



Hillsborough County
Florida

On Our Pond

**A NEWSLETTER FOR CLEANER WATER &
BETTER POND ENVIRONMENTS**



Volume 7, No 1

Adopt-A-Pond is sponsored by Hillsborough County,
the Southwest Florida Water Management District, and
YOU!

Spring
2001

Activities Update

Pond Walks:

- Spring Hammock Dr
- River Close Blvd.
- N Church Ave.
- Elk Spring Dr
- Fox Ridge Dr
- Willowdale Rd
- Creek Wood Dr

Education Meetings:

- Stewart Manor
- Twin Branch Acres
- Brooker Village

Cleanups:

- Brooker Village
- East Village
- Villas at Bloomingdale

Plantings:

- Hounds Run
- Stewart Manor
- Brooker Village

Spring is Here, Things are Growing, Groups are Working!



Our Mistake

In the Winter 2000 Issue of On Our Pond we mistakenly referred to Jack Kennedy's neighbor as "Dave" in the "Swamp Rats" article. His name is actually Darryl Lambeth. Our apologies to a man who deserves credit for his efforts.

Spring is here again, things are starting to grow, and we're hoping to hear from you. At this time of year, many people start looking to their ponds, so this issue is for all of you who would like to get involved with Adopt-A-Pond. This issue features articles about ways you can get active with our program, so don't hesitate. There's even an application inside. So if you are interested in restoring your pond, fill it out and send it in, or call with any questions! Even without a pond there's still a whole lot you can do with our program, so take a look inside!

On Our Pond

Quarterly Newsletter Published By:
**The Hillsborough County Stormwater
Management Environmental Team**

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The Adopt-A-Pond Volunteer Corp: *We're not just for homeowners anymore*

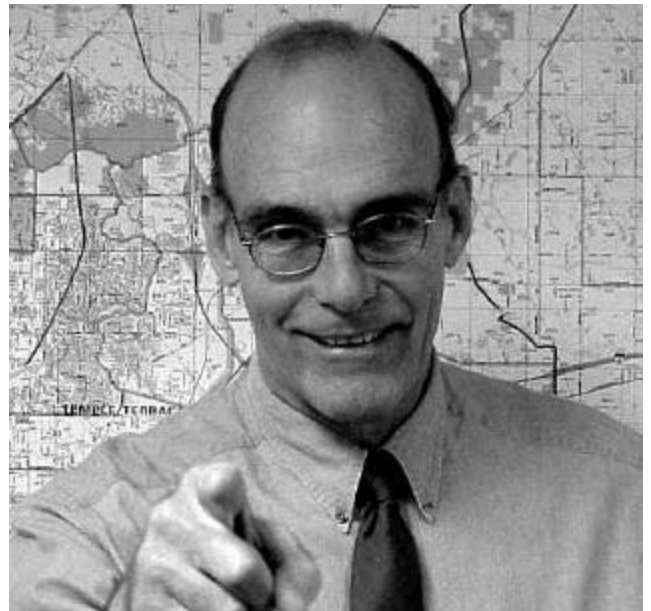
We've mentioned it before, but now it's becoming a reality. The Adopt-A-Pond Volunteers have begun to materialize. So who are they and what do they do? Well these volunteers are simply people who want to work with Adopt-A-Pond, just like our homeowners. The difference is these dedicated people aren't working on their own ponds. They may not even live on a pond! Their job is to help our other groups get their jobs done. They go to meetings with us, help us plant, and work with us at public events. They can even bring new ponds into the program and restore them like a pond group.

So what does it take to become an Adopt-A-Pond Volunteer? Well it's simple! All you have to do is give me a call and sign up. Then we'll keep you informed about training and opportunities to volunteer. We have ponds all over the county, so any area is fine. And there is no age limit either, teenagers are welcome, and children if accompanied by a volunteering parent. There's a whole world of possibilities for this new aspect of Adopt-A-Pond, so sign up today and get involved!

If You're Ready, We're Waiting

Many of you already know the benefits of a healthy pond environment. You've seen how a little understanding and a little work can turn your weedy mess into a thriving and beautiful ecosystem. You're part of an Adopt-A-Pond group. Well, there are many people who receive this newsletter who aren't in the program, and many more who don't even know who we are. So if you get this newsletter every three months and have always wondered what it was all about...if you've been interested but never got around to joining...or if you know someone who could use a little help from Adopt-A-Pond then this is the issue you've been waiting for.

Adopt-A-Pond is a public/ private partnership sponsored by Hillsborough County Stormwater Management and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). That just means that we're government and citizens working together to take care of our stormwater ponds. We can help you get the pond cleaned up, provide you with free aquatic plants and teach you how to manage your pond. And it's all free if you agree to participate and maintain the pond. It's a great way to learn about our environment, as well as beautify your landscape and increase your property value. And it can even be a lot of fun.



