Hi Alex,

Here are some comments/observations about the Gore property. I used your 2007 report as a guide.

- **page 9, plant communities:** I would include hardwood hammocks. There are scattered patches of higher land dominated by mature laurel oak, maple, strangler fig, dahoon holly, white stopper and other species.
- **page 9, ground cover:** add resurrection fern (on logs), shoestring fern (on cabbage palms), woodgrass (*Opismenus hirtellus*).
- **page 9, midstory:** add dahoon holly, hog plum, firebush, rouge plant, pop ash, white stopper.
- **page 10, canopy:** add laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), many of which are mature specimens, red mulberry (*Morus rubra*).
- **page 12, listed plant species:** I'm not sure of the current status of these, but here are some of the orchids and bromeliads we have found on the property:

  threadroot orchid (*Dendrophylax porrectus*) - threatened - locally abundant on cypress
  toothpetal orchid (*Habenaria odontopetala*)
  ladieslresses (*Cyclopogon cranichoides*)
  Florida butterfly orchid (*Encyclia tampensis*)
  vanilla orchid (*Vanilla phaeantha*) - endangered
  giant air plant (*Tillandsia usneata*) - endangered

- **page 12, bird rookery:** we have observed nests of pilated woodpeckers and barred owls.
- **page 12, potential listed species** -
  **Florida panther.** I have personally observed five panthers on the property since 2012. In December of 2014, a female with a collar, followed by two small kittens, was seen crossing DeSoto Blvd. onto the Gore property. FWC staff told me that the extensive fern understory is a favored habitat for females with young.
  **Florida black bear.** I have seen dozens of bears of all ages in the last five years. At least two different females were accompanied by three cubs.
  **Red rat snake.** One observed on the property in 2012. It was wrestling with a black racer!

**White ibis.** Seen at pond and on roadsides in summer, when water level is high.

- Other observations:
  - **Mammals:** bobcat, spotted skunk, deer, raccoon, bat (sp?), mice (sp?), grey squirrels.
  - **Reptiles:** yellow rat snake, red rat snake, black racer, scarlet king snake, coral snake, pygmy rattlesnake (family), diamondback rattlesnake, ringneck snake, green anole.
  - **Trees of archaeological significance:** At least two pointer trees (also
called thong trees) exist near the trails. Property was designated a stewardship forest by the Dept. of Forestry.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Linda
Chairman Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee
Parks and Recreation Department
Golden Gate Community Park
3300 Santa Barbara Blvd.
Naples, FL 34106

March 27, 2017

Dear Mr. Poteet,

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has a rich history of conservation through many different programs in Collier County, including managing over 63,000 acres of land in Florida Panther and Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuges. We are also an active partner in the Picayune Strand Restoration Project and work with the Florida Forest Service, Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Golden Gate Fire Department to assist with prescribed burning and wildfire management in Southwest Florida.

While the National Wildlife Refuges we manage are part of a network of public lands and private lands that provide habitat for many vulnerable species, additional land conservation efforts to secure vital linkages that connect this network of lands is necessary. One such linkage is the Gore property in the Golden Gate Estates along I-75 connecting the Florida Panther NWR with Collier County’s Belle Meade Natural Resource Protection Area (NRPA) and the proposed Collier County Belle Meade Flowway project to the west of the Gore property.

Currently, the area is sparsely populated by humans, and serves as a natural corridor for many species including the Florida Panther. The purchase of the Gore property by Conservation Collier, Cypress Cove Conservancy or other conservation organization would facilitate the linkage identified above by connecting the North Belle Meade NRPA east to the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, and south to the Picayune Strand State Forest and Restoration Project; thereby protecting the regional conservation investments made to date.

Additionally, the Gore property is located adjacent to the Faka Union Canal, and the Florida Department of Transportation recently constructed Florida panther (wildlife crossings) at the Miller and Faka Union canals on I-75. Protection of these wildlife crossing areas north and south of I-75 is important to facilitating the safe wildlife passage across the interstate highway. Fencing along I-75 is currently being constructed to the west of the Gore property to reduce panther mortality on that stretch of the interstate.
Protecting these lands is a proactive approach to reduce the inevitability of wildlife human interactions should these lands be developed, would protect regional wildlife corridors and would continue the environmental education opportunities that have been provided by the property for some 25 years or more. The Gore property represents one of the most dedicated local private efforts to secure fish and wildlife resources for the enjoyment of future generations of Collier County citizens.

