

Final Performance Letter
Sarasota Neighborhood Grant Project
Woodlands at Rivendell Community, Osprey, FL 34229

Board of County Commissioners
Sarasota, FL

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have planted a low-maintenance zone of flowers, shrubs, groundcovers, and native grasses from the shorelines up the slopes of several of our storm-retention ponds. Our goal was to sustain a buffer zone to protect the ponds from grass clippings, fertilizer, herbicides and insecticides running off into the water. We were successful in doing that, while adding beauty to the ponds with the flowering plants. Our residents volunteered over 560 hours of their time planting, mulching, watering and nurturing these plants. It was a good example of neighbors helping neighbors to achieve our goals, to make Rivendell a better place to live.

The water quality of the affected ponds should benefit from these no-mow zones. We'd like to provide a similar treatment to our remaining ponds. Our hope is that we can keep many pollutants out of the water system by affecting the watershed all the way to the bay.

Thank you for allowing us to be part of the Neighborhood Grant program. You are helping us provide a healthier environment for our residents.

Yours truly,
Michael Bergman
Woodlands at Rivendell
Osprey, FL 34229

PRESS RELEASE

September 11, 2008

TO:

FROM:

Michael Bergman
Woodlands of Rivendell Community
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Osprey, FL 34229
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Woodlands at Rivendell Community Completes Sarasota Neighborhood Grant

We're trying to improve the quality of our retention pond water, which runs through a neighboring community, Oscar Scherer State Park, South Creek, and all the way into the bay.

Last year, the Sarasota County Commissioners challenged the neighborhoods that make up our watershed to improve the quality of the runoff water that makes its way into our bays. They proposed a no-mow or low maintenance zone around our ponds to buffer out fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides, and grass clippings. While some communities fought this, the Woodlands at Rivendell embraced this opportunity to beautify our ponds while cleaning up our water effluent. **Mike Bergman**, a Rivendell resident who authored this grant put it this way. "We're trying to be good neighbors by cleaning up the water that runs off through our neighborhood, downstream into a neighboring community, through Oscar Scherer State Park, and into South Creek, where it enters the bay."

Several of Rivendell's ponds were chosen, and planted from the waterline up to the top of the slopes. **Russ Hoffman**, an environmental management professional, designed a planting scheme using colorful plants and shrubs. Hoffman says, " We wanted the ponds to be beautiful, as well as eco-friendly. I selected Florida native plants that thrive well under our distinct weather conditions, and require little maintenance."

The Woodlands at Rivendell received \$10,995 in matching funds from the Sarasota County Neighborhood Grant program to augment our own financing and volunteer labor to pay for this \$22,000 project. We hope to set an example to other communities that we can responsibly protect our watershed while enhancing the natural beauty of our ponds.

PHOTOS ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOUR USE.

(This press release will be sent out to the Woodlands Word, our monthly newsletter, as well as the Osprey Observer and the Sarasota Herald Tribune)