

**MAINTENANCE STANDARDS  
FOR CONSERVATION, PRESERVATION, SAVE and NATURALIZED AREAS  
FOR THE COMMON AREAS AND LOTS  
*South Riding - Living in Harmony with Nature***

**I. SCOPE** - These Standards address the maintenance and protection of preservation and conservation areas, wetlands and naturalized areas of South Riding, whether located on lots or on common areas. In either instance, the preserved and naturalized areas are important resources to South Riding and do much to enhance the quality of life here.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

*Hedgerows* - Rows of cedars or other trees, either left by nature or installed, which are located on lots, common areas, between sections of homes or along borders of the community or at other locations.

*Naturalized Area - Common Area* - An area where clearing or downing of trees (unless they are hazardous to persons or property); pruning or grubbing of undergrowth is not permitted without the written approval of the Proprietary. This naturalized area would typically be a common area parcel which abuts lots, but does not divide sections of homes. SRP may install trails in naturalized areas, in such cases minimal clearing and cleaning may be required to prevent a hazard to persons or property.

*Naturalized Area - Lots* - In the instance where a naturalized area is located on lot, the downing of dead trees, cleaning of underbrush for maintenance, and pruning may be permitted or even required. This situation would typically be limited to areas where the naturalized area is in a high visibility area of the lot, or when dead trees are hazardous to persons or property. [For example, lots with naturalized areas which are located on the front or side of the lot along a street.]

*Ponds* - All bodies of water located in South Riding which are either stormwater management ponds or natural ponds. Ponds will be maintained with a buffer of at least three to four feet of grasses and plantings around the perimeter to filter out nutrients and pollutants, and to deter the growth of a geese population.

*Street Trees* - The trees which are planted in the strip of grass located between a sidewalk and curb are part of a comprehensive street tree program, planned by the Developer, approved by Loudoun County and implemented by either the Builder or Developer, depending upon specific Sections.

*Turf and Meadow Area* - All parcels of common ground owned by the South Riding Proprietary which are not forested or otherwise planted. These areas fall into three categories:

- *High Visibility Areas* would be located at entrances to the community, to community facilities or to neighborhoods; along major roadways; in formal park settings; along curb strips. These areas would typically be mowed about weekly and would receive regular fertilization, herbicide and pesticide treatments.
- *Buffer or Transition Areas* would typically be located be a distance beyond a High Maintenance Area; or in an area between a High Visibility Area and a Naturalized or

Wetland Area. These areas would be mowed approximately bi-monthly and would not typically receive any turf treatments. Wildflowers or tree seedlings may be added to these areas to encourage natural reforestation or revegetation. When adjacent to wetlands or ponds, these buffers act as a filtration system, preventing nutrients, pesticides, herbicides and pollutants from flowing into ponds or wetlands.

- *Meadows* would typically be larger parcels of open space which are not forested. They may be located adjacent to lots. These areas would be mowed annually in the late Fall and would not receive turf treatments.

*Tree Preservation, Conservation or Save Areas* - The area may be designated on a Record Plat and/or Site Plan and may be part of a lot or more typically, would be part of the common area. Typically these areas would remain undisturbed.

*Wetlands* - These are natural areas, sometimes certified as actual wetlands; but may also be stream valley areas. Wetlands would typically be surrounded by buffer areas to prevent nutrients and surface pollutants from flowing into waterways.

### **III. MAINTENANCE STANDARDS**

***Under no circumstances will dumping of any materials including grass clippings, yard debris, excess mulch, weeding, prunings, etc. be permitted on any common areas. The storage or placement of personal items including woodpiles, play equipment, etc., or making personal use of any common area is not permitted. If any resident is found to be dumping or making personal use of the common areas, the cost of removal will be at the owner's expense; and the owner may be subject to a further additional charge as a penalty.***

#### ***1. Common Areas - Dividing Sections of Homes***

*Tree Preservation, Conservation, or Save Areas and Hedgerows - Dividing Sections of Homes:* South Riding believes these areas should be left in a condition which is natural and generally untouched except for the following:

- Dead trees should be downed if they present a hazard to persons or property, but the trunks and stumps will not be removed as they enhance nesting places for wildlife.
- Dead limbs should be pruned off larger trees in accordance with the standards of good tree maintenance, if they present a hazard to persons or property.
- Creeping vines, poison ivy, weeds, etc. should be minimized.
- Wood chips may be installed as a base.
- Trash and debris regularly removed.
- Absolutely no dumping of yard debris including grass clippings will be permitted.

