



# Operations Handbook: Rivendell Ponds & Preserves Committee

Updated: SEP 2024

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## Operations Handbook: Rivendell Ponds & Preserves Committee

### MISSION, VISION, OPERATING PHILOSOPHY & ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

#### Mission

The mission of the Ponds and Preserves Committee is to make substantiated, evidence-based and financially-sound recommendations to the Board regarding the management of our ponds and preserves. This includes overseeing necessary steps to meet our regulatory requirements, in addition to making recommendations for managing our ponds and preserves as practical, aesthetic, and valuable assets of the community.

#### Vision

The vision of the Committee is to implement and manage programs to support the health and functionality of our natural assets – both our ponds and preserves.

**PONDS** – Oversee maintenance of our stormwater management systems (SWFWMD permit #4410445). Implement a stepwise, multi-year program to evolve our pond management procedures to a more sustainable and fiscally-responsible approach by installing “**Rivendell natural shorelines**.” This includes low-maintenance grass zones (LMZs) on the banks and shoreline aquatic plantings in the ponds, coupled with control of algae using low-toxicity approaches. The primary focus will be on controlling erosion and nutrient flow with a concurrent commitment to algae control and wildlife support. The appearance of the shorelines needs to satisfy the community desire for aesthetically-pleasing ponds.

**PRESERVES** - The Committee will also oversee the contracted management of our preserves and compliance with the Sarasota County approved Resource Management Plans for Rivendell Units 1-5 (dated January 1998 and April 2000). Management of preserves includes: firebreaks, invasive plant removal, ecological mowing, homeowner incursions, access path maintenance, etc.

#### Operating Philosophy and Organization

Rivendell residents are encouraged to participate with the P&P Committee at whatever level fits their interests and schedule. Residents can also support P&P efforts without becoming “committee members.” The P&P Committee is organized into several teams that perform separate functions.

- **The Planning Team** - This team considers all matters affecting or potentially affecting Rivendell ponds and preserve areas, weighs alternatives, and considers future actions. Recommended policies and actions are made to the Board of Directors via the committee’s board liaison. This team also oversees the work of contractors who provide management services for Rivendell ponds and preserves (in conjunction with Maintenance Committee). Oversight will assure that our management of ponds and preserves, also our Surface Water Management System, conforms to permit conditions as specified by Sarasota County and SWFWMD. Any proposed changes to the scopes of work of the contractors requires the approval of the Rivendell Board.
- **The Outreach Team** – Following a planned multi-media community outreach effort, (website, newsletters, posters/flyers, etc.) this team educates and informs community residents on issues and actions regarding pond and preserves management. This team also works to solicit community support and actively network with other communities and external resources to share experiences.
- **Rivendell Nature Watchers** – This team includes Committee members and other residents who help observe and survey wildlife populations within Rivendell. In addition, this team organizes community activities related to Rivendell wildlife, providing opportunities to emphasize the link between wildlife and healthy ponds and preserves.
- **P&P Inspections** – During regularly scheduled inspections, P&P or a designee will review condition of ponds and preserves, LMZs, plantings, incursions, etc. and alert the RCA to any issues and actions needed. Inspections by P&P are typically 1-2 times per year.



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### 2A. PONDS - Regulatory Responsibilities, Covenants, Standing Rules

#### Regulatory Responsibilities

Refer to: <https://www.rivendellcommunity.com/documents>

All Common Areas are subject to the written Rivendell Community Association (RCA) Articles of Incorporation, the Declaration of Protective Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions, and all Amendments, Rules & Guidelines made by RCA.

All Common Areas are owned, controlled and managed by RCA. RCA has the obligation to follow the laws, rules and recommendations set by the State, Florida SWFWMD (subject to our land permit) and Sarasota County. RCA has the right to set Rules & Guidelines for the management, use, trespassing, plantings, improvements and encroachment on these Common Areas.

Land between the ponds and preserves and homeowner's property line is Common Property and subject to RCA Restrictions and Rules.

