



## WEST BAY CLUB

ESTERO, FLORIDA

Natural Region: Southern Coastal Plain

Watershed: Big Cypress Swamp

Bisected by a high, sandy ridge, the 868-acre site for West Bay Club in Lee County, Florida, is located along the lower reaches of the Estero River at its confluence with Halfway Creek, two miles from the mouth of the river at Estero Bay. Twelve lakes were created and 150 acres of wetlands were enhanced at West Bay, leaving 76% of the site in open space. The oak scrub and oak hammock, pine flatwoods, and rosemary scrub vegetative communities support large populations of gopher tortoise, amphibians such as the Florida gopher frog, and birds such as the cormorant. The property is used as the site of release by wildlife organizations for rehabilitated animals such as otters, owls, and small animals. On September 10, 2000, West Bay Club became the 21st Certified Audubon International Signature Cooperative Sanctuary in the World.



West Bay Club provides viable gopher tortoise habitat including this rosemary scrub vegetative community plus extensive wildlife corridors and natural preserve buffers to the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve, one of the most valuable resources in this region of Florida.