



Centerville Conservation Community -Letter from the President-

Dear Centerville Conservation Residents,

I would like to take this opportunity to address two issues I think are very important to our community:

The first issue is the critical role volunteers play in the management of our community. We have a 5-person board of directors made up of volunteer residents who make the decisions concerning important matters that affect the community. This includes our fiscal health, the common land management and control as well as the implementation and enforcement of our covenants and bylaws. We also have the Architectural Control Committee (ACC) that is responsible for controlling all new building and construction in the community as well as other issues like landscaping and trees on homeowner lots, ensuring that all activities are in line with the covenants of Centerville Conservation Community. Both the board and the ACC are required to be in place by our covenants.

In addition to the board and the ACC we have several committees that address things like land management and social activities of the community. Again, all run by volunteers. Without these groups I know our community would not be the incredible place we all call home.

In January we will have one board seat to fill and two vacancies on the ACC as well. I would strongly urge you to think about volunteering to either run for the open board seat in the election at our annual meeting in January or to volunteer to serve on the ACC. I know the continued success of our neighborhood is dependent on the stability of the board and the ACC.

The second issue I want to address is the condition of Lake Pisgah and the actions we are taking to improve it's appearance and long term health.

The following is a summary of the activities relating to our overall property management and actions taken on Lake Pisgah over the past three years. This is provided in an effort to help Centerville owners understand the status of the lake and plans for going forward.

Prior to 2019, the property management of our neighborhood was contracted out to a firm that had bought out the original property manager. Early in 2019, it was recognized by then HOA President Jason

Gassett, that the work being performed was less than adequate, especially as it related to the annual prescribed burns.

A Board discussion was held, and it was decided that Centerville should undertake an evaluation of insourcing the property maintenance activities, equipment needs, and work plans. At the same time, the Board established a Land Management Committee to oversee design of the work plan based on previously contracted work and to oversee the work by contractors. Due to increasing requests by the Board, the contractor decided to sever their contract which helped finalize the decision to insource the property management.

Effective July 1, 2019, Rich Lettera became the Property Manager, and we became responsible for all property management activities. The activities not only included mowing of right of ways but also included all activities outlined in the Land Management and Protected Species Plan that is the guiding document as prescribed by Leon Co. and the Apalachee Conservancy. This document was updated and approved by Leon County with input provided by our contracted forester and Apalachee. The update removed language related to initial construction as well as language relating to forestry management practices. Also included in that document is language requiring a fisheries expert to manage the two lakes in the neighborhood.

Centerville had been utilizing a contractor for lake management issues on an as needed basis. Previous efforts included placement of carp for control of weeds in Lake Pisgah, that placement occurred in 2014 based on permit records. These carp are still evident but no longer effective in removing plant growth as they switch from living off vegetative matter to eating invertebrates according to Florida Wildlife Commission information.

During the summer of 2019, the water level in Lake Pisgah dropped substantially and an investigation of potential leaks in the outfall structure and pipe leading to the overflow ditch was investigated. No leaks of note were found, and a contractor provided a clean out of the ditch due to overgrowth of native vegetation.

During the fall of 2019, growth of various weeds was noticed in Amber Lake that were prohibiting fishing activities. Jason Gassett asked the Land Management Committee Chair - David Marshall to contact the previous lakes consultant and was advised that he was too busy to continue providing his services. A new consultant was sought, and we found Dr. Sean McGlynn of McGlynn Laboratories, Inc.(MLI). MLI treated the issues in Amber Lake which included both native and non-native species and in short order that problem cleared up.

MLI was then asked to provide feedback on the condition of Lake Pisgah due to substantial growth of spatterdock (lily pads), cattails and dollar bonnets. MLI recommended a treatment of all the above but also found hydrilla, a non-native invasive weed that is best controlled by reintroduction of a fresh batch of carp. Carp were placed in November of 2019 and their effect was noticed by January of 2020. MLI continued to spray the cat tails and spatterdock as conditions allowed and recommended a contract based on quarterly treatment for an ongoing vegetative control plan. This contract was agreed to by the Board and became effective in April 2020.

While spraying continued through the summer, the cattails declined but the dollar bonnets became noticeably more plentiful. MLI attributed that to the low water levels of 2019 that allowed the root

system of the dollar bonnets to become more well established and harder to treat. Another element became an issue when a flock of geese took up residence in the lake causing an increase in coliform bacteria as detected in quarterly samples taken by MLI. Anti-geese efforts were put in place in the spring of 2022 and were effective in preventing the geese from nesting on the lake. It was found late in the summer that a neighbor had started feeding the geese and the population has returned this fall.

During the fall and winter of 2021, ongoing spraying appeared to be gaining on the dollar bonnet but not the spatterdock and a systematic spraying treatment was enacted. Alternate herbicides were utilized to attempt to get to the root system of both plants but that proved to be only marginally effective. The hydrilla seemed to decline but then rebloomed in the summer of 2022 and another 150 carp were placed in August 2022.

An even more aggressive herbicide treatment has been ongoing since mid-September 2022 targeting the spatterdock and dollar bonnets while the effect of the additional carp has been evident. One side effect of these measures has been the release of an algae that grows on the hydrilla. When the hydrilla is eaten, this alga can break loose and float on the surface and appear as a fine film. As a part of the process this film will decompose and leaving larger open water areas over time.

In late October of this year a lakes specialist with the Florida Wildlife Commission came on site to evaluate the issues with Lake Pisgah. Upon review of all actions to date and current lake conditions his comments were in support of all actions taken to date.

He made it clear that lakes such as these naturally go through an aging process where native weeds fill in areas and the only way to keep them cleared is either through an annual weed control program or to completely draw down these lakes and allow them to dry out for 5-6 months to kill off all the water-based vegetation. Since we have stocked carp to control the hydrilla, he did not consider that a good option but was not one to rule it out for long term control. He also strongly encouraged us to make every effort to eliminate the geese to prevent future bacterial infections. Additionally, geese can bring a new invasive lake weed that has been found recently in this area. When asked about a weed cutting program that has been suggested, he compared that to mowing a lawn, the weeds will come back and likely in a more aggressive growth pattern.

The most significant point he made was that these issues need to be consistently supported and given time to take effect. We now have sufficient carp in place and an ongoing vegetative management program established along with water level maintenance. All residents are asked to be patient and understand that every effort is in place to improve the appearance of Lake Pisgah and we need to avoid overtreating and doing greater harm.

I apologize for the length of this letter, but I felt it was critical to inform the community about these issue that I know have a very high interest level among our residents.

I want to thank you for your support during the last two years as I was honored to serve as President of our HOA Board, and I look forward to Centerville continuing to be the incredible place we all call home.

Larry