

Florida Center for Nature-based Solutions

at Naples Botanical Garden

December 2021

The Florida Center for Nature-based Solutions at Naples Botanical Garden, part of the new 75,000 square foot Evenstad Horticulture Campus, will enable the Garden to better meet environmental challenges while enhancing its 170-acre property, a major tourist attraction in Collier County. The Center will provide the opportunity for Garden staff to research and provide practical nature-based solutions for Florida's environmental challenges including stormwater management, water quality, shoreline resilience, reforestation, and restoration of damaged ecosystems. Nature-based solutions often enhance existing infrastructure resulting in long-term financial, social, and environmental benefits such as economic growth, green jobs, increased property values, and improvements to public health.

The purpose of the Center is to determine nature-based solutions that result in actions that protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems in ways that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, while safeguarding biodiversity and improving human wellbeing. The Center will also be able to draw on its capacity to reach its 235,000 annual visitors and beyond through its member magazine *Cultivate* (printed 3 times annually), its conservation magazine *Conserve* (printed annually), and social media to promote the resilience and adaptation of nature-based solutions and how they can be integrated into community landscapes and natural areas.

The Florida Center for Nature-based Solutions will enable Naples Botanical Garden to:

- Research and introduce environmentally friendly, sustainable landscaping plants best suited for subtropical environments that can enhance water quality, reduce beach erosion, support pollinators, and provide wildlife habitat.
- Identify, grow, and share plants that thrive in nutrient-poor environments, withstand storms, and tolerate rising temperatures.
- Expand community partnerships with environmental organizations and local governments.
- Educate citizens, landowners, and landscaping professionals about sustainable landscaping options and techniques.

An appropriation request of \$650,000 in non-recurring funds will be proposed to the Florida Legislature for consideration during its 2022 session.