#### SWFWMD Permit (Southwest Florida Water Management District)

RCA has been issued Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) #44 10445 by Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) to manage our lakes, ponds and wetlands. A condition of this permit requires that the RCA periodically (currently every 5 years) submit an inspection report to the District. This inspection report shall be written and certified by a Professional Engineer, registered in the state of Florida. This report provides assurance to the District that the Stormwater Management Systems (SWMS) is properly operated and maintained.

#### County, State Rules for Ponds

Sarasota County Ordinance #2007-062 outlines goals for better water quality and sets rules for fertilizer application and irrigation guidelines that should be followed by RCA, all homeowners, and lawn contractors. The rules specify the fertilizer content, application rates, and irrigation recommendations:

- A restricted season between June 1 – September 30<sup>th</sup> - no nitrogen or phosphorous containing fertilizers.
- A 10-foot Fertilizer-Free zone next to all bodies of water (ponds and preserve wetlands)
- Recommended low-maintenance zone (no-mow) around pond shorelines
- Maintain littoral shelves (per Sarasota County rules for pond management)
- Irrigate only on assigned day, reduce water usage, and ensure sprinklers and rain gauge are working properly.

#### Covenants

Rivendell land use restrictions are found in the Covenants under Articles 4.01 (k) and 4.01 (l). See [www.rivendellcommunity.com/documents](http://www.rivendellcommunity.com/documents).



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### 2A. PONDS - Standing Rules

Document dated: May 20, 2020 - <https://www.rivendellcommunity.com/documents>

Two Standing Rules have been established regarding our Ponds & Preserves.

#### 1. Low Mow Zones (LMZs) on All Pond Shorelines, including at Homes Bordering Ponds

(Page 12 - Rivendell Standing Rules Revision April 2024 and amended Article 4.02 (I) certified March 2023)

**Note:** the 2020 opinion on file by the RCA attorney specifies that the Association has the obligation and authority to maintain the stormwater detention ponds, which includes the pond slopes and the area surrounding the pond, to the extent it feels necessary to comply with the surface water management system. The owners are obligated to mow down to the low maintenance zones, and do not have the authority to alter or damage the areas designated by the association as low maintenance zones required to reduce and prevent erosion.

- The shorelines of all Rivendell stormwater ponds are community property and are being subjected to erosion, which is made much worse when turf grass is mowed to the edge of the pond. This erosion causes loss of community property and reduces the effectiveness of our stormwater management system.
- To control this erosion, mandatory Low Maintenance Zones (LMZs), consisting of a band of turf grass bordering each pond, a minimum of **three feet wide** have been installed and maintained on Rivendell mowed pond shorelines. This includes community-mowed shorelines as well as those at homes bordering ponds. (Mowing to the pond edge has ceased.)
- Maintenance of all LMZs shall be performed by the RCA Landscape Contractor in accordance with a detailed Scope-of-Work. That Scope of Work specifies that the LMZs shall be kept trimmed and maintained to a height not less than eight inches nor more than twelve inches and rounded, to achieve a goal of a neat, uniform and manicured appearance.
- Homeowners or other property occupants shall not alter LMZs at shorelines bordering their property.

#### 2. Public Access to Rivendell Ponds

(Page 15 - Rivendell Standing Rules)

- Access to common areas adjacent to ponds is limited to Rivendell residents, lessees, and their guests only, for areas reachable from the street. Access to common areas located behind private homes, unless for the purpose of conducting HOA business, is allowed only with the homeowner's permission.
- No person shall swim in, operate watercraft on, or use any portion of the Surface Water Management System unless approved by the Board of Directors.
- Only owners and their guests may fish in such areas of the Surface Water Management System as may be determined for such purposes by the Ponds and Preserves Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.



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### **2B. PRESERVES - Regulatory Responsibilities, Covenants, Standing Rules**

The Rivendell Community Association is responsible for regularly-scheduled maintenance of designated preserve and conserved-upland areas. This maintenance must meet certain specific County preserve and conserved-upland management requirements (specified in our Management Plan (1998 & 2000) appended to **Sarasota County Ordinance 92-021**).

