



GULF COAST CENTER FOR
**ECOTOURISM &
SUSTAINABILITY**

Who? What?

Gulf Coast Center for Ecotourism & Sustainability

Why? Where? A new 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation started in Gulf Shores

Serving a growing need for environmental and outdoor programs

Helping facilitate access to new resources and facilities

Supporting the development of sustainable tourism

mission statement

The mission of
the Gulf Coast Center for
Ecotourism & Sustainability is

to promote sustainable tourism
raise environmental awareness
encourage the stewardship of
our natural resources
increase community resilience
strengthen the coastal economy
enhance the quality of life for the
residents and visitors of the
Gulf Coast Region

our team

Board of Directors

One Employee

Community

Partners

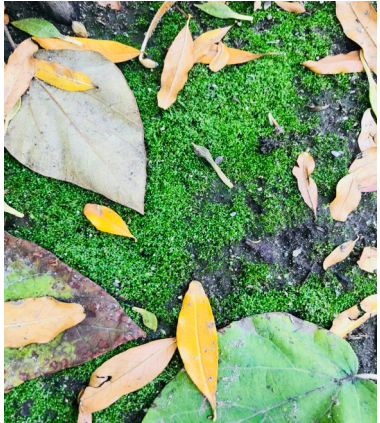
Naturalists

Inquisitive Youth

Inspired Adults

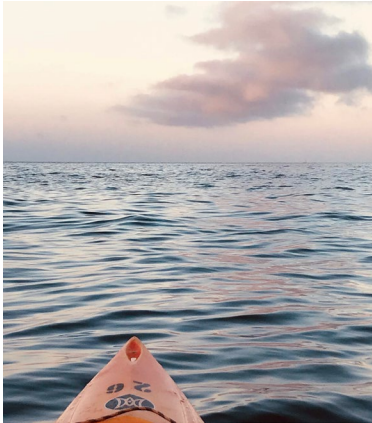
Chickens

Our Programs



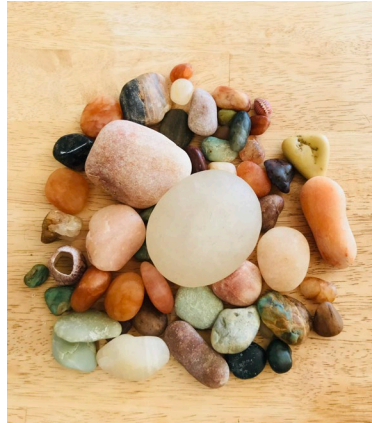
Environmental
Leadership
Camp Programs

Local and
Visiting School
Groups



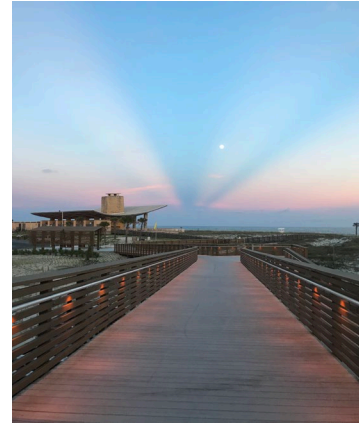
Hands-on,
Experiential, and
Project-based

Day and
Overnight
Programs



Summer Arts
and Ecology
Camp

Celebrate and
Connect Art with
Nature

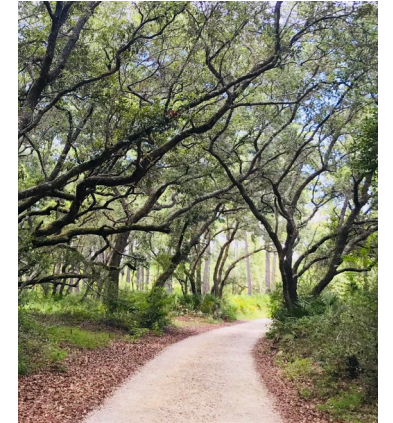


Photography
Performance
Painting
Ceramics
Cooking
Kayaking
Gardening



Community
Programs and
Initiatives

Coastal and
Marine
Protection



Habitat
Restoration and
Service-Learning

Gardening,
Composting and
Green-Living

Ambassadors of the Environment

Ambassadors of the Environment
Foundation provides opportunities for people,
filmmakers, photographers, journalists, and
other individuals to explore, document, and
communicate the natural world.
Help people fall in love with nature,
and understand how the natural world works.
— Ambassadors of the Environment

