



## The Tampa Bay Estuary Program Manatee County Partnership



- TBEP co-sponsored a meeting with Manatee County to discuss a proposed boat ramp south of the Sunshine Skyway Bridge. This fact-finding meeting focused on the need for the ramp, ecological features, and environmental benefits of the ramp, possible adverse environmental effects, and ways to mitigate for environmental impacts.
- TBEP Staff coordinated planning, on-site logistics and volunteer recruitment for a "Give a Day for the Bay" workday in March 2004 at Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve. About 60 volunteers donated 240+ hours removing Brazilian pepper trees, picking up litter and planting native plants along a tidal creek that flows into Terra Ceia Preserve.
- For more than 10 years, TBEP has been awarding community grants from the Bay Mini-Grants Program. In the last three years alone, Manatee County has benefited from more than \$115,000 in community restoration and education grants of which \$12,132 went directly to the County's government. Some of the recipients include Saint Stephen's Episcopal, Manatee School for the Arts, Braden River Middle School and Kinnan Elementary.
- For the past five years, TBEP has helped fund Manatee County's sediment analysis work for Tampa Bay at a cost of \$10,000 per year.
- TBEP was awarded a \$310,000 grant entitled *Tampa Bay Tidal Tributaries Habitat Initiative* that will help local governments develop concise restoration and management objectives for rivers and their tributaries, including the Manatee River. TBEP subsequently issued a \$36,000 contract to Manatee County's DEM for database management work associated with the *Tidal Tributaries* project.



*Braden River Middle students study wetlands*

*"The Tampa Bay Estuary Program's continuing support for local government grant writing assistance produced over \$10.8 million in water quality restoration project dollars to the Bay community in 2006. The return on investment for the Tampa Bay Estuary in 2006 was significant. For every dollar spent by the Program to assist local governments in preparing grant proposals, \$223 was gained in grant awards. We are seeing success in Florida. If future funding for the Tampa Bay Estuary Program is cut, opportunities to secure necessary bay improvement dollars may be limited, and the momentum of implementation activities by local governments may be lost."*

*--Amy Adams, President, Cape Canaveral Scientific, Inc.*