[Refer to RCA Operations (secured section of community website) under PONDS & PRESERVES – Sarasota County Wildfire Mitigation – document called “**ALipstein – Rivendell Ordinance 92-01**”].

**The Management Plan** recommends best practices be followed that were in place by the original developers. RCA has continued these recommendations.

Rivendell land use restrictions are found in the Covenants under Articles 4.01 (k) and 4.01 (l). See [www.rivendellcommunity.com/documents](http://www.rivendellcommunity.com/documents).

#### **The Rivendell HOA Maintains the Preserve Areas under the Terms of the Management Plan**

- The conditions of the Plan specify, in effect, that homeowners or their renters are not allowed to plant, disturb, or remove anything from the Preserve areas.
- Homeowners/residents must not cut or remove dead vegetation, deposit yard waste, nor allow grass or invasive vegetation to move into the Preserve.
- No building or storing of anything is allowed in the Preserve areas.

Violation of the agreement with the County in the past has resulted in the cost of remediation and future incursions could result in heavy fines.

- Additionally, any unauthorized changes to community-owned common ground (some of which is maintained in a natural state) are prohibited by our Covenants.

**Incursions - Any activity beyond a homeowner's property line is considered an incursion and is subject to enforcement.** As part of their Preserve management contract, the preserve contractor (Beautiful Ponds/2024) inspects the land behind properties bordering preserves. Homeowners will be advised of any problems and asked to stop or remediate any unauthorized activity immediately. Identified problems will be monitored on a continuing basis to ensure compliance with the community documents and with the County restrictions.

#### **Gopher Tortoise Survey & Bald Eagle Nest Check**

A gopher tortoise surveys and bald eagle nest checks shall be conducted prior to any mechanical equipment use in the preserves. The surveys shall be conducted by a trained, certified consultant. Surveys should precede any mechanical equipment use by two weeks.

#### **Ecological Mowing**

The mowing shall meet County ecological & environmental requirements (per our Management Plan) using specialized equipment. It will also benefit our community by reducing the wildfire risk in the subject areas. The areas to be managed comprise the upland of Oscar Scherer State Park Buffer on the East and South borders of our property and between Placid and Eagle Lakes that are inaccessible by municipal firefighting equipment.

Ecological mowing should be maintained as needed (recommended every 4-5 years) with proper Gopher Tortoise Survey & Bald Eagle nest check. *The ecological mowing is required to be maintained every four years “in perpetuity” by our agreement with the County. The mowing needs to be conducted in accordance with a plan that would be approved by the County. Further, it must be overseen by a County-approved Environmental consultant.*



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### **Signage**

Preserve perimeter signs are required by one (Rivendell Sec. 1 & 2) of two Management Plans. Signs will be placed as needed to manage incursion issues with homeowners. This will benefit our community by clearly delineating the preserve boundaries. This will ease the job of future inspection and enforcement of incursions.

### **Wildfire Mitigation - Florida Forest Service & Maintenance Mowing**

The Florida Forest Service established mowed fire breaks in 2021 (free of charge) in accordance with the 2020 Florida Fire Mitigation Plan. The RCA is responsible for maintenance mowing as needed (recommended every few years) to reduce wildfire hazard. (TBD pending written agreement.)



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### 3. POND - MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

#### Shoreline Erosion Control

##### 3A. Low-Maintenance Zones (LMZs) - Shorelines Bordering Mowed Areas

3-foot wide LMZs are mandatory on all ponds and must be maintained in a neat, uniform manner for aesthetic appeal and improved water quality. (Mowing to the pond edge is prohibited)