Please consider our recommendation to purchase this significant addition to Collier County's Conservation program.

Sincerely,

Kevin Godsea,
Project Leader
Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge

Cc: Alex Sulecki (Conservation Collier)
   Bobbie Lee Gruninger (Cypress Cove Conservancy)
Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee
William Poteet, Chair, and Alex Sulecki, Coordinator
Golden Gate Community Park
3300 Santa Barbara Blvd.
Naples, FL 34106

Dear Mr. Poteet and Ms. Sulecki:

The Trust for Public Land supports the efforts to acquire the Gore property in the Golden Gate Estates along I-75, which will connect the Florida Panther NWR with Collier County’s Belle Meade Natural Resource Protection Area and the proposed Collier County Belle Meade Flow Way project to the west of the Gore property.

Protecting these lands now will help reduce future issues for both wildlife and humans should these lands be developed. Protecting the Gore Property will aid in creating regional wildlife corridors and would help continue the environmental education opportunities that have been provided on the property for so many years. There is a dedicated groundswell of local support to protect the Gore property, which represents the desire of residents to protect these wildlife resources for the enjoyment of future generations of Collier County residents.

The Trust for Public Land strongly supports the purchase of the Gore property for Collier County’s continued protection of important natural resource areas.

Sincerely,

Brenda McClymonds
Senior Program and Project Manager
March 29, 2017

William Poteet, Chair
Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee

Alex Sulecki, Coordinator
Conservation Collier

RE: Gore and I-75 Properties, B-list
http://www.colliergov.net/home/showdocument?id=32596
http://www.colliergov.net/home/showdocument?id=21471

Dear Mr. Poteet and Ms. Sulecki:

Florida Wildlife Federation (Federation) requests that Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee (CCLAAC) revisit the above referenced B-list properties to reconfirm willing sellers; re-evaluate the environmental and social values; and consider reassigning to the A-list. The Federation is a conservation property owner in the immediate area of the Gore and I-75 Properties.

The Federation has long advocated and worked to establish a protected habitat link immediately north of I-75 to connect North Belle Meade Natural Resource Protection Area with Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge and RLSA stewardship sending lands.
To aid habitat connectivity with conservation lands south of I-75, the Federation successfully petitioned FDOT to improve wildlife movement via wildlife ledges under I-75 at the FakaUnion and Miller canal bridges.

FDOT, Collier County, wildlife agencies, the Federation, and others are exploring opportunities for additional crossings to connect the North Belle Meade Natural Resource Protection area with South Belle Meade in the Big Cypress Strand State Forest. An acquisition campaign to secure the wildlife passage across North Golden Gate Estates beginning with the purchase of the Gore and I-75 Properties will aid this effort.

The Federation also asks that CCLAAC explore how purchase of the Gore and I-75 Properties can complement Collier County’s 2012 Master Mobility Plan, 2011 Watershed Management Plan, and wildlife compensation/wetland mitigation obligations resulting from planned county infrastructure projects. The Master Mobility Plan and Watershed Management Plan were completed after the Gore and I-75 Properties were placed on the B-list.

Collier County’s Master Mobility Plan recommends a potential TDR program with North Golden Gate Estates Flowway, located in the eastern most portion of North Golden Gate Estates, as a tool for preserving land and reducing impacts to the watershed. Comments during the public review process led Collier County to include a wildlife habitat corridor to connect North Belle Meade and Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge. http://www.colliergov.net/home/showdocument?id=42004 The Gore and I-75 Properties are within the wildlife habitat corridor boundaries.
The Watershed Management Plan’s Recommended Non-Structural Initiatives includes a North Golden Gate Estates Flowway Protection Area that encompasses the Gore and I-75 Properties. [http://www.colliergov.net/home/showdocument?id=42435](http://www.colliergov.net/home/showdocument?id=42435)

The following map is from the above report and a memo by the county’s consultant specifically addressing the North Golden Gate Estates Flowway Protection Area. [http://www.colliergov.net/home/showdocument?id=35618](http://www.colliergov.net/home/showdocument?id=35618)

![Map of North Golden Gate Estates Flowway Protection Area](image)

The Gore and I-75 Properties along with an eventually protected habitat link through the remote southern portion of North Golden Gate Estates can provide a buffer to the Picayune Strand State Forest, help naturally manage North Golden Gate Estates stormwater and groundwater levels, result in a conservation network north and south of I-75, and provide significant nature enjoyment opportunities.

