



HOA Surface Water Management (SWM) Committee Information Session on the Homeowner's Role in Preserving Our Ponds, Lakes and Preserves

On February 25th, over 70 residents gathered for the Surface Water Management (SWM) Committee's Information Session on the Homeowner's Role in Preserving Our Ponds, Lakes and Preserves. Neil Price, the HOA Board Liaison and Lakes Subcommittee Chair opened the meeting by sharing the crucial elements for success for this multi-year, multimillion dollar initiative, as identified by the committee, which includes:

- ◆ Continued lake water maintenance by measuring the water quality monthly and report to Pond Watch
- ◆ Ensuring our lakes drain and filter effectively into the Preserve area and from there into Matlacha Pass
- ◆ Ensure our lake shorelines are maintained and effective erosion control is in place.
- ◆ Continue to ensure that our Preserves are relatively free of invasives and with native vegetation protection according to our SWFMD permit
- ◆ Continue to effectively manage surface water drainage via culverts, swales, ditches and ensure other strategies that are employed for effective maintenance
- ◆ Develop and implement an ongoing education program for all homeowners.

The SWM committee has developed an initial master plan for the lakes, which was shared at the September 2019 Workshop, however, Neil and Debbie stated that it may change over time as nature dictates. For those homeowners with a shoreline who want to take action at their own expense (before their lake is scheduled) the committee asks that you first fill out and submit the [Lake Shoreline Review Request Form](#) through the ARB, for contact with the SWM Team for review.

Neil reminded everyone that the lakeshore lines belong to the HOA, and are not the private property of individual homeowners. However the HOA welcomes individual resident engagement from those impacted. He further noted that while many residents like the Rip Rap (wall of white rock) installed on the lakeshore of Prince #5, only 20% or less of our shorelines can include this material, per FL ordinance. Therefore, more natural alternatives must be found to maintain our shorelines.

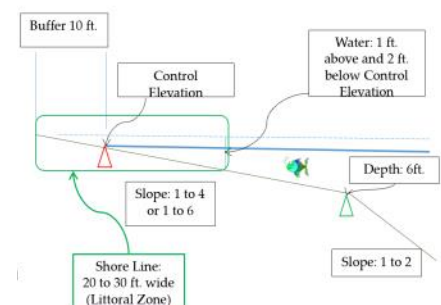


Neil then introduced our guest speaker Dr. Ernesto Lasso de la Vega, a biologist working at the Lee County Hyacinth Control District, to discuss alternatives to minimize aquatic weeds in public waters and share best practices for healthy shorelines. After sharing many visual examples, he explained the components of a healthy shoreline include:

A Buffer Zone – a 10-ft. zone (required in Lee and other counties) Followed by a Control Elevation slope of 1ft. to 4 ft. or 1 ft. to 6 ft. Plants with minimum maintenance (e.g. 1 time/year) are desirable Grass = high erosion potential and nutrients moving into the STP No irrigation No fertilization/minimal herbicide or pesticide.

Shore Line (Littoral Zone) should be 20 to 30 ft. wide (Littoral Zone) With 1 ft. above to 2 ft. below the Control Elevation Plants are needed to prevent erosion. They trap the algae and remove nutrients from the drainage water.

Components of a Shoreline





Surface Water Management Session (cont.)

Dr. Ernesto Lasso de la Vega further said it's important to know your soil and water type when planting littorals in your Transition Zone. Desired plants generally include Pickerel Weed (*Pontederia*), Duck Potat (*Saggitaria*), Bulrush (*Scirpus*), Golden canas (*Canna flaccida*) and Blue Flag (*Iris virginica*). *Bacopa monnieri* (Water Hyssop), may also work well.