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Truscapes Llomell Llorca 941 567 6116</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	<p>The <b>width</b> of the LMZs is established and maintained jointly by a) homeowners living adjacent to ponds and b) our community landscape contractor for mowed shorelines with no adjacent homes, with the exception of pond banks that border certain specific preserves. The tops of these banks have mowed preserve perimeter paths, but the banks close to the water shall be allowed to grow naturally with no trimming.</p> <p>The <b>height</b> of the LMZs is maintained by the community landscape contractor in accordance with a detailed Scope of Work. That Scope of Work specifies, among other things, that the LMZs shall be kept trimmed to a height not less than 8 nor more than 12 inches, and shall be maintained to achieve a goal of a neat, uniform and manicured appearance.</p> <p>The contract also specifies that the LMZ edge facing away from the pond shall be rounded. Care shall be taken to avoid damage to shoreline aquatic plants and to avoid discharging trimmings into ponds.</p> <p>Contractor will also maintain a mowed path (for access by P&amp;P or approved Contractors) and inspection of stormwater control structures, using a “gator” or similar vehicle at the top of the pond berms adjacent to identified preserves or uplands, and at two specific locations (short access paths for SW end of #16 Scherer Lake &amp; SE of Pond #9)</p>
<b>Frequency</b>	<p>Contractor will trim LMZs 19 times annually (in accordance with scheduled contract):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every two weeks in “summer”</li> <li>• Every four weeks in “winter”</li> </ul>
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	<p><u>Quarterly walk-through</u>: Contractor shall perform a comprehensive walk through of property. Plus 1-2 times annually by P&amp;P to review performance &amp; discuss improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are LMZs being maintained as per agreement?</li> <li>- Is the width and trimming neat and uniform?</li> </ul>
<b>Comments</b>	<p><u>Note</u>: 179 Rivendell homes border ponds. Homeowner is responsible for maintenance of community-owned area between property line and LMZ.</p> <p>The community standard is a mandatory LMZ (low-maintenance, no-mow zone), 3-foot wide, trimmed to 8-12” around all mowed pond shorelines, along with shoreline aquatic plants. (Roughly half of the 38,000+ foot total shoreline is natural.)</p>
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	<p>1-2 times annually, P&amp;P will accompany vendor on an annual inspection and identify areas of concern. Are LMZs being maintained at 3 feet? Any LMZs/plants removed? Are Littoral Zones plantings dense enough? Etc. Report issues to RCA or vendor for possible remediation or fines.</p>



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### 3. POND - MANAGEMENT ACTIONS (cont.)

#### 3B. Shoreline Aquatic Plants

Together - LMZs and shoreline aquatic plants are an effective strategy for controlling erosion, filtering out pollutants, and providing habitat for fish, birds and other wildlife.

To be effective for erosion control, plants installed on shorelines previously mowed should ultimately be in a continuous band 3 foot wide and of sufficient density to mitigate wind-driven waves.

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Beautiful Ponds Nathan Hoffman 630 391-3692</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	Install native shoreline aquatic plants – <b>Pickerelweed, Duck Potato, &amp; Spike Rush</b> – as per multi-year approved schedule. Plant clusters to spread along the shorelines and fill in to reach optimal density.
<b>Frequency</b>	Per approved multi-year schedule – follow plan for timing & locations of plantings
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	Inspect prior to warranty expiration to gauge plant growth success and any replacements needed.
<b>Comments</b>	Assess algae issues that might affect plants success.
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	Once a year, P&P will accompany vendor on plant warranty inspections walk-around to identify areas of concern (dead plants, weeds, improper maintenance, etc.). Also check Littoral Zones. Take action as needed.

#### 3C. Shorelines Bordering Preserves

- With Mowed Preserves Perimeter Paths (Truscapes)
- With Rough-cut Preserve Perimeter Paths (Beautiful Ponds)

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Truscapes Llomell Llorca 941-567-6116</b>	<b>Beautiful Ponds Nathan Hoffman 630-391-3692</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	Maintain access to <b>mowed</b> preserves perimeter paths, mowing and removing debris as needed.	Maintain access to <b>rough-cut</b> preserves perimeter paths, mowing and removing debris as needed.
<b>Frequency</b>	Semi-annual	Semi-annual
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	Contact contractor to address any issues noticed	Contact contractor to address any issues noticed
<b>Comments</b>	<i>Overseen by Maintenance Committee</i>	<i>Overseen by P&amp;P Committee</i>



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<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	Maintenance Com will accompany vendor on inspections and identify areas of concern. Take action as needed.	Once a year, P&P will accompany vendor on inspections and identify areas of concern. Take action as needed.
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### 3. POND - MANAGEMENT ACTIONS (cont.)