Please share this letter with the entire CCLAAC.

Sincerely,

*Nancy A. Payton*

Nancy A. Payton  
Southwest Florida Fidd Representative
April 24, 2017

William Poteet, Chair
Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee

Alex Sulecki, Coordinator
Conservation Collier

Dear Mr. Poteet and Ms. Sulecki,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Audubon of the Western Everglades (AWE), I urge Conservation Collier to purchase the Gore Property in the Golden Gate Estates area. This 200 acre tract is strategically located near the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, the North Belle Meade Natural Resource Protection Area, and the proposed Belle Meade Flowway, and provides essential linkages for wildlife. Preservation of habitat and connectivity is key to the survival of the many species that utilize this area. The pressures of development in eastern Collier County are constantly increasing, making this rare opportunity more crucial.

AWE supports the efforts of the Cypress Cove Conservancy to retain this valuable tract as a natural area.

Thank you for your consideration,

Eileen

Eileen Arsenault
President

Audubon of the Western Everglades
1020 8th Ave. South, Ste. 2
Naples, FL 34102
239-643-7822
www.audubonwe.org
August 8, 2017

Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee
William Poteet, Chair

Conservation Collier
Alexandra Sulecki, Coordinator

RE: Gore Property

Dear Mr. Poteet and Ms. Sulecki,

On behalf of the Blue Zones Project of Southwest Florida, I am writing to request the Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee to consider moving the Gore property to the A-list. The benefits, as you well know, of placing this land into permanent conservation include: preservation of environmentally sensitive wetlands and wildlife habitat, flood protection, surface water quality enhancement, passive recreation, protection of potable groundwater resources, and a potential wildlife corridor link.

The Blue Zones Project is a community wide health initiative which recognizes that place and space have an impact on human health and well-being. The purchase of the Gore property will aid the environment as well as public health. Studies continue to demonstrate the importance natural space has on the overall health of individuals. In fact, most research on urban environments now include natural/green space as a determinant of health and well-being in communities. Therefore, preserving natural/green space can increase well-being (both mentally and physically) which will ultimately reduce healthcare costs.

Currently, the property has around 2 miles of trails. Hopefully, if this property can be preserved, additional trails could be created for public use. One of the many facets of the Blue Zones Project is to encourage people to move naturally in their environment. The Gore property presents a wonderful opportunity for residents and visitors to enjoy nature while on foot or bike.

We hope you will reconsider the acquisition of this property. Thank you for all you do to ensure wildlife and green space can be enjoyed by future generations to come.

Sincere regards,

Jessica Crane

Jessica Crane
Community Policy Lead
Blue Zones Project SWFL
311 9th Street N., Suite 105
Naples, FL 34102
November 9, 2017

Ms. Alexandra Sulecki
Conservation Collier Coordinator

Dear Ms. Sulecki,

The Conservancy of Southwest Florida (Conservancy) representing over 7,000 supporting families writes to express support for the acquisition of the Gore property. The Conservancy commends the work of Collier County staff and the Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee (CCLAAC) for the successful protection of thousands of environmentally significant acres. The Conservation Collier program effectively preserves outstanding natural resources which have benefited Collier County citizens by safeguarding aquifer recharge capacity, protecting essential habitat areas, and providing natural places for public enjoyment.

Obtaining the Gore property will secure an important segment in the connection of sensitive habitats extending from the North Belle Meade Natural Resource Protection Area to the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge. The importance of this linkage is exemplified through existing County plans for both the North Golden Gate Estates Flow-way Restoration Plan as well the County’s Master Mobility Plan. The Gore property sits within the Golden Gate Estates Flow-way Area and acquisition of this property is vital for moving the County’s aforementioned plans forward.

Acquisition of the Gore property will protect wetlands that currently serve as floodplain storage. Retaining the land as part of a functioning wetland system means that the parcel will continue to recharge the aquifer, while protecting habitat for wildlife and numerous listed species. Acquisition can also aid in providing necessary fire breaks during drier conditions in North Golden Gate Estates. Furthermore, it will add passive recreational opportunities for Collier County residents to enjoy. For all of these reasons, we recommend this property be ranked as an ‘A-list’ property for presentation to the board in 2018. Please share these comments with the CCLAAC in advance of the upcoming ranking meeting.

Thank you.

