



TAMPA PORT AUTHORITY

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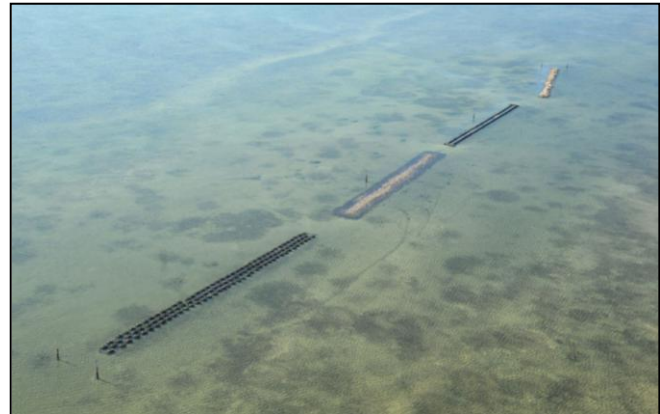


Photo 1: Planning Commissioner Ray Young (far right) stands with recipients of the 2011 Merit Award for an environment and conservation project, the longshore bar project. Recipients are (left to right) Tom Ries, Scheda Ecological Associates; Mike Seifert, Tampa Port Authority; Susan Burnett, Arcadis/Malcolm Pirnie; and Andy Fobes, Tampa Port Authority. (photo courtesy The Planning Commission)

Photo 2: Aerial view of the award-winning Longshore Bar project, a collaborative effort to promote the recovery, growth and sustenance of seagrasses in Tampa Bay. (photo courtesy Tampa Bay Estuary Program)

Effort to promote seagrass growth in Tampa Bay wins merit award

TAMPA, Fla.— The Tampa Port Authority is pleased to announce that one of its key collaborative environmental projects has been selected as a Merit Award winner by The Planning Commission in that organization’s 2011 Community Design Awards program, in the ‘environmental and conservation’ category, the *Tampa Bay Longshore Bar*.

The Tampa Port Authority is actively engaged with the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, Arcadis/Malcolm Pirnie, and 10 other key partner agencies in this environmental pilot program with the overall objective of encouraging seagrass recovery through the creation of wave-attenuating longshore bars. Seagrass recovery has been clearly defined as a major goal in Tampa Bay, acknowledging that very significant seagrass losses have been recorded since the 1950s. After thorough research and design, a sustainable, 950-foot long artificial bar system

was constructed to encourage volunteer seagrass recovery. The long-term project goal is the restoration of 50 acres of seagrass in Hillsborough Bay.

The project goal is restoration of 50 acres of seagrass by 2019. The project team will monitor the bars for seagrass recovery, fish usage and durability of the bars. There is great interest in this technique and, if successful, re-creating bars in areas where they have been lost may be an important tool for seagrass managers in Tampa Bay and other coastal areas. TPA staff was a vital partner in this project and provided oversight of design, permitting, construction and monitoring. TPA also provided significant cash and in-kind contributions which led to an expanded project. Other partners in this large and unique pilot restoration project include Scheda Ecological Associates, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pinellas County Environmental Foundation, EPA's Gulf of Mexico Program, Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County, City of Tampa, Mote Marine Laboratory, Coastal Resources Group, Inc., Tampa Bay Watch, and the MacDill Air Force Base.

"The Tampa Port Authority has long been engaged in projects that benefit the health and vitality of Tampa Bay and coastal areas," Richard Wainio, Tampa's port director and CEO, said. "We are very fortunate to have an impressive list of partners to work with toward development and execution of the longshore bar project and many, many others," he said.

Tampa Port Authority (www.tampaport.com) administers Florida's largest and one of the nation's most diversified ports. With more than 8 million people within 100 miles, the Port of Tampa has a local consumer market that is among the largest in the Southeast U.S. The Port of Tampa is the largest economic engine in west and central Florida.

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