Ambassadors of the Environment

Ambassadors partners with:

camps



hotels and
resorts



THE RITZ-CARLTON

schools



other non-profits



GULF COAST CENTER FOR
**ECOTOURISM &
SUSTAINABILITY**



Night Hikes

Star-gazing

Campfires, Songs
and Storytelling

Immersive Nature Experiences

Kayaking

Hiking

Beach Ecology

Biking

Microscope Labs

Boardwalking ??

Field Studies

Wildlife Monitoring



Gaining Lifelong Skills

Teambuilding

Problem-solving

Community Service

Sustainable Living

Stewardship

Self confidence



Make Connections

Within Oneself

The Community

Between Actions and
Consequences

Between the Past,
Present and Future

Clean Land, Clean Water

Think Global, Act Local

Everything Runs on Energy

There is No Waste in Nature

Biodiversity is Key

Everything is Connected



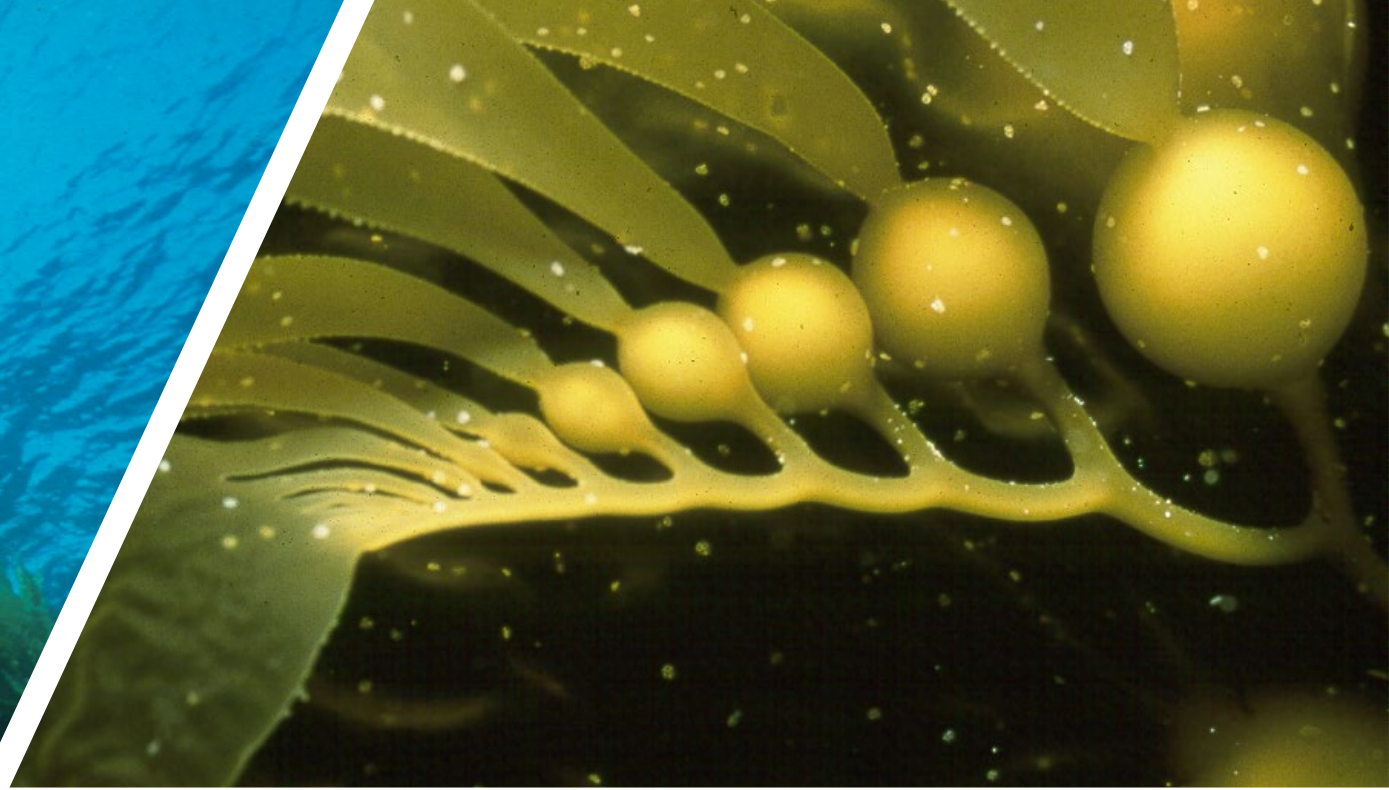
Everything is Connected

The Catalina Island Ambassadors of the Environment Program hosted a delegation from Alabama.



To LEARN, EXPERIENCE and OBSERVE an environmental leadership program in action.









They returned to report back their findings.





In the wake of the Deepwater Horizon tragedy and Gulf Oil Spill...

Some fundamental

lessons were learned: Health of your economy hinges on the health of your environment

The importance of leadership, teamwork, listening and understanding

The role we all play as consumers

To be the change you want to see in the world

When life gives you lemons, you make lemonade



Out of tragedy
was born an opportunity

to tell a story
about interconnectedness

about the fragility AND resilience of
both nature and the human spirit

about the power
of leadership and determination



GULF COAST CENTER FOR ECOTOURISM & SUSTAINABILITY

The City of Gulf Shores and the Center are working together to build a state-of-the art facility dedicated to learning and experiencing.

Inspired by nature in every sense, the facility will blend rustic, natural design elements with new sustainable technologies.

From food production, to material upcycling and resource collection, visitors will engage in the innerworkings of the Center.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

- \$9.7 million in RESTORE funding
- RFP late spring, early summer 2019
- Select a project management team, architects, engineers
