

# **Santa Rosa Creek Round House Case Study**

# Preserving Tradition with Modern Performance | Santa Rosa Creek Band Round House Case Study

Client: **Santa Rosa Band of the Lower Muscogee**

Markets: **Hospitality**

Products: **Performance Palm**

Locations: **Milton, FL**

## Overview

The **Santa Rosa Creek Band Round House** was envisioned as a cultural and community landmark—one that would preserve, honor, and actively celebrate Creek Indian heritage for future generations. Inspired by traditional Native American roundhouses, the structure represents a modern interpretation of an ancient architectural form that has served Indigenous communities for thousands of years.

Archaeological evidence shows that roundhouses date back to 4000–2000 BCE and historically served as subterranean or semi-subterranean gathering spaces. These structures were central to tribal life, hosting ceremonies, weddings, councils, social gatherings, and mourning rituals.

For the Santa Rosa Band of Lower Muscogee, rebuilding a roundhouse was not simply a construction project—it was an act of cultural restoration.

## Cultural Significance & Vision

According to architect **Larry Barrow**, many original Native American roundhouses across the eastern United States were destroyed during the **Indian Removal process beginning in 1830**, when tribes were forcibly displaced from their ancestral lands.

The Santa Rosa Band of Lower Muscogee had long envisioned reestablishing a roundhouse to reclaim this lost history and provide a permanent space for cultural continuity.

“The roundhouse is more than a building—it’s a living symbol of Creek identity, history, and resilience.”

— *Larry Barrow, Architect*

The design challenge was to create a structure that respected traditional form and meaning while meeting modern expectations for safety, longevity, and constructability.

## Design & Construction Challenges

### Building Scale & Specifications

The Santa Rosa Creek Band Round House is notable not only for its symbolism but for its impressive scale:

- **Radius:** 40 feet
- **Diameter:** 80 feet
- **Height:** 52 feet
- **Roof Pitch:** 45-degree (12/12 pitch)

Constructing a structure of this size—while maintaining precision, safety, and cultural integrity—presented significant challenges.

### Construction Approach

To address these challenges, the project team utilized a **prefabricated steel frame and roof panel system**, assembled on-site at ground level.

Barrow notes that this approach:

- Significantly improved worker safety
- Dramatically increased productivity
- Reduced on-site construction complexity
- Ensured consistent quality and precision

“By assembling major components at ground level, we were able to reduce risk while maintaining exceptional accuracy across the entire structure.”

— *Larry Barrow, Architect*

## Material Selection: Why Endureed

Selecting the right roofing material was critical. The roundhouse roof needed to visually honor traditional thatch structures while meeting modern performance requirements for a permanent, high-visibility landmark.

Barrow selected **Endureed's Performance Palm** based on several key factors:

### Authentic Aesthetic Alignment

Endureed's Performance Palm closely replicates the texture, depth, and organic appearance of traditional natural thatch—allowing the structure to remain visually true to Creek architectural heritage.

### Fire Safety & Non-Flammability

Unlike natural thatch, Endureed's Performance Palm is **non-flammable and fire-rated**, eliminating the need for chemical fire-retardant treatments and significantly enhancing long-term safety.

### Exceptional Durability

Designed for long-term performance, Endureed resists:

- UV degradation
- Moisture absorption
- Rot, mold, and mildew
- Insects and wildlife intrusion

This durability was essential for a structure intended to serve the community for generations rather than decades.

### Prefabricated Modular System

Endureed's **prefabricated modular units** aligned perfectly with the project's construction strategy, allowing for:

- Faster installation
- Reduced labor risk
- Consistent installation quality

## Technical Support & Reliability

“Endureed stood out not just for the product itself, but for the level of technical and customer support they provided throughout the process.”

— *Larry Barrow, Architect*

These qualities made Endureed a natural fit for both the project's cultural importance and its practical demands.

## Results & Impact

### A Lasting Cultural Landmark

The completed Santa Rosa Creek Band Round House stands as a powerful symbol of cultural resilience—bridging ancient tradition with modern construction methods and materials.

### Safety Without Compromise

By using Endureed, the project achieved a thatch-like aesthetic **without the fire risks** associated with natural materials, ensuring a safe gathering space for ceremonies and community events.

### Long-Term Sustainability

Endureed's longevity reduces the need for future material replacement, minimizing waste and preserving the integrity of the structure over time.

### Community Connection

Today, the roundhouse provides a permanent, dignified space for:

- Ceremonial gatherings
- Cultural education
- Community events
- Intergenerational storytelling

## **Conclusion**

The Santa Rosa Creek Band Round House demonstrates how modern engineered materials can respectfully support cultural preservation. Through thoughtful design, strategic partnerships, and the selection of Endureed engineered thatch, the project successfully honors Creek tradition while delivering the safety, durability, and performance required of a modern landmark.

It is not simply a structure—it is a living bridge between past, present, and future.