Meredith Barnard, Policy Analyst
239-262-0304 ext. 308
meredithb@conservancy.org

CC: Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee
Good morning Alex, here is an article I thought you and the committee might like to have a look at. It shows what a beautiful home this would make for the wildlife sanctuary and nature center. If you think it’s appropriate please forward this to the committee. We are doing a fund raising event with music, art, food and wine at 3:00- 5:00 pm on Saturday April 14th.

We would like to extend an invite to any committee members who would like to see the place in person. Things are going very well with our weekly tours and there is much interest.

There is room for public impute on the 9th right? and what is the time please?

Have a wonderful day

Bobbie Lee
Cracker House in a Hammock
A sensitive approach to building in Florida wetlands

I can't be done. The limestone caprock and muck are going to create far too many foundation problems."

"You're nuts. The construction exists and mosquitoes and deerflies will eat you alive."

These were some of the comments I heard after I decided to build an old-fashioned Florida Cracker house in the middle of a hardwood swamp and hammock (a forested island in a wetland) in southwest Florida. But the naysayers neglected two important factors: my stubbornness (inherited from my father), and the fact that I had returned home after my first year in college to find bulldozers clearing a similar hammock behind my parents' house. Seeing my boyhood sanctuary disappear converted me instantly into an environmentalist. I vowed that someday I would find another hammock and somehow preserve it.

Thirty years later, I had the opportunity to realize that goal. I found such a hammock in a remote section of eastern Golden Gate Estates, in a part of a 1960's subdivision that had so far escaped the typical Florida-style tract home development. Unfortunately, most of Golden Gate Estates hadn't escaped one of the most ecologically devastating alterations to a water table in the history of Florida. To make the area more fit for habitation, developers had drained the land by carving 238 miles of north-south canals through it. These canals not only carried away the surface water, but drank up much of the subsurface aquifer as well. A series of wildfires burned over 600,000 acres in the region the year after the canals were completed. The developers ultimately were prohibited from doing further damage, but fires are now a perennial threat to the area.

Paradise—The canal system not withstanding, the site I chose for the house is a paradise of water-loving maples, cypress, swamp bays and laurel oaks scattered through a lush understory of ferns, vines and other hydric shrubbery. Though the land is no longer inundated by water, it remains subject to the typical above-ground seepflow (2-in. to 6-in. deep surface water) that occurs during the four-month- to six-month-long rainy season in southeast Florida.

Veiled by a thicket of hardwood trees and hydric shrubbery, the house reflects the author's concern for the environment. Construction was confined within a 50-sq. ft. area and to a short access road approaching the house. Like the traditional Florida Cracker-style house, the house is elevated on stilts for protection against flooding and insects. A cupola atop a hip roof ventilates the interior, while galvanized-steel roofing reflects heat away from the interior. A fireplace faced with native limestone serves to keep the house warm during the occasional winter cold spell.

Consequently, there was vegetation aplenty, but the site was by no means impenetrable. I wanted to build on a 10-acre plot, preserving as much of the native vegetation as possible (photo above). The house would be built on stilts, situated on difficult terrain and located more than 15 miles from the nearest population center in Golden Gate City. Problems? You bet. But none proved unsolvable.

Choosing a contractor—As they used to say in medieval cookbooks about cooking rabbit, "First, catch your hare." So I went shopping for contractors. The first three I approached were discouraging. Their estimates varied from unrealistically low to astronomically high. One said outright that the house couldn't be built under the environmental protection conditions that I stipulated. These were: to limit the use of heavy equipment to prevent compaction of the fragile hammock loams and damage to the vegetation and limestone caprock (limestone that caps the aquifer); and to confine all construction activities to a 50-ft. by 50-ft. area to retain maximum vegetation around the house for both aesthetic reasons and shade.

Because of the wetland environment, the Department of Environmental Regulations imposed additional stipulations. A standard septic system and drain field were acceptable, but they had to be installed above grade so...
above the water table. That meant that the septic tank had to sit on the ground and be covered with a mound of soil. The leach lines would be elevated and then buried by alternating layers of soil and #57 gravel. Not only was this mound system easily disguised, but the tank would be easy to find when it needed pumping out every five years or so.

The problem of water supply was just as easily solved. A well sunk 42 ft. deep into the Tamiami aquifer drew the purest drinking water anyone could hope for. A simple fiberglass filter prevented calcium carbonate sediments (scale) from entering appliances such as the dishwasher and washing machine.