- Determine design elements and environmental certifications
- Estimated completion: 2021-2022



Learning Campus

Community Partners

City and County Schools

Gulf State Park and Valor Hospitality

Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism

Local Businesses

Universities

Environmental Groups


and

Conservation Organizations

Cities of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach

Program Opportunities

Farm to Market/Field to Table
Little Lagoon Restoration
Dune Ecology/Sea Oat Planting
Wildlife Monitoring
Recycling and Composting
Environmental Art Installations
Videos and Publications
Classes and Workshops
Nature Film Festival
Earth Day Fair

A photograph of a wooden boardwalk leading from the foreground towards a beach and the ocean at sunset. The boardwalk is made of dark wood and has railings on both sides. The beach is sandy with some sparse vegetation. The ocean is blue, and the sky is a mix of orange, pink, and blue with scattered clouds. In the distance, a few people can be seen on the beach.

The Path Forward

**Program
Development**

**Center
Design**

**Community
Engagement**

A vintage-style welcome sign for Gulf State Park. The sign is rectangular with rounded corners and a dark brown border. It features a light brown background with horizontal stripes. The text "Welcome To" is on the top line, and "Gulf State Park" is on the bottom line, both in a dark brown, cursive script font. The sign is mounted on a dark blue wall, and a spotlight illuminates it from above.

*Welcome To
Gulf State Park*

Gulf State Park will be an international benchmark for environmental and economic sustainability demonstrating best practices for outdoor recreation, education, and hospitable accommodations.



Sustainability Goals

Construct facilities targeting the highest levels of international environmental certifications

- The 350-room Lodge is on track to meet LEED Gold, SITES Platinum, and FORTIFIED Commercial certifications
- The Interpretive Center is targeting full Living Building Certification, LEED Platinum, and FORTIFIED Commercial certifications
- The Learning Campus is targeting LEED Silver and FORTIFIED Commercial certifications
- Gulf State Park will be the only place in the world where a visitor can experience and learn about this combination of certifications in a single location



