

At the March 13th Board Meeting it was discussed that the Board had been invited to send a representative to a Palermo walk about with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and the VCDD to review the process of removal of Brazilian Pepper Trees from the preserve area surrounding our neighborhood. The Board was asked to give homeowners a report after that meeting.

The meeting mentioned above took place at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, March 21st. Attendees included:

Kareen Richard, District Field Manager, VCDD
Rick Schappacher, District Engineer
Jerry Jasper, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, VCDD
Dennis Medved, SWFWMD Staff Environmental Scientist
Alex Hinebaugh, Lennar Land Construction Manager
Josh McGarry, Aquatic Systems District Manager
Nancy Spokowski, President of the Board, Palermo

Conclusions were as follows:

- Several areas were noted not to have complete removal of the Brazilian Pepper Trees, most notably an area to the left of the construction gate as you face it, as there was a misunderstanding that this area was to be part of the assignment.
- A few areas also showed a need to chemically treat stumps to limit regrowth.
- Overall the process for removal and disposal and/or mulch blowback was deemed adequate by SWFWMD with the need to return for some punch list items.
- Note that the removal requirements only extend to 25 feet, so Brazilian Peppers are still in the preserve beyond this point.
- Construction debris was noted in several spots and the VCDD noted that these materials will be removed.
- Preserve rules and regulations do not allow for any other live or formerly live materials to be removed from the preserve areas, so while this situation leaves the preserve looking untidy, no action will be permitted to be taken here.
- The VCDD noted cases where homeowners had apparently entered the preserve for disposal of plant materials, clippings, etc. This practice is not allowed. The preserve should not be utilized by homeowners for any purpose.

We have been informed that the VCDD is continuing to work with Lennar on other aspects of the items necessary to turn the common areas over from the VCDD to Lennar. The Board is hoping that it will get answers to some questions it has posed on this and will let homeowners know if and when more definitive information becomes available.