All you have to do is meet a few criteria:

- 1. The pond has to be owned by the County or privately owned with drainage easements dedicated to Hillsborough County.**
- 2. No wetlands or conservation areas are allowed.**
- 3. We can't be used to satisfy SWFWMD permit conditions.**
- 4. Your group has to submit an application and demonstrate a commitment to fully participate in the program by working with us and maintaining the pond.**
- 5. Access has to be available for County crews and equipment.**

If this sounds like something you'd like to do fill out the application insert and send it in. If you have any questions just give us a call at **272-5912 x3633**. We'll be happy to discuss it further with you.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY ADOPT-A-POND
APPLICATION/AGREEMENT

*You must complete and return this application/agreement to be considered for the Adopt-A-Pond Program.
Please call Adopt-A-Pond at 272-5912, and verify that we have received it. Thank You!*

APPLICATION

1. Pond Representative name: Last _____ First _____
Street _____ City _____
Zip Code _____ Daytime Phone _____
Pond Group Name _____

1. Why does your Pond Group want to adopt your neighborhood pond?

AGREEMENT

Each Pond Group Member, by his or her signature below, hereby agrees to the following terms and conditions:

1. RESPONSIBILITIES.

POND GROUP MEMBERS SHALL:

1. Choose a Pond Group Representative to help coordinate pond activities.
2. Send notification forms to pond property owner(s) fourteen (14) days prior to each pond workday. A copy of the written notification shall be sent to the County.
3. Attend the Pond Group Educational Meeting.
4. Attend the Pond Group=s neighborhood pond planting.
5. Attend at least four (4) pond maintenance days each year to remove nuisance plants and trash, and submit a Pond Group report through their Pond Group Representative for each Adopt-A-Pond.
6. Practice Stormwater pollution prevention by establishing fertilizer-free and pesticide-free zones around your pond.
7. Mark all storm drains in the neighborhood with the program=s colorful curb marker that says *ADumping Here Pollutes Our Pond.@*
8. Submit, through the Pond Group Representative, a neighborhood mailing list so Pond Group Members may receive the quarterly newsletter *On Our Pond*.
9. Work in a safe and responsible manner during pond work days, only during daylight hours and in good weather, avoiding heavy or hazardous items, and provide one adult supervisor for every five participating youths.
10. Avoid the use of herbicides in the pond unless approved by Adopt-A-Pond staff.
11. Remove undesirable plants from the pond, as identified by Adopt-A-Pond staff, such as water hyacinth and cattails.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SHALL:

1. Provide a free one-time clean-up of the adopted pond, if needed.
2. Provide educational materials, aquatic plants, pond management guidance and plant identification.
3. Provide a permanent Adopt-A-Pond sign at the adopted pond.
4. Provide curb markers.

II TERM

This agreement shall remain in effect for a three (3) year period and shall be automatically extended for successive three-year periods under the same terms and conditions.

III INDEMNIFICATION

Each Pond Group Member covenants and agrees that he or she will indemnify and hold harmless the pond property owner(s), Hillsborough County and any agencies and all their officers, agents and employees from any claim, loss, damage, cost, charge or expense arising out of any act action, neglect or omission by him or her during the performance of this Agreement, whether direct or indirect, and whether to any person or property to which the pond property owner(s), Hillsborough County or said parties may be subject, except that the Pond Group Members shall not be liable under this provision for damages arising out of injury or damage to persons or property directly caused or resulting from the sole negligence of the pond property owner(s), Hillsborough County, and its member agencies, any maintaining agencies, and all their officers, employees and agents. This section does not constitute a waiver of any member agency=s sovereign immunity.

IV TERMINATION

If in the sole judgment of Hillsborough County, it is determined that Pond Group Members are not meeting the terms and conditions of this agreement, upon thirty (30) days written notice, Hillsborough County may terminate this agreement and remove the sign. The Pond Group may terminate this agreement for any reason upon thirty (30) days written notice to the County.

By your signature below, you hereby agree to the terms and conditions set forth in this agreement.

	<u>NAME</u>	<u>SIGNATURE</u>	<u>ADDRESS & PHONE</u>
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____	_____
13.	_____	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____	_____
15.	_____	_____	_____
16.	_____	_____	_____
17.	_____	_____	_____
18.	_____	_____	_____
19.	_____	_____	_____
20.	_____	_____	_____
21.	_____	_____	_____
22.	_____	_____	_____
23.	_____	_____	_____
24.	_____	_____	_____

Attach an additional sheet for additional signatures, if necessary

(To be completed by Hillsborough County Adopt-A-Pond Program)

This application and agreement is approved denied. Date: _____

By: _____
Hillsborough County Public Works Director

Pond Group # _____ Service Unit _____ STR _____

One Man's Weed...

