



PHILLIPPI CREEK

Phillippi Creek is Sarasota Bay's largest fresh-water creek. It flows from humble headwaters at Sarasota's renowned birding hotspot, the Celery Fields, meanders through reflective moments of old Florida, past sleepy suburban backyards, under frenetic commercial corridors to its peaceful mangrove

stands and oyster beds — where it finally rolls into Roberts Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. Phillippi is a tidal creek, meaning its waters rise and fall with the tide, providing a dynamic mix of habitats for many of our area's iconic fish and wildlife.

Over the last century, as urban development replaced natural environments, stormwater runoff carried more and more nutrient and bacteria pollution from fertilizers, leaking septic systems and urban pet waste into the Creek. Phillippi Creek has seven miles of tidal creek and 100 miles of canals upstream. Over time, erosion filled the Creek with sediments and reduced flow. Recognizing the opportunity to improve their creek, residents and organizations in the Phillippi Creek Watershed and Sarasota County Government launched an initiative to improve water quality in Phillippi Creek. Learn more about their efforts and how you can get involved in the historic revival of Phillippi Creek ...



Top Paddling Phillippi Creek is a popular pastime for area residents. **Above** Phillippi Creek sparkles with wildlife including otters, snook, osprey and manatees. Photo credits: otters (Dmitry Azovtsev, licensed under cc), snook, osprey (Mary Lundeberg), manatee (Marine Mammal Commission).

PHILLIPPI CREEK WATERSHED

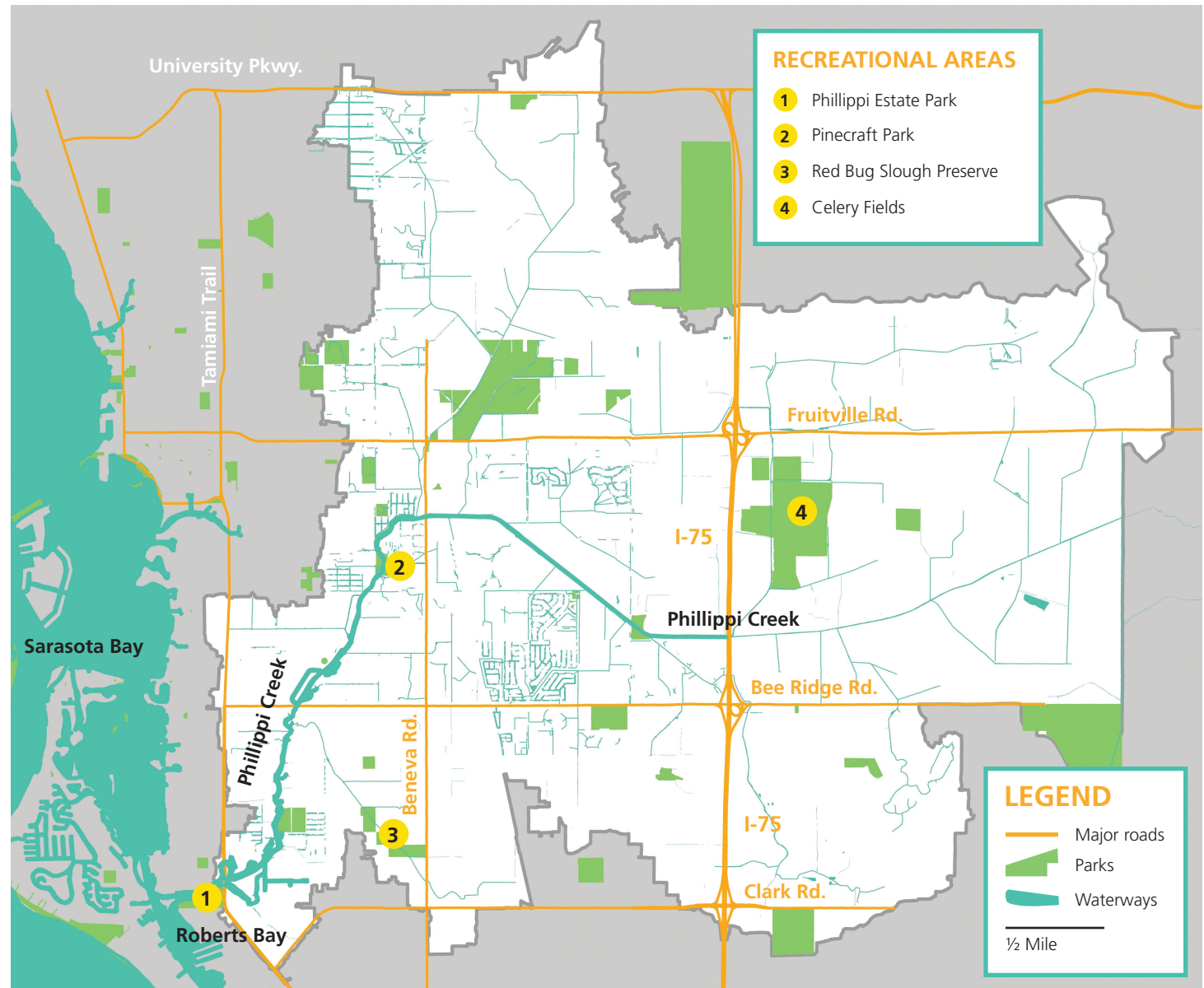
A watershed is an area of land over which rain water flows before collecting in a waterbody. The Phillippi Creek Watershed is highlighted below in white. **Are you in the watershed?**

A healthy Creek means more fish and wildlife, higher property values, better recreational opportunities and a stronger economy. Residents and organizations in the Watershed have partnered with Sarasota County Stormwater Environmental Utility to reduce flooding and nutrient and bacterial pollution in Phillippi Creek.

Sarasota County Government and area homeowners have converted 8,000 aging septic systems and 32 small wastewater plants over to a modern sewer system. That translates into almost 9 million gallons of wastewater per day no longer discharging into the watershed. The County also created the Celery Fields Regional Stormwater Facility, which removed more than 200 homes from an active floodplain, while providing a popular haven for hundreds of species of birds.

As a homeowner, there are many things you can do to help improve Phillippi Creek:

- Skip the fertilizer during summer months, when rains can wash it into stormdrains and into the creek.
- Replace areas of grass with Florida-friendly plants 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.



Enjoy the Creek! Enjoy a variety of activities in and around the Creek. Visit the Celery Fields and spot hundreds of species of birds. Launch kayaks from Pinecraft Park and paddle to Roberts Bay. Attend an archaeological dig at Phillippi Estate Park. Go fishing at Pinecraft Park or Red Bug Slough Preserve. Google "Sarasota Water Atlas Phillippi Creek" to learn more about the Creek and take a virtual tour.