



Stream Restoration Plans Adjusted

WSSI attempts to minimize tree removal.

By [Mike DiCicco](#)

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Following public outcry over the number of trees that were taken down during the restoration of the lower portion of the Snakeden Watershed, Wetland Studies and Solutions Inc. (WSSI) has revised plans for the pending restoration of the Glade Watershed.

WSSI president Mike Rolband said plans were adjusted to save as many trees as possible. "I'm trying to find the most palatable solution," he said.

Plans for restoration of the first three of the Glade's six "reaches" will be up for approval by the Reston Association's Design Review Board Jan. 27.

THE COMPANY conducted a wildlife habitat evaluation of the watershed and has adjusted the limits of construction to avoid important habitats as much as possible, Rolband said. Also, he said, the company has delineated its exact access routes and construction areas and marked all trees that are to be removed so that citizens will know what to expect. Where water comes from drainpipes, the streambed cannot be raised as is being done elsewhere, so workers will now put up walls around the ends of those pipes rather than widening the streambed to accommodate the flow. And a couple of the bridges that are being replaced are to be moved, so as not to disturb trees that have grown up around them since their original construction.

Along the first reach, WSSI now plans to use the swimming pool and tennis court parking lots to house equipment, rather than clearing an area. "Originally, people didn't want us to shut the tennis court parking lot down," Rolband said, noting that a few people still were not pleased with the arrangement.

Plans for another stockpile area, as well as an access route, around Reach 3 were also struck after residents pointed out that the place planned to house equipment was popular with fireflies. "We were going to go there because there are no trees, but because of the fireflies we'll now not go that direction and use a different access route," Rolband said, noting that workers instead would simply "truck it a lot further."

On Reach 2, the company eliminated plans for a section that was some distance away from the main stream, in order to avoid clearing a lot of trees for an access route, and a planned construction entrance and stockpile area were adjusted to avoid a spot where lady slippers grow.

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT change, particularly along the third reach, Rolband said, is that workers will now close down existing trails and use them for access whenever possible, rather than clearing access routes. Although some residents around the Snakeden Watershed had protested when workers at first used the trails there, he said neighbors of the Glade seemed to prefer closing the trails to taking down trees.

Rolband noted that restoration of the Glade watershed would never have resembled the sort of large-scale work that was done along the badly eroded lower reaches of the Snakeden. "It's just a totally different scale," he said.

Asked if he had encountered such opposition from residents before, Rolband said he had never

run up against such resistance as he has in Reston in the 18 years he has been in business. But, he acknowledged, "We are in people's backyard and it's disconcerting to have change."

He also said WSSI had received "an amazing number" of phone calls and e-mails from Reston residents who supported the project.