#### **POND - Invasive Plant Species Management**

Invasive plants species are often species that are not indigenous (does not naturally grow in the ecosystem) or an indigenous species that dominates the ecosystem - choking out other species. Invasive species are often a threat to the habitat and need to be monitored and controlled on a regular basis.

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Beautiful Ponds Nathan Hoffman 630 391-3692</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	Inspect ponds and shoreline banks for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invasive plants &amp; vegetation (remove)</li> <li>• Die-off of any plants</li> <li>• Disease or pests on plants</li> </ul>
<b>Frequency</b>	Twice a month
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	Advise RCA to address any concerns noted.
<b>Comments</b>	Invasive species might include: alligator weed, cattails, torpedo weed, aquarium watermoss, watermilfoil, hydrilla, water spinach, water hyacinth, water lettuce, West Indian marsh grass
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	Once a year, P&P will accompany vendor on inspections and identify areas of concerns. Take action as needed.

#### **POND - Algae and Nutrient Control, Water Quality of Final Discharge**

Algae control in ponds is a very important part of maintaining a healthy pond. In very high densities, algae blooms may discolor the water and out-compete, poison, or asphyxiate other life forms. Some algae are toxic to humans and dogs. Excessive algae growth can indicate problems with water quality. Regular inspection and possible treatment are required.

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Beautiful Ponds Nathan Hoffman 630-391-3692</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	Inspect ponds for algae blooms and plant health. Perform water quality & nutrient tests as needed.
<b>Frequency</b>	Twice a month
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat with chemicals (as non-toxic as possible) to address algae bloom and maintain pond health</li> <li>• Spray as needed for pest infestation or plant disease</li> <li>• Replant any dead plants (per warranty agreement)</li> <li>• Advise P&amp;P of any irregularity or concern</li> </ul>



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<b>Comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduce use of toxic chemicals as much as possible.</li><li>• RCA to continue to encourage all residents to follow responsible irrigation and fertilizer practices to reduce nutrient runoff and pollutants into ponds.</li></ul>
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	Once a year, P&P will accompany vendor on inspections and identify areas of concerns. Take action as needed.



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### 3. POND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS (cont.)

#### POND - Inspection & Maintenance of Ponds Surface Water Management Systems Control Structures

For Ponds: a condition of the Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) #44-10445 by Southwest Florida Water Management District issued to RCA is to inspect our Surface Water Management Systems (SWMS) and report periodically (currently every 5 years) to the District to assure the system is properly operated and maintained.

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>TBD (Rick Richards/2024) NOT CONTRACTED</b>  <b>Beautiful Ponds</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspect Bubblers</li> <li>• Inspect all water control structures, weirs, grates</li> <li>• Remove any debris from structures</li> <li>• Keep SWMS access paths clear and working properly</li> </ul>
<b>Frequency</b>	Annual or after a named storm Formal engineering inspection by County every 5 years
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure paths are free of debris and easily accessible</li> <li>• Ensure water control structures are free of debris (natural or man-made), remove leaves, fallen trees, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Comments</b>	Last formal inspection: 2024 Next formal inspection due: 2029
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	Once a year, P&P will accompany vendor on to identify areas of concern. Take action as needed.

#### PONDS - Inspection of Pond Shorelines (LMZs & Plants)

LMZs and aquatic plants are living vegetation and need to be monitored regularly as they grow and spread. Their appearance is important to the aesthetics of Rivendell. Each pond shoreline should be reviewed to ensure plants and grasses are healthy, LMZs are 3-foot wide and trimmed 8-12" per our contract agreement, and that no further erosion has occurred.

