

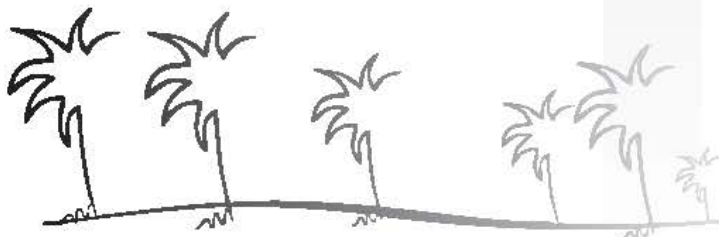
**Friends of Fort De Soto, Inc.
Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide community support for the preservation and improvement of Fort De Soto Park through financial contributions as well as volunteer efforts. Our focus is to promote public awareness of Fort De Soto Park, its special environment and facilities, and through improved communication and special projects, to bring awareness of the need for historical and environmental preservation and conservation.

The Friends of Fort De Soto, Inc., is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to Friends of Fort De Soto are tax deductible to the extent allowed under current tax laws.



Friends of Fort De Soto, Inc.
3500 Pinellas Bayway
Tierra Verde, FL 33715-2528
Phone (727) 582-2267



Fort De Soto Park is operated as a public service by the Board of County Commissioners with the assistance of the Pinellas County Park Board and is maintained and operated by the Pinellas County Park Department. More than 2.6 million people visit Fort De Soto annually. Work continues to improve access to all park facilities. This trail, as well as other facilities, accommodates most visitors. If you require special assistance or accommodation, please notify a staff member located in the park headquarters building.

For more information about Fort De Soto Park, or Friends of Fort De Soto membership, please call (727) 582-2267.

*Pinellas County Park Department
631 Chestnut Street
Clearwater, FL 33756-5336
Phone (727) 464-3347*



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**Friends of Fort De Soto, Inc.
Barrier-Free Nature Trail
Fort De Soto Park**



**Pinellas County Parks
“A Natural Attraction”**

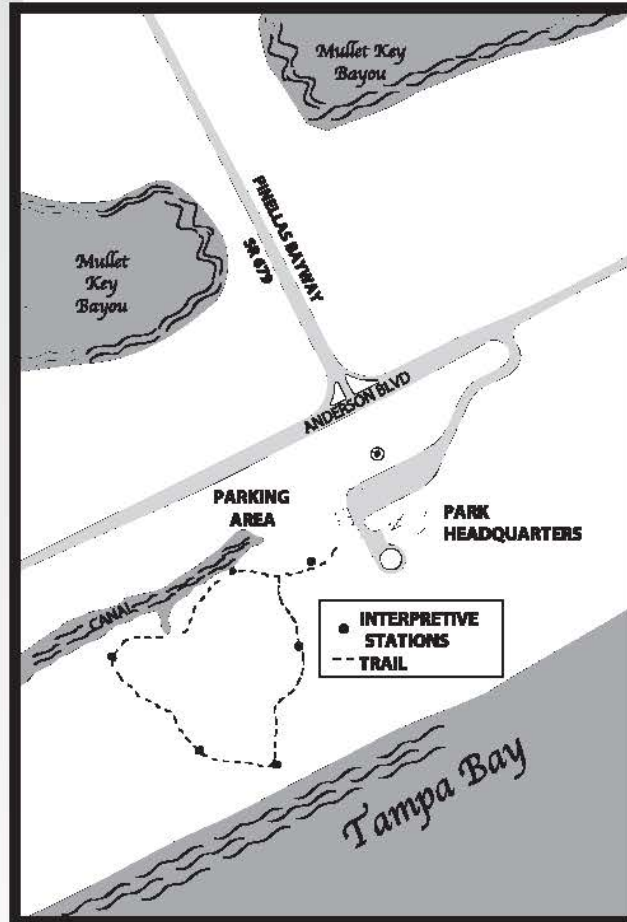
A trail providing access to nature for park visitors regardless of physical abilities.

Experiencing the outdoors and being surrounded by nature is great therapy for the body and soul. In Florida, there are 1.2 million physically challenged people. With this in mind, the Friends of Fort De Soto, Inc., initiated a plan in 1997, to develop an interpretive nature trail to be enjoyed by all visitors to Fort De Soto Park, regardless of their physical capabilities. The idea was to provide a

self-guided interpretive program along the trail making it possible for visitors to experience the beauty of nature through touch, smell, sight, or sound.



Fort De Soto Park staff and Sawgrass Lake Park naturalists worked together during 1998 to design the trail. The 2,200 foot long trail was built by park staff with assistance from Boy Scouts and other wonderful volunteer groups. Recycled materials were used and construction complies with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.



Raised timbers were placed eight feet apart for guidance and to allow enough space for wheelchairs to pass side-by-side. Concrete strips placed along the trail alert visitors to the interpretive stations or rest areas. Trail amenities include rest areas with benches and water fountains. Signs with interpretive messages, also recorded on touch-activated speaker boxes, enhance visitors' experiences by providing helpful information about the nature trail.



The Barrier-Free Nature Trail opens the natural world for all visitors to enjoy. The Friends of Fort De Soto, Inc., and the many dedicated volunteers involved in this project, hope you enjoy the trail and visit often.

