

Natural Areas Policy Statement
6-8-10

The following is the policy statement of the Sterling Hill Community Development District as it regards the natural buffer or environmentally sensitive areas that are scattered in large numbers throughout the Community. This policy statement is consistent with the policies of other governments including Hernando County and the State of Florida as it regards natural upland and wetland conservation/preservation areas:

The natural areas are not intended to be maintained. These areas are to be left untouched to allow for nature to take its normal course. Any vegetation that dies or is damaged by storms or other "acts of God" is to remain in its existing configuration within these areas to fulfill its role in nature's process.

Trees, within or immediately adjacent to these areas that have died and appear to pose a threat of falling and damaging an abutting property owner's property may be addressed by the abutting property owner. The abutting property owner must initially contact the Hernando County Development Review Division or the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) to assess the threat. Any subsequent trimming and/or removal, if warranted/permitted by the appropriate governing entity shall be done at the expense of the abutting property owner. The goal is to prohibit or minimize disturbance to these areas.

In the event that a tree does fall onto another's property, that property owner has the right to cut back or "limb" the tree, as necessary to their individual property line. The rest of the tree is to be left alone. Notwithstanding, removal of native vegetation within and immediately surrounding these areas is discouraged and may be restricted or prohibited by Hernando County, and ultimately the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) to protect the upland/wetland area or water body. Ultimately, no one is allowed to encroach into the natural areas for any reason, from maintenance to placement of personal property of any kind.

The above policy statement may be amended as the District Board of Supervisors deems necessary.