In the end, my stubbornness paid off. A young contractor, Steve Sells, agreed to tackle the job provided he was allowed some leeway and a chance to be innovative during the course of construction. His attitude was remarkable considering that much of his previous work involved commercial buildings, churches and typical CBS homes (cinderblock homes built on concrete slabs). Sells had little experience with wood-frame construction, particularly the sort of hybrid stick-frame, post-and-beam construction my house required. Fortunately, his father Don, an experienced engineer and builder—and Sells' on-site supervisor—did.

Playing off tradition—The traditional Cracker-style house (named after the early Florida settlers) was square in plan, raised on stilts and crowned with a cupola or belvedere atop a hip roof. A wide veranda, sometimes screened against mosquitoes, wrapped around all or part of the house. A main hallway originated at the front entry and bisected the house, functioning as a breezeway in the days before air-conditioning. This passage was called the “dogtrot” because the family dogs would invariably seek it out during the heat of the day.

Opening off the dogtrot were the dining room, living room and bedrooms. The kitchen and bathroom were usually located away from, but attached to, the main house. That's because the kitchen generated unwanted heat and was a fire hazard, and the bathroom was usually little more than an outhouse.

In designing my house, of course, I shifted the bathrooms and kitchen into the main house (drawing left), and equipped them with modern plumbing. There is, after all, a limit to how much pioneer spirit is required in the late twentieth century.

I retained the dogtrot to serve as the entrance hallway. But instead of running the length of the house, it dog-legs to the left and opens into the living room. To preserve the original dogtrot effect, however, the dining room, kitchen and master bedroom still open off the hall, while an office/study connects to the hall through a pair of French doors. Two more pairs of French doors lead to screened porches off the master bedroom and dining room. A fourth pair closes off the bedroom from the dogtrot or opens in conjunction with those in the dining room to provide a breezeway through both rooms. Thus, when the windows and doors in a room are opened, the dogtrot, albeit modified, lives again.

To gain a little extra floor space, I tucked a sleeping loft underneath the cathedral ceiling directly above the study. In most other respects, the house closely mimics the traditional Cracker house. True to style, there's no air-conditioning. A galvanized-steel hip roof reflects much of the sun's heat away from the house. At the peak, a cupola exhausts warm air from the house, drawing replacement air into the interior through door and window openings (more on that later). In addition, the house is raised about 10 ft. on piers, allowing cool air to collect underneath it (see FHB #40, pp. 73-77 and FHB #49, pp. 72-75). This construction also protects against flood damage during hurricanes and allows the main waste-water drain to run downhill to the above-grade septic system.

A floating foundation—Building a house over an undulating substrate of limestone cap-rock created a unique set of problems. Foremost among them was providing firm anchorage for the 28 10x10 posts that would support the house. Although the caprock seemed solid enough in many places to support concrete piers, it contained numerous holes where the limestone had been dissolved by rainwater. Over the centuries these had filled in with non-compressible mud and sand until In 30 ft.
variably occurred where piers and their supporting posts were to be positioned.

The water table, less than 5 ft. below the surface during the wet season, also caused problems. Water so close to the surface made well-drilling easy, but produced unstable layering of subsurface soils. These unstable soils effectively precluded post-in-ground construction because they prevented the necessary compaction of soil around the posts.

Driving concrete piles, or augering 6-ft. to 8-ft. deep holes through the porous caprock and inserting Raymond piles (hollow steel piles backfilled with concrete and often used for wharves and docks) were ruled out. The dense forest canopy and the soft ground prevented the use of the heavy equipment needed for this work. I also considered digging a trench completely around the perimeter, filling it with gravel and then pouring a concrete grade beam over it. But I rejected that as being too expensive and environmentally damaging. Still another possibility, injecting pressure grout into the caprock holes, was dismissed because of the distinct possibility that an inordinately large (and expensive) amount of grout might be required to fill and seal all the subterranean grooves that pervaded the site.

The final decision, arrived at after consulting with local engineers, was a compromise: 28 separate holes would be excavated by backhoe to a depth of about six feet (or about one foot below the maximum level of the water table). Each would be backfilled with D. O. T. #57 gravel (5/8-in. material similar to drainfield gravel), and then 36-in. by 36-in. by about 12-in. deep reinforced-concrete plinths would be poured on top (drawing next page). Not only was this method the least expensive, it also would create a minimum of environmental damage. Moreover, the 3-ft. sq. by 6-ft. deep gravel-filled pads would allow ground water to percolate through both laterally and vertically without destroying the compaction required to support the house. With creative backhoeing and the judicious use of Bobcats, all the foundation holes were excavated and backfilled in two days. Concrete trucks arrived on day three, pumping concrete into the forms from 200 feet off the site.