GOLF COURSE
CONVERSION

TRAIL NETWORK
EXPANSION

INTERPRETIVE
ELEMENTS

PARK
WAYFINDING

LEARNING
CAMPUS

CAMPGROUND
IMPROVEMENTS

ROAD TO TRAIL
CONVERSION

PICNIC AREA
ENHANCEMENTS

PEDESTRIAN
BRIDGE

PEDESTRIAN
BRIDGE

BEACH PAVILION

INTERPRETIVE
CENTER

DUNE
RESTORATION

THE
LODGE

EDUCATION
PIER

LEGEND

ENHANCEMENT
PROGRAM

MASTER PLAN
ELEMENTS



Bringing inside out and outside in



Interpretive Center



LIVING
BUILDING
CHALLENGESM

**Interpretive
Porch**

**Solar Power
(105%)**

**Multi Use
Room**

**Sand & Water
Play Area**

**Interpretive
Wall**

**Reclaimed
Water
(105%)**

**Pedestrian
Bridge**

**225' Dune
Setback**





Learning Campus

Learning Campus

Community Hub

Auditorium

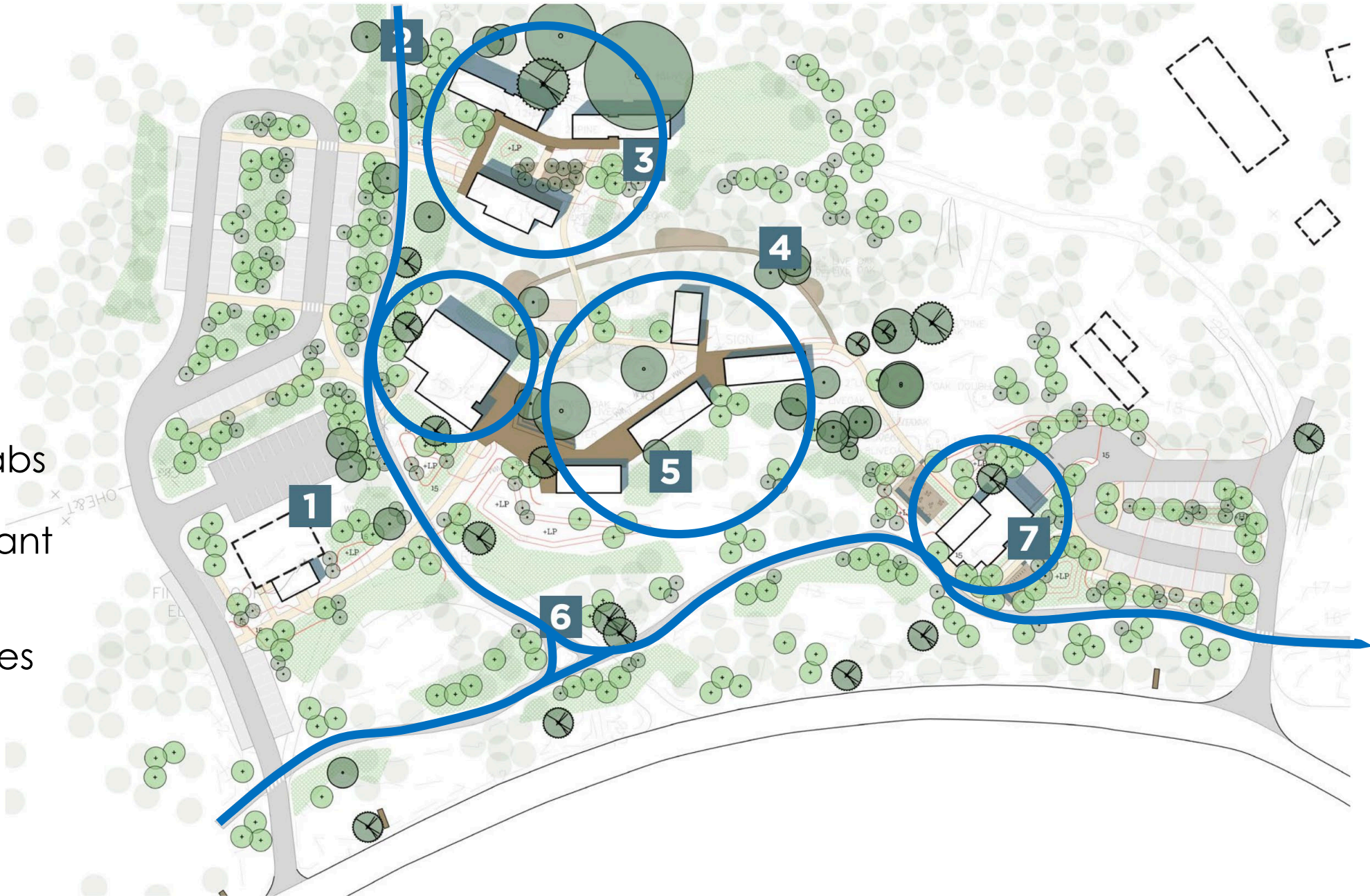
Bunkhouses

Classrooms and Labs