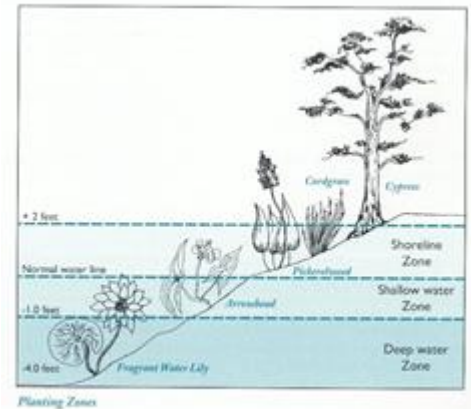
Overall homeowners perception of what's important for our lakes usually includes aesthetics to improve property value, a clean the environment which attracts wildlife and water use for irrigation.

However, the functional aspects of our ponds in Florida are to hold water (retention basin) in the wet season to prevent flooding, provide water in the dry season for irrigation, replenish the aquifer to prevent saltwater intrusion, filter nutrients, pesticides, heavy metals and oils and provide habitat for wild-life.

As evidenced by the work already completed by the 'Swamp-Rats' on lake #24 and the work our SWM Committee has planned for the 23 man made lakes, Cape Royal has the opportunity to achieve the potential our lakes offer, to be both functional and beautiful. Stay tuned for more information and education from our SWM committee.

In 2020, the SWM Committee will focus on the following 2 key initiatives:

1. Complete the grading of the slope on Lake 14 (along Princess Grace Court and Prince #5) and install Dredgesox with littorals. Neil stated that individual discussions will be conducted with each resident impacted before work begins. While Lake 14 is not considered to have the worst erosion, it was selected as a pilot because it has multiple types of erosion, allowing the committee to see what works and what doesn't work.
2. The remaining 2020 budget will be used to purchase and add littorals throughout the lakes to slow erosion where appropriate. Specific locations are to be determined. Impacted residents will be contacted before any work begins.



Healthy Shorelines

Frequently Asked Questions

Who should I contact if I want to see the master plan for my lake?

Contact the SWM Committee Lead, Bill Ready or any committee member.

If I want to plant littorals along my shoreline now, what action can I take?

Please remember that our lake shorelines belong to the HOA, and are not the private property of individual homeowners. That said, first look at the edge to see if you have a shelf under the water. If yes, and a homeowner wants to proceed at their own expense, the first step is to outline their plan on a [Lake Shoreline Review Request Form](#) and submit it through the ARB, for contact with the Surface Water Management Team.

Surface Water Management FAQ (cont.)

Will littorals eliminate the scum in my lake?

No, however, littorals will hide the scum. Dr. Ernesto Lasso de la Vega said scum is good because it pulls the nutrients out. If hidden by the littorals, the aesthetic aspect of the lake is maintained while promoting a healthy lakeshore.

What actions as a homeowner with lakeshore property should I take NOW?

- Be sure your gutter runoff is draining correctly and gutters are rerouted, as needed
- Check your sprinkler system along the back edge of your property by the lakeshore
- Understand the Lee County Fertilizer Ordinance to minimize fertilizer and pesticide runoff into our lakes and talk to your landscaper to be sure they are compliant
- Inspect and maintain septic systems to ensure they are functioning properly
- Clean up any oil or grease on your driveway to reduce runoff into the lakes

What should I know about Fertilizer used in my yard?

In May 2009, a Lee County Ordinance No. 08-08, took effect regarding who can use fertilizer and the content, amount and methods that may be used as necessary to help reduce nutrient pollution flooding into our water bodies. Ask your Landscaper if they are registered with Lee County, and have at least one employee who has completed the certification training program. Also check to see if they display a county decal on all of their vehicles and trailers. Highlights of the new code:

- Fertilizers containing nitrogen and/or phosphorus cannot be used during the rainy season, June 1-Sept. 30
- During the remainder of the year, fertilizer use is limited
- Fertilizer may not be applied within 10 feet of a water body or wetland
- Fertilizer is not allowed on impervious surfaces such as roads, driveways and sidewalks
- Deflector shields are required on spreaders
- Grass clippings & vegetative trimmings may not be swept or blown into ditches, drains, water bodies, roads or sidewalks