**Hurricane-proofing**—Although local contractors call this a stilt house, it is more accurately described as a post-supported house built on piers, just as if it were located over water instead of in a hammock. Having experienced nine hurricanes while growing up in South Florida, and remembering the devastation caused by Hurricane Donna in 1960, when the eye of that storm passed directly over the Naples-Golden Gate area, I took no chances.

Although Robert Pahl, the architect who translated my ideas into working drawings, had recommended using 8x8 pressure-treated posts for support, I chose 10x10 posts. They are sturdier than 8x8s, but more importantly, they add extra mass to the underpinnings to help anchor...
steel post anchors (Simpson Strong-Tie Connectors, 1450 Doolittle Dr., P. O. Box 1568, San Leandro, Calif. 94577) cast into the tops of the plinths. The posts were then notched at the tops to accept girders built up out of pressure-treated 2x12s. To resist uplift, the girders were bolted to the posts with ¼-in. galvanized machine bolts. Joists were nailed to the tops of the girders and tied down with hurricane anchors. Pressure-treated 2x12s, bolted to the posts, provide the necessary diagonal bracing.

The subfloor consists of ¾-in. CDX T&G plywood glued and nailed to the joists. Two coats of Thompson's Water Seal were applied to the subfloor for protection against high humidity during construction. The decks and simple picket-supported railings were built of pressure-treated pine. Cantilevered from the main-floor framing, they give the house a light, airy feeling, as if it's suspended within the forest.

An extra margin of safety was also built into the 2x4 wall framing. All load-bearing walls have five top plates instead of two to help stiffen them. For the exterior shear walls, horizontal blocking was installed 32 in. o.c., and the walls were sheathed with ½-in. CDX plywood. Sells fastened the plywood with 6d galvanized nails, spaced 6 in. o.c. around the perimeter and 8 in. o.c. in the field. The sheathing extends below the bottoms of the rim joists, allowing for a firm connection between floor framing and wall framing.

Except for the study, every room in the house has a cathedral ceiling with exposed rafters. Four double 2x10 laminated-veneer lumber (LVL) hip rafters, each about 32 ft. long, support the roof. Each was raised into place by hand, a feat that attested to both the strength and the dedication of the carpenters. The bottom of each hip rafter rests on a wall corner and is tied to the corner studs with 10 ft. of steel strapping. The tops of the hip rafters bear on the corners of a double 2x12 ring beam that forms the base of the cupola (top photo, previous page).

The rest of the roof framing consists of 2x10 LVL purlins and 2x6 hem-fir rafters. The bottoms of the rafters are tied to the top plates with hurricane anchors. Because all 2x rafters were left exposed to the interior, they were selected carefully to minimize knots and blemishes. The hip rafters, purlins, and the ring beam were boxed-in with ½-in. pine plywood on the sides and 1x cedar on the bottom edges for a finished look.

Left unsupported, the roof would have exerted considerable outward thrust on the exterior walls. To avoid that problem, a number of the interior partitions extend upward to the ceiling to support the hip rafters. Also, two corners of the ring beam bear on 4x4 posts that reach up from the partition between the study and the hall. The main roof rises from 8 ft. to 14 ft. above the floor and forms a kind of flying buttress against the open base of the cupola.

Laying in—Before the 26-ga. galvanized-treated sleepers were nailed parallel to the roof edges directly over the T-111 deck. Also, all electrical wiring in the ceiling was completed at this time. The galvanized roofing was then attached to the furring strips with 2-in. ring-shank nails with neoprene washers.

Because there would be no air-conditioning in the house, no roof insulation was needed. Also, the infrequent southwestern Florida cold snaps are not of sufficient mag-
type of roof—I planned to build a fireplace in the house. The sub-floor was not insulated either, but 3½-in. fiberglass batting was installed in all the walls in case air-conditioning is ever added. Sun-heated air exits the roof cavities via the ribs in the steel roofing.

Traditionally, exterior siding was either Dade County pine or cypress, or a combination of both. The former is an extremely durable wood with high resin content that resists both termites and dry rot. The latter is well known for its ability to withstand high humidity and moisture, particularly rain and standing water. However, for cost, availability and deliverability, I chose vertical 1x12 rough-sawn cedar boards with rough-sawn 1x2 battens. I rationalized this departure from tradition by the fact that Western Red Cedar has excellent weather-resistance in its own right. I’m sure the early crackers would have used it were it available at the time.

