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#### For Immediate Release

## Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast Kick Starts $8.9 Million Robinson Preserve Expansion

### *(Public, Private, Not-for-Profit* *Entities Work to Improve Nature Center for Manatee Residents and Species)*

**OSPREY, FL (December 27 2012**) Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast (Conservation Foundation), a not-for-profit land trust, Robinson Farms, Inc. and Manatee County kicked-off the first phase of an $8.9 million capital campaign to enhance the 487-acre Robinson Preserve. A conservation easement was placed on 150 acres of land acquired by Conservation Foundation adjacent to the existing Robinson Preserve on December 27. Conservation Foundation also conveyed the title of the land to Manatee County to manage the Preserve and make improvements.

“Today, Conservation Foundation and the Robinsons took a very significant first step in Manatee County’s 10-year journey to restore these 150 acres and create a center for nature, exploration, science and technology that will serve the public,” said Charlie Hunsicker, director of Natural Resources for Manatee County.

“Manatee County now owns this land and while they will be able to make improvements consistent with a preserve, other development rights have been permanently extinguished through the conservation easement that our land trust will hold in perpetuity,” explained Christine P. Johnson, president of Conservation Foundation.

“Acquisition of this property for the public, in partnership with Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast will extend the boundaries of an already incomparable and award winning environmental and recreational experience at Robinson Preserve for our residents and visitors to Manatee County. I am proud to declare that Manatee County has created a unique collection of protected coastal habitats and shorelines along lower Tampa Bay and Sarasota Bay to a degree unsurpassed in Southwest Florida. Robinson Preserve and this new expansion is the cornerstone in this effort," notes Manatee County Commission chairman John Chappie, District 3.

Land restoration will focus on restoring wetlands and removing invasive plant species. Restoration will help control freshwater run-off to improve water quality in the surrounding Manatee River, Perico Bay and Palma Sola Bay―actions critical for marine animals whose survival depends on the proper temperature and salinity in the water.

Robinson Preserve is home to both threatened and endangered species such as the American oystercatcher, bald eagle, black skimmer, brown pelican, little blue heron, tricolored heron, reddish egret, white ibis, wood stork, and many marine animals. “Working with Conservation Foundation, we are fulfilling our hopes to save this land for the wildlife and people of Manatee County,” said Will Robinson, of Robinson Farm, Inc.

A lead gift of $3.2 million to Conservation Foundation from The Mosaic Company Foundation jump-started the project. “The Mosaic Company Foundation is pleased to support Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast in their meaningful habitat conservation work,” said Mark Kaplan, board president of The Mosaic Company Foundation. “We share this priority of conservation and we’re proud to support the opportunity to expand Robinson Preserve. The Mosaic Company Foundation is excited to be part of the effort focused on securing and preserving this beautiful natural resource for generations to come in Manatee County and the broader southwest Florida community.”

Improvements planned by Manatee County following environmental restoration of the land include construction of an educational center, boardwalks, pedestrian bridges, a parking lot, restrooms, age specific thematic playgrounds, kayak and paddle trails, kayak storage facilities, and signage. Several community environmental organizations have already committed to volunteer and provide environmental education experiences and programs for the public on-site. “We are hopeful that individuals, families, corporate and community foundations will continue to support and contribute to the completion of environmental restoration,” said Hunsicker.

“Conservation Foundation and Robinson Farms, Inc. worked together and the County Commission approved the expansion and will support the enhancements,” said Dan DeLeo, board chairman of Conservation Foundation. “This is a complex project with multiple parties, and that is when the expertise of a land trust like Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast matters most.”

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# Video

Christine Johnson and Charlie Hunsicker are available for interviews at Robinson Preserve beginning December 27.

# About Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast

Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast, works with landowners, businesses, and government to protect the beauty and natural integrity of bays, beaches, barrier islands and watersheds on the Gulf Coast. The Foundation purchases natural areas, holds conservation easements and educates for responsible stewardship. Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast also works with Sarasota County’s acclaimed environmentally sensitive lands program, their neighborhood parks program, and is a nationally accredited land trust.

**About The Mosaic Company and The Mosaic Company Foundation**

The Mosaic Company (NYSE: MOS) is the world’s leading producer and marketer of concentrated phosphate and potash. Driven by its mission to help the world grow the food it needs, Mosaic is committed to strengthening global food security and protecting critical water resources. The Mosaic Company and The Mosaic Company Foundation make investments in and partner with best-of-class leaders in the focus areas of food, water and local community investments. For more information on The Mosaic Company and The Mosaic Company Foundation, visit [www.mosaicco.com](http://www.mosaicco.com)