

# NEWS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, Parks and Recreation Department  
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## LASSING PARK'S LIVING SHORELINE

**St. Petersburg, FL** (December 2021) – The City of St. Petersburg and the St. Petersburg Parks & Recreation, in partnership with the Tampa Bay Watch, is kicking off the living shoreline project at Lassing Park, Beach Dr. SE & 18<sup>th</sup> Ave. S., on Wednesday, December 15, at 9 a.m.

The proposed project is designed to help stabilize approximately 700 ft. of severely eroding shoreline. It's also providing hard bottom habitats for fish and wildlife resources and promoting water quality improvements in the Tampa Bay ecosystem.

The project includes the creation of oyster reefs and the installation of coastal wetland plants along the northeastern shoreline of Lassing Park. The total project requires 100 tons of fossilized shell and 792 oyster reef balls to construct 8,384 sq. ft. of new oyster communities. A second layer of 3,184 sq. ft. of bagged fossilized shell will be added to give the oyster communities more relief.

The Lo-Pro Reef Balls™ oyster reef balls are constructed of marine-friendly concrete, weighing about 200 lbs. each. The reef balls feature holes where oyster larvae can enter and attach to the inside, creating a productive habitat while preventing erosion threatening the shoreline.

How do oysters improve the Tampa Bay? The Community Oyster Reef Enhancement (CORE) program, led by Tampa Bay Watch, helps restore lost Eastern Oyster habitats in the bay. Oysters act as engineers in creating habitats that attract other sea creatures, which then provides diverse food sources for a variety of wildlife. Oyster reefs also function as a natural shoreline and cleansing system with a single oyster filtering up to 50 gallons of water a day.

The project is ongoing and expected to be completed in Spring 2023. For more information, contact the St. Petersburg Parks & Recreation Department at 727-893-7441 or visit [www.stpeteparksrec.org/news](http://www.stpeteparksrec.org/news).

**The City of St. Petersburg**, one of Florida's largest cities, is a city of opportunity where the sun shines on all who come to live, work and play. It's an innovative, creative and competitive community that honors its past while pursuing its future. Visit [www.StPete.org](http://www.StPete.org) to learn more.

**The St. Petersburg Parks and Recreation Department** is nationally accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies, and with 17 recreation facilities, nine swimming pools, over 150 parks and more than 70 athletic fields, the department makes it a mission to preserve and enhance the city's parklands and recreational facilities and engage the community in leisure activities. Visit [www.StPeteParksRec.org](http://www.StPeteParksRec.org) to learn more.

**Tampa Bay Watch** is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to fostering a healthy Tampa Bay watershed through community-driven restoration projects, education programs, and outreach initiatives. Incorporated in 1993, Tampa Bay Watch conducts habitat restoration and educational activities throughout the year, relying heavily on the efforts of community volunteers. These programs seek to build citizen awareness, concern and participation in improving the health and sustainability of Tampa Bay. Tampa Bay Watch opened the Tampa Bay

Watch Discovery Center at the new St. Pete Pier in July 2020. The Discovery Center features a public Exhibit Gallery showcasing the economic and ecological value of the Tampa Bay estuary to residents and visitors, a 45' eco-vessel which conducts daily on-water educational activities and both an outdoor "wet" classroom and an indoor classroom offering a variety of environmental outreach programs to visitors and Tampa Bay area students. *For more information on upcoming events, or to become a volunteer or member, visit [tampabaywatch.org](http://tampabaywatch.org) or call 727-867-8166.*

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