



Little Steps Now Prevent Expensive Repairs Later *Let's Keep Ponds Healthy and Property Values Strong.*

By the Ponds and Preserves Committee [Woodlands Word – Dec. 2019]

11.11.19



When Benjamin Franklin proclaimed that, “**An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,**” he probably wasn’t referring to our Rivendell ponds. However, we can still learn a valuable lesson here: it is better to try to avoid problems in the first place, rather than paying much more to fix them once they arise.

As detailed in many *Woodlands Word* articles, Rivendell's previous mow-to-the-edge policy is well documented as a formula for erosion. Erosion is a slow, but continuous process that eats away at our shorelines. After almost 20 years, shoreline loss due to pond erosion has been measured at 2-4 feet – with an accelerated pace over the past eight years. If nothing changes, our ponds could see another loss of 3-6 feet of shoreline loss in the next 8 years. Erosion has a significant effect not only on the abundance of wildlife attracted to our ponds, but also on our community's cost of operation and our property values.

Estimates of \$200/foot for engineered shoreline remediation are common. With over seven miles of shorelines, roughly half of which has previously been mowed to the edge of the pond – do the math! This option comes at a tremendous cost, possibly exceeding millions of dollars that will be shouldered by everyone in the community.

Our Erosion Problem is Real

Yes, we have a known crisis with pond erosion. We are also aware that several nearby communities are struggling with similar issues. And we can learn from their experiences. Venice G&CC underwent expensive shoreline remediation efforts to correct problems caused by previous geo-tube stabilization efforts (financed through HOA assessments). [Waterford HOA](#) (Venice) is undergoing a \$1.75 million engineered pond restoration (multi-year to spread homeowner payments). [Stoneybrook at Venice](#) is considering a large lake bank restoration program. Other communities are involved in expensive remediation as well. The time for Rivendell to act is now - before costly solutions are the only option.

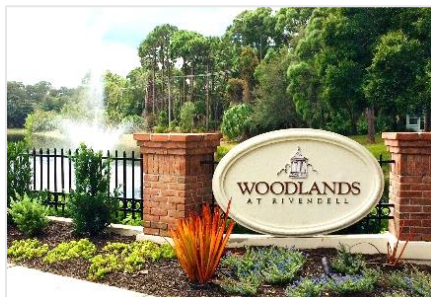
The Good News

Our Board, the P&P and many homeowners have already committed to working together to implement key steps to reduce erosion and stabilize shoreline banks. We thank the many community residents who have joined the effort to keep our ponds healthy and attractive to wildlife by doing these small, yet very important steps:

- Install voluntary Low-Maintenance Zones (LMZs) along properties that border ponds.
- Support the planting of aquatic vegetation along ponds and embrace the new trimmed, natural LMZ shoreline appearance.
- Encourage neighbors helping neighbors to install LMZs.
- Follow Sarasota County recommendations for fertilizer-free zones and responsible irrigation.
- Leave wetland preserves untouched (no incursion).
- Photograph and celebrate bird and wildlife abundance at our ponds and preserves.



Going Forward – Continued Hard Work Yields Optimism



We are being praised for our community efforts - by Sarasota County's Stormwater team, SWFWMD, Palmer Ranch Holdings, and many neighboring communities. We share experiences, trials and successes. There's still more to be done. We must continue to reduce erosion using the best practices we know. Working together, we can all do our part and enjoy the benefits from vibrant, beautiful ponds and strong property values. Again, Ben Franklin said it best, “**Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.**”