

January 5, 2015

Re: Vulture Damage Mitigation Program to start week of January 5, 2015

The RW HOA has contracted with the USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) to execute a program for vulture habitat management and wildlife damage control in River Wilderness. Their work will begin the week of January 5, likely Monday afternoon.

As you know, River Wilderness, especially Savannah Lakes and the Islands, has a big, messy, smelly and expensive **Vulture** problem. The large colonies of vultures have been gathering in the trees, on bridges and on rooftops, depositing their droppings and destroying lanai cages and sun roofs. You can view the situation most easily along Island Estates Drive.

Because of the scarcity of food supply in RW, the USDA team believes that encouraging the vultures to leave should be a matter of disrupting their roosting habits. The program is designed to do just that. The team may first remove some of the dead trees that the vultures use for roosting. They will then capture a small number of birds to create effigies which will be hung in the roosting trees. (This technique is very effective as the vultures can see that other vultures are in terminal distress and will not land there). **Next, the team will use non-lethal pyrotechnics in the late afternoons/evenings to prevent the vultures from becoming comfortable and settling-in for the night, and they will use some pyrotechnics again on some early mornings to disrupt those vultures who have resettled on the roosts during the nights. This means RW will need to tolerate loud noises. The pyrotechnics will be frequent during the first month of the contract and then will occur on sporadic days during the remainder of the contract. The work will take place Monday thru Friday.**

After the first month of effort, the need for noisy disruptions will taper off but will continue at a reduced level. The USDA predicts that it will take at least 3 to 4 months to get a majority of the birds to leave the area. Once that is accomplished a monitoring/maintenance program will be implemented to follow up as needed throughout 2015.

Some RW pet owners may be concerned about loud noises frightening their pets. Unfortunately there isn't much we can do except to provide advance notice of the USDA activities as best we can. The River Wilderness Dog Club has offered to help by visiting your pets when the noise begins. To arrange for this help, please contact Vicky Jenkins at vicky.jenkins@sungard.com or Tammy Taylor at TammyRWDC@hotmail.com.

Again, this program will begin early in the week of January 5, and will continue for several weeks. Be prepared for some noise. Please understand that the noise is necessary if we are to get the birds to leave the neighborhood and stop the significant amount of property damage that they are doing. We appreciate your cooperation.

The RW HOA Board
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