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Beautiful Ponds</b> <b>Nathan Hoffman</b> <b>630-391-3692</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	Review shorelines to ensure grasses and plants are healthy and spreading as expected. Check for any benching or erosion. Report on findings.
<b>Frequency</b>	Monthly (check contract)
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	Contact landscape contractor if maintenance is being neglected. If plants are under warranty and not doing well, contact vendor for replacement.
<b>Comments</b>	Use native, deep root species designed for shoreline habitat – Duck Potato, Pickerelweed, and Gulf Coast Spikerush. They should grow along the shore and cluster in density, but not grow into the pond center.
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	1-2 times per year, P&P will accompany vendor on inspections to identify areas of concerns. Take action as needed.



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### 4. PRESERVE - MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

#### PRESERVE - Invasive Plant Species Management

Invasive plants species are often species that are not indigenous (does not naturally grow in the ecosystem) or an indigenous species that dominates the ecosystem - choking out other species. Invasive species are often a threat to the habitat and need to be monitored and controlled on a regular basis.

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Beautiful Ponds Nathan Hoffman 630-391-3692</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	Inspect preserve and designated uplands & wetlands and buffer areas for invasive plant species. Spray or remove as needed.
<b>Frequency</b>	Monthly
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	Invasive species are a threat to the preserves and need to be controlled on a regular basis.
<b>Comments</b>	Among the most common invasive species are: Brazilian pepper, melaleuca, Australian pines, cattails, air potato and grape vine. Creative Wetlands does yearly inspection for County.
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	1-2 times per year, P&P will accompany vendor on semi-annual inspections and CW annual to identify areas of concern. Take action as needed.

#### PRESERVE - Inspection and Remediation of Residents' Incursions

All Preserves and buffers surrounding preserve areas are to be left alone. Any area beyond the homeowner property line should not be touched, planted, built on, vegetation removed, yard waste or trashed dumped, etc. Regular inspection is conducted and any incursions are identified for RCA action.

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Beautiful Ponds Nathan Hoffman 630-391-3692</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	Inspect areas for any incursions (per Covenants) & report them to RCA. Keep preserves from taking over common land
<b>Frequency</b>	Monthly (add to contract)
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	RCA to follow up with homeowner for corrective action and/or appropriate fine. Annual formal inspection by County contractor
<b>Comments</b>	Incursions to be remediated by Beautiful Ponds. Homeowners will be notified of incursion and action to be taken. Possible fees for remediation work could be charged to homeowner.
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	Once a year, P&P will accompany vendor on inspections and identify areas of incursion. Report to RCA for violation action, notice of fines, etc.



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### 4. PRESERVE - MANAGEMENT ACTIONS (cont.)

#### PRESERVE - Inspection & Maintenance of Preserves SWMS Control Structures

For Preserves: a condition of the Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) #44-10445 by Southwest Florida Water Management District issued to RCA is to inspect our Surface Water Management Systems (SWMS) and report periodically (currently every 5 years) to the District to assure the system is properly operated and maintained.

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Rick Richards Co (not part of contract, need RFQ) Rick Richards 941-915-1815</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspect Bubblers (22)</li> <li>• Inspect all water control structures, weirs, grates</li> <li>• Remove any debris from structures</li> <li>• Keep assigned SWMS access paths clear</li> </ul>
<b>Frequency</b>	Semi-annual or following named storm (add to contract) Formal SWFWMD inspection every 5 years
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure paths are free of debris, vegetation and easily accessible</li> <li>• Ensure water control structures are free of debris (natural or man-made), remove leaves, fallen trees, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Comments</b>	Last formal inspection: 2024 Next formal inspection due: 2029 Note: West Bay will maintain their assigned SWMS access pathways.
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	Once a year, P&P will accompany vendor on inspections and identify areas of concern. Take action as needed.

#### PRESERVE - Ecological Mowing (per Management Plan)

In accordance with the Management Plan approved by the County, RCA must conduct regular maintenance mowing using approved mechanical equipment. Also benefits enhanced wildlife habitats.

