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“This is one of the oddest situations you’ll probably ever find in land use.”

—Tom Missimer, DR/GR

Land of uncertainty



FLORIDA WEEKLY PHOTO

This sign was nailed to a tree along Corkscrew Road. Some residents are opposed to Lee County allowing further mining in the 96,000-acre Density Reduction/Groundwater resource area.

20 percent of Lee County land is currently restricted. Is it bureaucratic ruse or sound policy?

BY EVAN WILLIAMS
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In 1989, former Lee County commissioner Charles L. Bigelow received a phone call from friend and colleague Tom Pelham. Back then, Pelham was the head of the Florida department that managed



BIGELOW



MISSIMER

growth and was pressuring county’s to plan for the future. They agreed on a compromise, which may have helped protect Lee County from developing visions of an urban nightmare - endless rows of grey rooftops and gassy factory smoke beneath a sickly yellow sky; questions like “What exit are you from?”

Or it may have been something else altogether: simply, the beginning of a long, messy geopolitical imbroglio. Maybe both.



FLORIDA WEEKLY GRAPHIC

“You could probably call Charles Bigelow the father of the DR/GR” Tom Missimer said. Missimer has a PhD in geology and specializes in hydrology, the study of water, and has been involved with the DR/GR before it was so named, in a 1973 U.S. geological survey, as well as drilling some of the initial test wells there.

DR/GR stands for Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource. It is the 96,000-acre patch of land, located mostly east of I-75 and south of State

■ **Inside:**
Learn more about the DR/GR. **A8**

SEE DR/GR, A8 ►