Finishing the interior—Most of the interior paneling is vertical 1x6 V-groove cypress (top photo, p. 65). I used random-width pecky cypress boards in the study. The kitchen has V-groove cypress walls, nailed horizontally to duplicate the kitchen walls that I remembered from my boyhood home. For the bath-rooms, 1x1 V-groove cedar installed horizontally was substituted for cypress. Drywall was used in the dining room to break up the effect of too much wood and to create a more formal look.

Chair rail and wainscoting were carried from the dining room into the hall and master bedroom to add a turn-of-the-century effect. The simple wainscoting consists of ½-in. birch plywood with picture-frame molding applied over it. This wainscoting, along with the T-111 ceiling and most of the rafters, is painted white to brighten the interior. Hip rafters and purlins, painted a dark green, accent the ceiling and reflect the verdant foliage outside.

Flooring throughout the house is Bruce oak planking (Bruce Hardwood Floors, 16803 Dallas Parkway, P. O. Box 660100, Dallas, Tex. 75266-0100) glued and nailed over the subfloor. The 5-in. wide baseboard was ripped out of 1x6 cypress boards (to copy traditional design). A thumbail bead was routed along its top edge to complement the period theme.

A native fireplace—Though a fireplace isn’t considered a necessity around here, I decided that its ambience and occasional utility were worth the cost. The fireplace is the focal point in the living room (bottom photo, p. 65). Rising 25 ft. above the forest floor and weighing a calculated 36 tons, it isn’t phisically code restrictions. The hearth is raised 6 in. above the subfloor to allow fireplace and house to settle independently.

Both the chimney and the hearth are faced with native Florida limestone over a concrete block and firebrick substructure. The predominant stone used was Tamaion limestone, a geological formation underlying Collier County (where the house is located). This consists of irregularly shaped, hard, fossilized mollusk and sandstone limberock that is easily worked and is commercially available. A 9-ft. long steel shelf supports the limestone above the firebox.

Key Largo limestone, another marine geological formation found in the upper Florida Keys, forms the hearth. It consists primarily of fossilized corals and is usually sold in cut slabs. To offset the “chaly” effect of the commercially quarried limestone, a vein of weathered golden-brown limestone excavated from the job site was inserted in a meaning-der pattern above the mantel and across the surface of the hearth. The stonemasons responsible for all this (Collier Masonry, Inc., 3451 Malaga Way, Naples, Fla. 33942) were artists of the old school and built the entire structure from the ground up.

Because vegetation was left undisturbed beyond the footprint of the house, each of the four decks surrounding the house appear to be suspended within the forest. The deck in the photo above opens off the living room and study. Though it’s unscreened, surpris-ingly few mosquitoes venture up to it from the hammock floor. Paddle fans make summer “porch-settin’” comfortable. The decks are of pressure-treated lumber, and siding is board-and-batten western red cedar.

 contrasts dramatically with the white and gold Tamiami and Key Largo limestones in the chimney and hearth. Combined in this way, a little bit of Florida’s history is preserved with a larger portion of Floridian prehistory.

The heat and mosquitoes—the heart and soul of the house is its ventilation capability. To provide maximum airflow, all windows, except those in the bathrooms, are Pella casements. Because of the wide roof overhang, they can be left open when it rains, thus provucing some measure of cooling. Three Velux roof windows, one in each bedroom and one over the entry foyer, provide additional ventilation. By selective opening or closing of casements, roof windows and the awning windows in the cupola, airflow can be created in any room, through the dog trot, and out the roof windows or cupola. The floor-to-ceiling walls in the hallway and living room also help to channel air through the house.

Paddle fans in every room but the study and the dining room (which has a chandel-lier instead), circulate air constantly. The paddle fan in the cupola is reversible so that in the winter, it can draw sun-warmed air down into the house from outside. Additional fans on the decks make “porch-settin’” pleasant, even on still summer evenings (photo above).

Climate control notwithstanding, having grown up in Florida, I knew that the most annoy- ing problem was not the climate but mosqui- toes. To alleviate the mosquito problem, the decks off the dining room and master bedroom are screened. The living-room deck and front deck are open mainly because the view of the forest is simply too pleasant to interrupt with screening.

