



Let's Work Together! Caring For Our Ponds & Preserves

By the Rivendell Ponds and Preserves Committee

This article is intended primarily to inform Rivendell Residents who are not up-to-date with previous articles on this topic in the *Woodlands Word*, new Homeowners, and Renters. It summarizes the activities of the Rivendell Ponds and Preserves Committee (P&P) and identifies steps toward ponds management that are being taken by the HOA, as well as those being asked of Residents and Renters.

After five months of background investigation, the P&P was formed in May, 2018. The mission of the Committee is, in part, to provide evidence-based recommendations to the Rivendell Board of Directors on management of our ponds and preserves.

Substantial erosion has been observed on Rivendell ponds. Control of that erosion by use of “natural shorelines” has been shown to be the most cost-effective approach. In short, this involves keeping heavy vehicles away from the slopes of the ponds, installing and maintaining “Low-Maintenance Zones,” (LMZ) and installing aquatic plants along the shorelines. Additionally, efforts are underway to control algae in our ponds by using low-toxicity approaches. These changes are also expected to improve the suitability of our ponds for wildlife habitat, including birds, fish, turtles and other favorites.

The program status as of early 2019 is:

- Erosion-control pilot projects have been started at Egret Pond and at Bobcat Pond.
- Additional projects and steps by the HOA are planned for the future.
- Voluntary Low-Maintenance Zones are recommended for homes adjacent to ponds.
- All Homeowners and Renters are being asked to follow Sarasota County requirements and recommendations for management of fertilizer and irrigation.

Additional details on this program, including its history of development, are available on the community website, www.rivendellcommunity.com/ponds. If you are a Rivendell Resident or Renter, please check out the Website, particularly the “Highlights.”

Note that the steps to maintain a Low-Maintenance Zone and steps to manage your fertilizer application and irrigation are on single pages that can be downloaded and printed. If you have contracted lawn services, we recommend that the page on Maintaining a Rivendell Low-Maintenance Zone be provided to your contractor.

This program's success requires the support of our entire community - so this is a call for us to all work together toward a common goal that benefits Rivendell. If each of us does a little something toward sensible management of our ponds, we will all be rewarded with lower-cost pond operations and a greater abundance of wildlife.

These actions will also help protect our property values, while keeping Rivendell in the forefront as a community that protects its ponds and preserves.

When fully developed, this LMZ on Egret Pond will be used as the standard for the community.

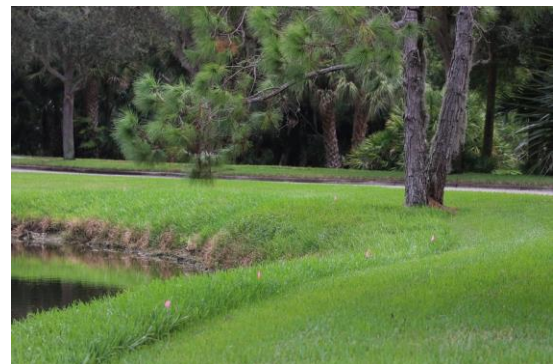


Photo by Nancy Dobias. (Nov. 2018)