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Rick Richards Co Rich Richards 941-915-1815</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	RFP to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce understory by chopping the vegetation.</li> <li>- Mulching the understory</li> </ul>
<b>Frequency</b>	TBD (per contract) Note: all mowing to be preceded by a Gopher Tortoise Survey and a Bald Eagle nest inspection
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	Address or report any issues



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<b>Comments</b>	The areas to be managed comprise the upland of State Park Buffer on the East and South borders of our property and are inaccessible by municipal firefighting equipment.
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	As needed, P&P will accompany vendor on inspections and identify areas of concern. Take action as needed.



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### 4. PRESERVE - MANAGEMENT ACTIONS (cont.)

#### **PRESERVE - Signs (per Management Plan)**

To clearly delineate homeowner property lines and community buffer or preserves areas, the County has requested that signage be placed along the border identifying homeowner vs community property.

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Pond and Preserve Committee</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	Ensure sign requirement by County is being followed. Signs will be placed as needed to manage incursion issues with homeowners.
<b>Frequency</b>	Annual
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	Install missing signs and/or replace signs that are damaged.
<b>Comments</b>	Signs will benefit our community by clearly delineating the preserve boundaries and ease the job of future inspection and enforcement of incursions.
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	Once a year, P&P will accompany vendor on inspections and identify areas for signage. Take action as needed.

#### **PRESERVE - Maintenance of Preserve Perimeter Paths**

- Access Path to SWMS Control Structures
- Access Paths to Ponds & Preserves for Routine Maintenance

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	<b>Beautiful Ponds Nathan Hoffman 630-391-3692</b>	<b>Rick Richards</b>
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	Inspect all Bubblers, and paths to SWMS control structures. Remove any debris, vegetation or waste that inhibits proper function.	
<b>Frequency</b>	Annual	
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	Routine maintenance of all paths to ponds & preserves – inspect and remove any debris, fallen trees, branches, vegetation or waste to clear the paths for easy access.	
<b>Comments</b>	Ensure path can be accessed as needed by designated personnel and their required equipment.	
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	Once a year, P&P will accompany vendor on annual inspections and identify areas of concerns. Take action as needed.	



**Operations Handbook: Rivendell Ponds & Preserves Committee**



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### **4. PRESERVE - MANAGEMENT ACTIONS (cont.)**

Refer to the 2020 Wildfire Mitigation Plan prepared by the Florida Forest Service.

#### **PRESERVE - Maintenance of Fire Breaks**

The Florida Forest Service conducted initial mowed fire breaks in 2021. The RCA is responsible for maintenance mowing as needed per agreement with FL Fire Service.

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	Rick Richards Co Rick Richards 941915-1915
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance mowing - using mechanical equipment to reduce vegetation and wildfire risk</li> <li>• Prior to mowing, conduct Gopher Tortoise Study &amp; inspect for Bald Eagle nesting sites</li> </ul>
<b>Frequency</b>	As needed
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	Bald Eagle and gopher tortoise surveys must be completed prior to any work
<b>Comments</b>	Follow specifics from Fire-mitigation Plan.
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	As needed, P&P will accompany vendor on inspections and identify areas of concern. Take action as needed.

#### **PRESERVE - Maintenance of Preserve Trees Bordering Homes**

<b>Contractor/ Contact Person</b>	To be determined
<b>Maintenance Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspect tree bordering homes on preserve and community buffer areas as identified in 2020 Fire Mitigation Plan by FL Fire Service.</li> <li>• Maintain and trim trees as needed.</li> <li>• Remove any diseased, dead trees or branches that could fuel fire. Remove invasive trees and vegetation as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Frequency</b>	TBD
<b>Follow-Up Steps</b>	Regularly inspect areas and address as needed.
<b>Comments</b>	Homeowners may also notify RCA of potential maintenance issues.
<b>P&amp;P Action</b>	Maintenance Committee to oversee.