

Facts, not fear will restore Lido Beach

There is one thing we all agree on in Sarasota — we are in love with our beaches.

Unfortunately, what nature gives, it takes away. We have all witnessed the devastation of beach erosion. First, the beach goes away, and next, homes, businesses, roads and infrastructure are under threat.

Today, Lido Key is under that very threat.

Less than five feet of beach remain in many sections of Lido Key. Over time, the waves and currents have eroded millions of cubic yards of sand off of Lido Key and it has settled in an ever-growing 20 million cubic yard sand shoal between Lido and Siesta Keys at Big Pass.

A Solution that works...

Following years of work and diligent review, the Army Corps of Engineers, the City of Sarasota and the Department of Environmental Protection have agreed on and approved a project to return a small amount (less than 4% of the more than 20 million cubic yards that have accumulated) to restore Lido Key all the way north past the Public Beach with 300 feet of shoreline.



Environmentally sound approach

Some fear the dredging could harm Siesta Key's beaches. The approvals have vigorous monitoring in place to address that very concern. The truth is after more than a decade of extensive review, the environmental studies show that no significant impact on Siesta Key will occur.

Positives include:

- 62% of the cost will be paid by the Federal government and 19% by the State easing the burden on Sarasota taxpayers.
- These valuable approvals, 10 years in the making, which our city has obtained, provide an environmentally responsible solution that will protect our beaches for 50 years.
- Lido beach homeowners, public beaches, businesses, nesting sea turtles and infrastructure will be protected once again.
- Big Pass Channel will remain navigable which reduces boat traffic at drawbridges and in other inlets.
- Sand will be returned to where it eroded keeping the beach system healthy and organic.

It would be wonderful if every grain of sand placed on Longboat Key, Lido Beach, Siesta Key and Casey Key stayed forever, but nature does not work that way. We must share the sand fairly for the protection of the entire region. In this case, it is worth applauding government when it 'gets it right.' We hope our neighbors can work together to help us solve this critical need at Lido Beach.

We thank the residents and government officials who have worked together for years to bring this project to fruition.