for the County** – their environmental legacy is strengthened and will be protected in perpetuity. **It is a win for citizens of Sarasota** – with the dedicated grassroots movement, our community came together to advocate for the environmental importance of this land. **And above all, it is a win, a big win, for nature** – for birds, wildlife and the fragile web of life that is perched against the backdrop of our busy, dynamic urban environment.

We are grateful to the Board of County Commissioners for this legacy gift to County residents.

It was just under a year ago that the BCC in a public hearing unanimously voted to put the Quad parcels 1, 2, and 4 (SE, NE, and SW) at the Celery Fields under conservation easement. They charged the Conversation Foundation and Sarasota Audubon Society with working out stewardship and management plans for the benefit of the environment.

Since that time, both organizations have worked with six different county departments, negotiating the placement of the conservation easements on the northeast, southeast and southwest Quads parcels and the terms of management. *(The fourth parcel already has a fire station on it and subsequent building and development on part of the SW parcel will follow conservation easement guidelines).*

It was in large part due to the trust that the BCC has in Sarasota Audubon and the Conservation Foundation, that the unanimous vote came about. What is now a formal private-public partnership began as a community/society/foundation effort throughout.

Next steps? Sarasota Audubon and the Conservation Foundation will be working with environmental and hydrology engineers to develop plans for the 25+ acres. All of this depends on the success of the fundraising campaign they are undertaking to cover the substantial costs associated with any future plans.

However, you can be part of this conservation effort today – please donate at www.sarasotaudubon.org/donate. Click on **SAS Quad Fund**, established for this purpose.

Thanks to all who made our dream a reality today. It is a momentous event!
Let's keep it going!

Jeanne Dubi, Acting President, Sarasota Audubon Society