



Living Classroom Construction at Coastal Oaks Preserve Has Begun

Indian River County (IRC) – The Indian River Land Trust is pleased to announce that construction of a new outdoor living classroom at its 226-acre Coastal Oaks Preserve is underway. This inviting educational space will provide a unique, hands-on learning and research experience for youth and adults alike.

The living classroom, designed to immerse students in the natural beauty and ecological diversity of the Coastal Oaks Preserve, will serve as a valuable resource for the Land Trust and its partnering organizations, including the Environmental Learning Center and FAU's Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute for learning about environmental science, conservation, and local ecology.

This majestic preserve boasts freshwater wetlands, oak-palm hammocks, pine flatwoods, mangrove forests with saltwater ponds, salt marsh and seagrass meadows. Motivated to share the unique characteristics of the property, the Land Trust has long dreamed of building a Living Classroom on the Preserve that can be used to connect our community with nature and cultivate the next generation of future scientists and wildlife enthusiasts.

Ken Grudens, Land Trust Executive Director, said the Board of Directors is excited about this unique project. "The Board's vision for this Preserve, complete with a mile of Lagoon shoreline and nearly every type of native, natural habitat one can find along the region's coastal areas, is coming to fruition. It will be a place like no other to gather, share and learn."

While the outdoor living classroom is primarily dedicated to scheduled educational programs with a growing list of educational partners, the Indian River Land Trust recognizes the local community's interest in experiencing this unique space. In addition to prioritized student learning, the Land Trust will offer periodic opportunities for the public to visit and enjoy all the property has to offer.

Information about Coastal Oaks Preserve and other Land Trust conservation areas can be found at www.irlt.org/cfiles/projects_lagoonwfinitiative.cfm