



Alligator Creek, South Venice, Fla.

ALLIGATOR CREEK

Alligator Creek flows from peaceful headwaters near East Venice Ave. through the Alligator Creek Conservation Area on its way to Woodmere Park, where it joins up with a multi-use recreational trail. Passing beneath the rush of traffic along Tamiami Trail, the creek widens along quiet neighborhood backyards and peaceful stands of mangroves and oysters before joining Lemon Bay. The lower reaches of Alligator Creek are designated as Outstanding Florida Waters and host a portion of the Lemon Bay Aquatic Preserve. Near the Creek's mouth, the popular South Venice Beach Ferry waits to shuttle beach-goers across the Intracoastal Waterway to South Venice Beach. Alligator Creek is a special place — home to spectacular wading birds, otters, manatees, snook and red drum. It has some pretty remarkable neighbors, as well. Meet the residents who are cleaning up its watershed, one waterway at a time ...



Above Alligator Creek meanders through lush foliage. Members of the South Venice Water Quality Task Force. The South Venice Beach Ferry.

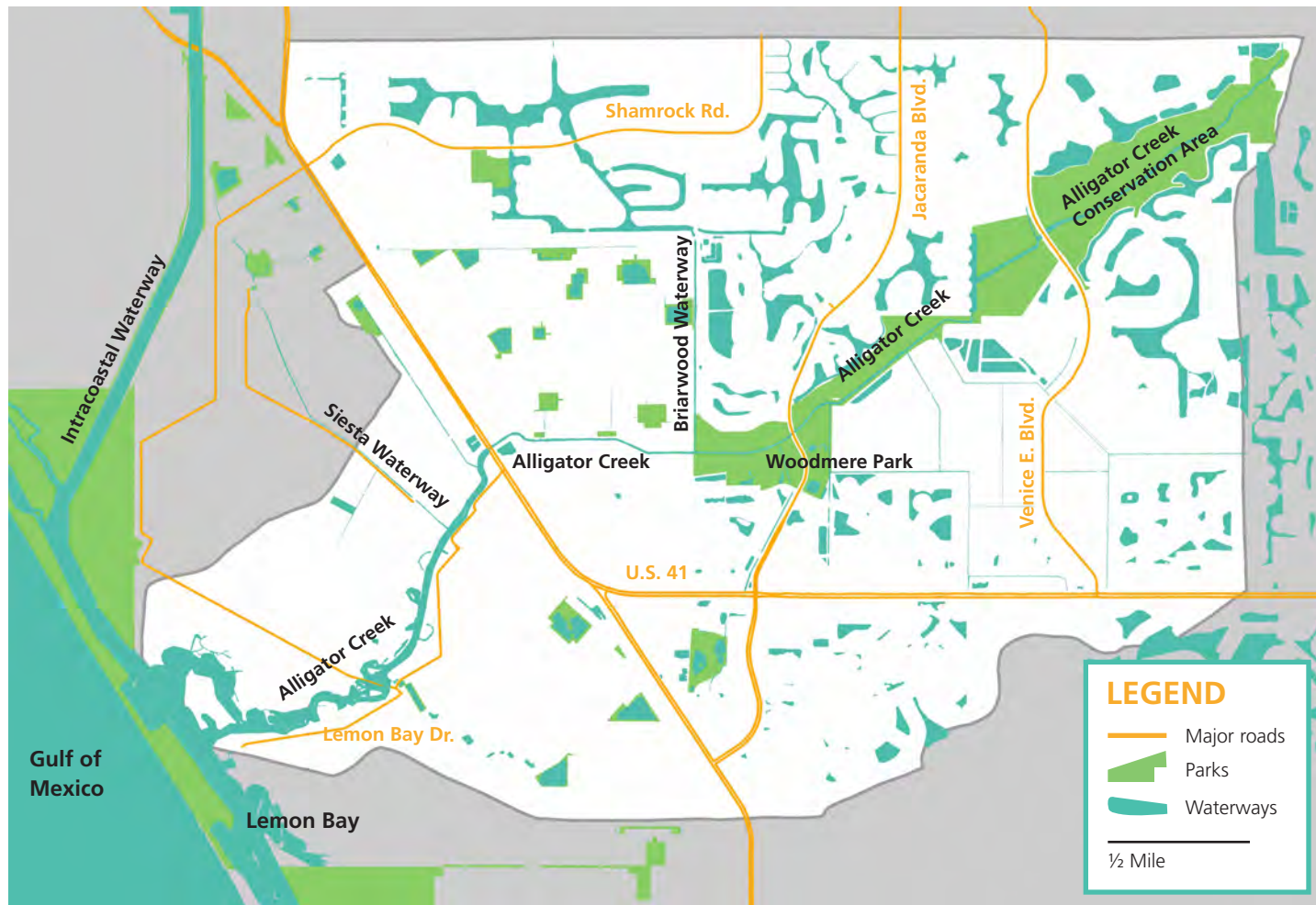
ALLIGATOR CREEK WATERSHED

A watershed is an area of land over which rain water flows before collecting in a waterbody. The Alligator Creek Watershed is highlighted in white below. Are you in the watershed?



As a homeowner in the Alligator Creek Watershed, there are many things you can do to help improve Alligator Creek:

- Skip the fertilizer during summer months, when rains can wash it into stormdrains and into the creek.
- Replace areas of turf grass with Florida-friendly landscaping that requires less water, fertilizer and pesticides.
- Pick up pet waste
- Replace pavement with pervious surfaces, like pavers and gravel, to let water soak into the landscape instead of becoming stormwater.



The South Venice Civic Association (SVCA) and the Venice Gardens Civic Association's Lakes Committee are active in improving water quality and natural habitats in the Alligator Creek Watershed. About five years ago, members of the South Venice Water Quality Task Force decided to turn what they called a "trash filled, muck covered ditch" into a clear running stream. They removed trash and invasive species, stabilized the banks and replanted native species. After proving their approach could make a difference, the Task Force teamed up with Sarasota County to extend their efforts along Siesta and Briarwood Waterways. Today, these waterways are more natural and streamlike, with over 50,000 new native plants. For more information about this community's environmental success story, visit South Venice Civic Association online. To learn more about Alligator Creek and to take a virtual tour, visit the Sarasota Water Atlas online and search for "Alligator Creek".