

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Follow the money

I guess I'm considered a senior citizen, and that being so means I've done and seen many things, among those watching our landscape change. I'm not really a tree hugger as I realize with so many people, development is going to happen.

What is being allowed to happen with the Babcock Ranch is a sin against Mother Nature and all future generations of people. What a gift to the future this could be. Doesn't it stand to reason to leave this area alone. Your state is flush with money wondering where to spend it, why not buy all this land and leave it alone? Why do elected officials see development as good all the time when all it brings is more taxes? Yes, this is so but what a hell of a price to pay! More people, more roads, more people getting on the band wagon with other developments.

Don't look for elected officials to help you. I saw a list a week or so ago and half the people running for office were multi-millionaires and what did they do for a living - you guessed it. They were developers. Kinda like putting the fox in the hen house.

I'll be long gone by the time this land is ruined, but it still hurts to see it going ahead. Money, money, money. When it's all said and done Mother Nature will have the last say, but it doesn't have to be so.

DON CLARK
Fort Myers Beach

Buy out sugar

Sugar cane growers contributed \$22 million to federal and state elected officials in the past election, both Democrat and Republican. As a result of this contribution \$1 billion was spent on subsidies to growers and to pay for artificially inflated sugar prices.

Some Caribbean islands and Brazil cannot export sugar to the United States because of tariffs. The United States subsidizes the economy of some of these countries due to their inability to grow exportable crops to the United States due to the tariff.

Florida and the federal government have recently appropriated billions of dollars to help restore the Everglades but apparently sugar cane growers are "off the table" on the studies.

Due to the above, it seems more economical to buy out the land of the growers and restore the Everglades to their natural state. This would allow natural flow of the lake's overflow, restore the natural flow to the river, save a billion of dollars a year on subsidies, allow industries that use sugar to lower their cost, enable third world countries to export, and become more economically competitive, and prove that World Free Trade does work - not "managed" free trade.

Agricultural subsidies are one of the largest transfer of monies from the federal government to private industry with the fewest benefits to the country and the taxpayers. Don't believe the bureaucrats who want to continue expensive studies and end up with debatable solutions that will require more studies.

STAN TRUE
Matlacha

Dump the district

Kurt Harclerode, spokesman for the South Florida Water Management District, said well-water levels have reached record lows. Wells are drying up. They are all meeting with Cape Coral, Fort Myers and Lee County utility officials to evaluate the situation. They are considering stepping up watering enforcement, and other measures such as a halt on new construction.

Am I the only one that remembers that for nearly the past two years the SFWMD has allowed billions of gallons of fresh water from Lake Okeechobee to be dumped into the Caloosahatchee out to the Gulf. That water has damaged our whole ecosystem and is to blame for red tide and the blue-green algae in our canals.

Now they claim we have a water shortage. Come on, wake up. The water district is more to blame for our water shortage than Mother Nature. If you want conservation, let's start by eliminating the water district officials and saving tax dollars.

Even our ancestors new the definition of the word "reservoir." Need I go on?

RAY P. URYGA
Fort Myers