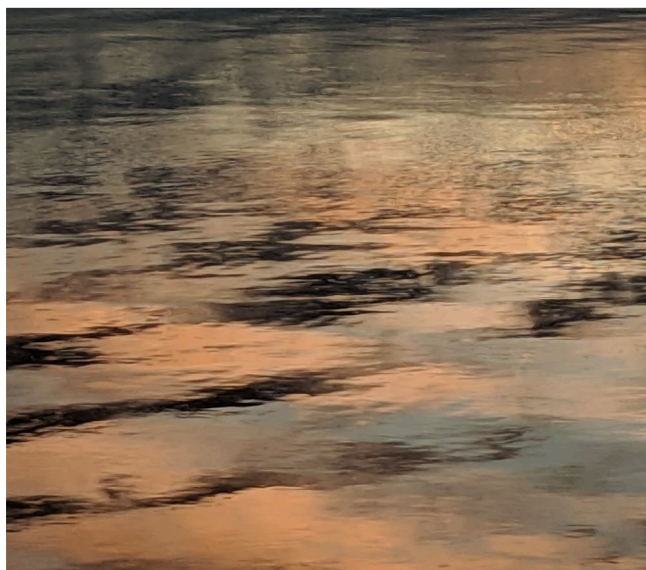
Woodside Restaurant

School groups,
retreats, field studies

Events, workshops,
festivals



The Park



Sustainable “Features” of the Park

Birds and
bats provide
pest control

Trees provide
oxygen

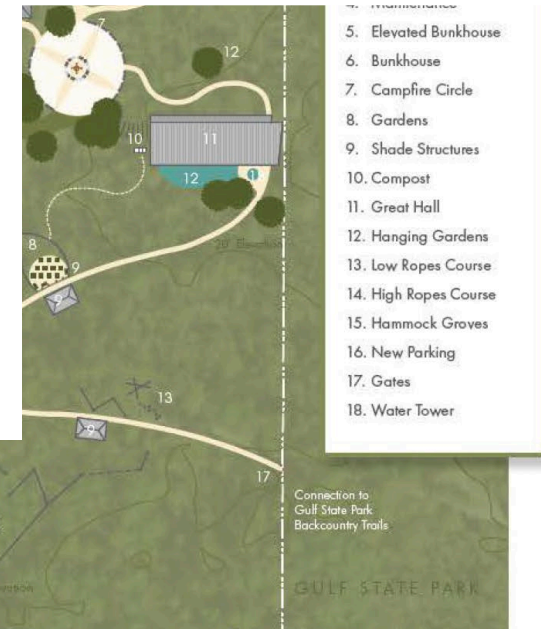
Wetlands
filter
sediment and
pollutants

Objectives

Serve a growing need for environmental
and outdoor programs

Help provide access to new facilities

Support sustainable tourism





Looking Ahead

Learning Opportunities

Successes and Challenges

Nuggets of Wisdom

Collaborative Potential
Locally and Globally

Protecting Critical Habitat
Foundation of Ecotourism and
Sustainability



GULF COAST CENTER FOR
**ECOTOURISM &
SUSTAINABILITY**

**Strengthening the community
and the environment.**

gulfcenter.org