- Absolutely no storage of personal items including wood piles, play equipment, etc. will be permitted.

*Turf Areas Dividing Sections of Homes:* These grass areas will typically be considered High Visibility Areas and will be mowed regularly and will receive turf treatments.

**2. Common Areas Abutting Homes - Not Dividing Sections of Homes** - Open space parcels which abut homes, but which do not divide sections of homes, and which are not located in High Visibility Areas; should be left in a more naturalized condition. These areas may be considered Buffer or Transition Areas or Meadows, depending upon their size and location. These areas are considered very important to the balance needed to maintain habitat for native birds, insects and small animals. They are an important natural resource for South Riding and should be used for the enjoyment of residents and as a teaching resource. These naturalized areas will be designated by the Developer or the Proprietary. These areas may be seeded with turf grasses, sown with wildflowers, or planted with berry plants or other seedlings. As a minimum the areas shall be:

- Kept free of trash, debris and stumbling rocks.
- Kept free of yard debris and personal items.
- Mowed approximately bi-monthly [Buffers and Transition Areas].
- Mowed once or twice per year [Meadows]. Note: Wildflower meadow areas would typically be mowed once per year in the late Fall.
- Trails [mulch or impervious surface] may be installed in the meadows as a teaching and walking resource.

**3. Ponds** - South Riding has several ponds on the Common Area: some of which are man-made stormwater retention facilities and other which are natural. Shoreline vegetation will be planted around the perimeters and will typically not be mowed. The vegetation may include grasses, cat tails, water irises and other plants and trees. Such vegetation acts as a filter preventing nutrients and surface pollutants from flowing into the waterways. Pond maintenance will include:

- Keeping ponds free of trash and debris
- Treating for algae, as needed
- Routine maintenance of any fountains and aerators
- Clearing adjacent trails of geese or other animal waste

**4. Wetlands** - These areas are designated by signage recognizing the areas as wetland areas. They are a meaningful resource for South Riding in terms of the balance of nature and land. These areas are also controlled by Federal regulations and depending upon the type of wetland, activity within it may be strictly limited. In general no trails or other amenities may be installed within a

wetland, and no clearing or grubbing of any kind may be conducted. At a minimum the areas shall be kept:

- Free of debris and trash.

**5. *Preservation, Conservation or Save Areas Located on Lots*** - These areas may appear more park-like, permitting with well cared for plantings and mulch floors. It is not intended that these areas should become overgrown with vines and undergrowth. If such an area is in a high visibility location on a Lot [front or side of the Lot or along a street], the Lot owner will be required to keep the areas:

- Free of trash and debris
- Free of dead trees which are larger than 6" in diameter measured 24" above the ground. Trunks may be cut up into firewood, but firewood shall be stored behind the house, out of view. Stumps are not required to be removed.
- Undergrowth should be kept clean and minimized.
- The installation of native plant material as an understory is encouraged to promote native insects and birds.

**6. *Street Trees*** - The South Riding Proprietary, through its assessments, will fund the Spring clean up of tree beds and the mulching of trees located in the grassy strip between the sidewalk and curb. The Proprietary will also fund the maintenance pruning and insecticide spraying of all street trees, and continuous weeding of the mulch rings. If there has been no rain for five consecutive days, residents are requested to place a hose on top of the mulch ring (not inserted into the fertilization tube) and let it run at a medium rate for between twenty to thirty minutes. This amount of water should be adequate for the tree. Residents should water no more frequently and should not treat the trees with any chemicals.

**7. *Grassy Strip Between the Sidewalk and Curb in Single Family Home Neighborhoods*** - The maintenance of the wide strip of grass located between the sidewalk and curb in single family home neighborhoods is the responsibility of the adjacent homeowner. Residents are expected to regularly mow the grass, edge both sides of the sidewalk and the curb, and fertilize the turf. Grass height in the heat of summer months should be no less than 3 inches so that it does not burn out. For information on fertilizer suggestions, etc. please contact the Town Hall at 703-327-4390.