We LOVE innovation

The Windemere Community pond group on Gnarled Oak Ave in Lutz has had its share of troubles. Broken outfalls drained the pond.

Ducks and turtles ate their plants (the freeze took care of the rest). And steep banks made for difficult planting. But they have stuck with us through all of these problems, and when I

came out to their pond this spring I was stunned. Not only had quite a bit of the vegetation recovered, but this group had found a beautiful and easy solution to their steep

pond banks. Blowing in the wind before me was a field of blue, red and yellow all around the pond! I took a closer look and smiled as I

realized this group hadn't planted even one of these flowers. Every bit of the vegetation on these banks were naturally occurring "weeds" that most people kill in their yard. This winter, while the group was trying to decide where to plant with the fluctuating water level, they decided to just leave some of the attractive blue flowers. I

told them they weren't invasive, so they let it go. With a little selective weeding they soon had an amazing ring of blue toadflax, blended with swaths of Rumex, and wood sorrel. This pond is a beautiful example of how working with nature can be easy, and effective. The innovative management by the Windemere Community not only solved their steep bank problem, but gave them a unique and beautiful pondscape. Great job guys! I look forward to seeing what else you've got in store.



Water Quality Testing!

The time is here to get started! There's a limited number of spaces in this first session though. So if you want to get in on the program now call and reserve your kits! There will be a training session for those who volunteer on Saturday June 23 from 10am-12:30pm at HCC Plant City Campus Institute of Florida Studies. If you can't make that day there will be others on Aug 18 and Dec 8. All you have to do is send in monthly reports and attend the training to receive the kits. **Call to register now! Kits will be reserved on a first come first served basis. 272-5912 ext.3633.**

Management Plans—they're not just for scientists.



Management plans are a crucial part of any attempt to restore or protect natural resources. Scientists who work in these fields are very familiar with them, but even though the name sounds imposing, there's really nothing complicated about them. Just like you wouldn't build a house without a blueprint, managing a natural resource, like our ponds, requires a plan. Now granted, people care for their ponds without plans every day, and some do quite well. But the truth is, they actually have a plan in their heads, even if it isn't written down. They know what they want to see, they know what stands in the way of that goal, and they know what needs to be done to get there. That's all a management plan is! The problem is that everyone envisions things differently and if that one person ever leaves or quits, the others have no idea what has been done or what to do next. That's why scientists as well as pond groups need to write down their plans for management. Adopt-A-Pond makes it very easy with our management plan workbook, which is available to anyone who wants to use it, even if you aren't part of an Adopt-A-Pond group. But it doesn't have to stop there. Ponds, stormdrains, yards, conservation

areas, and common areas can all be included as part of a community wide

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Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners
An Affirmative Action-Equal Opportunity Employer

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Management Plans *(continued from page 5)*

environmental management system. A comprehensive plan not only benefits the environment, but ensures that your community fees get managed efficiently, and serves as a standard for future activities. A realistic plan that considers as many factors as possible can be a powerful tool in both your pond management efforts, as well as your community design. For help with your management plan give us a call at **272-5912 x3633**.

Visit these Websites!

- Center for Aquatic & Invasive Plants: <http://aquat1.ifas.ufl.edu/>
- Cooperative Extension Service: <http://hillsborough.extension.ufl.edu/>
- Hillsborough County Lake Atlas: <http://www.lakeatlas.usf.edu>
- Southwest Florida Water Management District: <http://www.watermatters.org>
- A Conservation Library by SWFWMD: <http://www.conservationinfo.org>
- Stormwater Management Website:
<http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/publicworks/engineering/stormwtr.html>

Pond Sampling Results

Once more the readings are pretty steady. With so little rain we won't be seeing many changes. We should not only use the water testing as a means of seeing what is there, but use it to gauge our restoration efforts. Do the readings drop as you add plants and cut inputs of fertilizer? How do the readings match what you see visually? Have you noticed improvements in water quality since your pond has aged in the program? If not, are you sure your testing method is accurate? These questions will be addressed in our new water quality program.

NAME	pH	Nitrate mg/L	Ammonia mg/L	Phosphate mg/L	Turbidity NTU	DO mg/L
Dowdell Middle School	6.5	1.0	0	0	20	12
Gnarled Oak, Windemere	8.5	0.2	--	0	10	8
Mirror Lake, Laurel Woods	7.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	32	8
WBA	6.5	0	0.2	0.0	10	5