



THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

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SENATOR PAULA DOCKERY

15th District

June 30, 2011

The Honorable Rick Scott
Governor, State of Florida
PL-05, The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399

The Honorable Herschel Vinyard, Jr.,
Secretary Florida Department of
Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Governor Scott and Secretary Vinyard:

On Tuesday, my colleague Senator Mike Fasano sent a letter regarding his opposition to the proposal that would allow private companies to build and operate high-impact campgrounds within the Honeymoon Island State Park. I am writing to notify you that I am also adamantly opposed to this proposition - at Honeymoon Island, and all the other state parks that are being considered.

Yesterday, Mr. Ballard, Deputy Secretary at DEP, responded to Senator Fasano's letter. He referenced the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC). This council was created by the Florida Forever legislation that I passed in 1999. The legislative intent was that the ARC be a group that first and foremost is a good steward of the conservation lands acquired with Florida tax dollars. The appointees are entrusted to identify lands for purchase and approve management plans for those lands. Their primary goal is to preserve the natural resources on Florida's public lands and the flora and fauna on those lands while allowing public access within the parameters of protecting those resources. Florida State Parks belong to all citizens of our great state.

My Dad volunteers at Honeymoon Island State Park and has shared with me the concerns that his fellow volunteers, friends and neighbors have about this proposal. Based on their input, it is clear that this is not going to be a politically popular decision and it certainly is not a policy-based decision that follows the legislative intent of the Florida Forever Act.

I urge you to halt this process and to take the time to listen to the stakeholders, primarily the taxpayers whose dollars were used to preserve these lands for the benefit of all Floridians and the tourists who flock to our beautiful parks and natural spaces to experience "The Real Florida." In these tough economic times when many families don't

REPLY TO:

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Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

MIKE HARIDOPOLOS
President of the Senate

MICHAEL S. "MIKE" BENNETT
President Pro Tempore

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have the disposable income to visit expensive tourist attractions, it is our nature-based resources that increase Florida's tourism numbers. This is not only an environmental issue; it is an economic issue as well. Florida is a state that relies heavily on tourism, and ecotourism has been the silver-lining.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paula Dockery". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Paula Dockery, State Senator, 15th District