



NAPLES BOTANICAL GARDEN

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Amy Kessler

Telephone: 239-643-7275

Email: akessler@naplesgarden.org

NAPLES BOTANICAL GARDEN ANNOUNCES MAJOR GIFT FROM COLLIER ENTERPRISES

NAPLES, FL (November 27, 2007)— Naples Botanical Garden announced today a \$1 million gift to its capital campaign from Collier Enterprises to name the South Wetlands in the future preserve area and support associated conservation programming.

“The South Wetlands represent an important aspect of Florida’s natural habitat. We see our efforts in preservation mirrored in what the Garden is working to accomplish” said Tom Flood, president and CEO of Collier Enterprises. “The Garden has already become a demonstration site for the effective control of invasive plant species in Florida and I have seen exciting plans to further their community education and outreach efforts.”

The Garden has recently promoted Chad Washburn to Natural Areas Manager. Washburn has a Master’s degree in environmental science from Indiana University and is responsible for oversight of the restoration of seven habitats on over 90 acres of natural area, including the South Wetlands. The Garden also has the voluntary full time services of botanist and retired university professor George Wilder to make a comprehensive catalogue of all the native plants on the Garden property. In the few months Wilder has been on site, he has already made some exciting discoveries of rare species.

“Chad and George’s work in the South Wetlands will provide a solid foundation for the Garden to undertake meaningful research in restoration ecology. The Collier Enterprises’ gift will enable us to develop activities and educational programs that will make our community more aware of the valuable asset we have in our wetlands and hopefully participate in their restoration” said Brian Holley, executive director of the Garden. “This gift will have an impact for many generations to come.”

This gift also reflects the Collier family’s and Collier Enterprises’ legacy of commitment to conservation. About 80 percent of the land in Collier County today is in public ownership, permanently protected as parks and preserves. Nearly all of this land was conveyed to government or nonprofit agencies by the Collier family and its companies, including Collier Enterprises and the Barron Collier Company.

Naples Botanical Garden’s 160-acre project is slated to open in late 2010. With over half the site being placed into conservation easement, the balance of the property will feature five cultivated gardens immersing visitors in the cultures of south Asia, Brazil, the Caribbean and Florida. Plans also include a hands-on children’s garden complete with a secret garden, tree houses and a waterfall.

Naples Botanical Garden is creating a world-class tropical garden paradise that will feature cultivated gardens of Asia, Brazil, the Caribbean, Florida, and a hands-on interactive children's garden along with 90 acres of beautifully restored natural habitats, all due to open in 2011. The 160-acre site is located just three miles from downtown Naples. The Garden currently features the award-winning Tropical Mosaic Garden, a Butterfly House and the Florida Uplands Preserve that includes a one-mile walking path through restored terrain of South Florida. Visit www.naplesgarden.org or call 239-643-7275 for more information.