

1 April, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

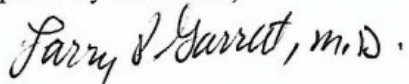
It has been brought to my attention that a lot I sold to the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on Cayo Costa Island in Lee County for preservation, has been turned into a commercial enterprise. This was not my intent when it was sold in the 1970s. Our lot was especially important as it is located on the island's south end, called "the narrows", a section of the park that is vulnerable to storms and erosion and adjacent to the Faulkner Calusa Indian Mounds.

My understanding is Cayo Costa State Park's concessionaire was allowed to construct a dock at the site where my dock used to be. My small dock was destroyed when Hurricane Charley hit the island in 2004. Now the state is allowing thousands of people per month to across the island which has caused a number of negative impacts to the park resources.

Our lot and many others were sold to the DEP for preservation using Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Funds. The Nature Conservancy assisted with many of these sales and the intent was to keep them totally natural and intact. EEL funds, by definition, are used to "acquire, protect and maintain environmentally endangered lands guided by scientific principles of conservation and best practices for resources, stewardship and ecosystem management." We thought our land would be preserved. The DEP clearly misrepresented this to us.

I am against the commercial use of my former property. It is more appropriate to keep commercial groups at the north end designed for commercial use. I ask that you stop these activities along "the narrows" as soon as possible to protect the island. The fact that you are allowing the very land you are supposed to protect to be destroyed by human impact when it was sold for preservation is unacceptable.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry J. Garrett, M.D." in a cursive script.

Dr. Larry Garrett

Arcadia, FL