But aesthetics are tempered with practicality. All decks have screen doors between them and the interior rooms. Access to the front door is protected by double door screens—a concept similar to that used in zoo aviaries. The idea is simple: people enter the first screened area and close the door behind them, then pass through the second screen door directly into the house. Thus, visitors awaiting entry are fully protected during the summer mosquito season.

Needless to say, mosquitoes aggravated the tradespeople. But the annoyance was offset in part by the daily sighting of wildlife on the job site, including deer, raccoons, pos-sums, armadillos and bird species too nu-merous to mention. Even a mother bear with two cubs meandered through.

Robert H. Gore runs his own environmental planning and consulting firm, BIO-ECON, Inc.
THE GORE SANCTUARY PROJECT

OUR VISION

Cypress Cove Conservancy has a vision to create a very special community center and natural park upon the property that Dr. Robert Gore once used to nurture the relationship between humans and nature. "Naithloriendun, as Dr. Gore called it, is part of an old growth tropical forest that includes one of the oldest cypress trees in Florida as well as many other Southwest Florida natural wonders. For decades, Dr. Gore invited elementary through college aged students to come to his home to learn about good stewardship of SWFL's natural heritage. Our vision is to continue his legacy and build upon it. The Gore Property also provides critical habitat for many listed and endangered species and is a well-known wildlife corridor. Preserving it will allow us to leave green space behind for future generations. Take a virtual tour of the property and learn more about our vision via this video: https://youtu.be/j5ASNPZr3Zs

OUR PLAN

We will renovate the Gore home into a community center to facilitate education, leisure activities and events. The center will help us provide service learning hours for local college students and educational programs for all ages on topics such as wellness, gardening, wildlife and biodiversity, sustainable practices and more. We use gardens, walking trails, and outdoor entertainment areas to allow for connection with and observation of native species and the natural environment on the property.

Maintenance of the property will be facilitated via volunteers, educational programs and activities, special events and continuing contributions.

We invite you to join us in this venture to create a truly unique community focal point!
Outdoor Recreation Areas for:
- Exercise, walking
- Meditation
- Nature Observation
- Photography
- Bird Watching
- Connecting

Improvements:
- Walking trails
- Shelters and benches
- Species ID markers
- Gardens and more

EXPLORATION FOR ALL AGES

Programs for:
- Health & Wellness
- Nurture in Nature
- Landscape art classes
- Project Nature Connect
- K-12 programs
- Service learning hours
- Biology Teacher Training

To be enjoyed by:
- Local school children
- College students
- Families and visitors

EDUCATION CENTER
"The greatest gift of the garden is the restoration of the five senses."
~ Hanna Rion

Proposed gardens for education and leisure:

- An aloe garden with a variety of healing plants
- Herb gardens for cooking and medicinal applications
- An orchid garden to delight the senses
- Gardens of plants and flowers to attract butterflies and dragonflies to delight children of all ages!
COMMUNITY CENTER

- Educational classes & seminars
- Art, wellness, nature, and cultural events
- Scout and school activities
- Local club and organization meetings
- Service learning hours

PUBLIC TOURS

- Recreation
- Community education
- Biologist led walks
- Nature connect activities

EVENTS

- Music and entertainment
- Day retreats
- Picnics and socials
- Weddings and ceremonies
- Fundraising events
The Gore Property provides critical habitat for many listed and endangered species and is a well-known wildlife corridor. Wildlife corridors reduce unwanted wildlife-human encounters and act as a buffer between the activities of mankind and nature. Land preservation also provides crucial protection against the impact of natural disasters on the local community. Undeveloped corridors help reduce flooding and facilitate faster drainage of excess water.

Dr. Gore pieced together parcel by parcel with his own money, a 200 acre preserve. Since his passing, his family is seeking buyer(s) who will continue to preserve the land.

Cypress Cove Conservancy is working to form a private/public partnership with Conservation Collier to preserve the Gore properties per the family's wishes. Conservation Collier acquires properties of high natural resource value throughout Collier County. Properties must meet specific criteria including: rare habitat, aquifer recharge, flood control, water quality protection, and listed species habitat. The Gore property meets these criteria and has been presented for consideration. However, since Conservation Collier does not manage community centers, Cypress Cove Conservancy proposes to partner in the effort to continue Dr. Gore's service to the community by purchasing the ten acre parcel that includes the home and creating and maintaining a community and education center upon it.
Cypress Cove Conservancy Inc. is a 501c3 non-profit organization. Our goal is to purchase potential corridor parcels that provide critical habitat for listed and endangered species living in Southwest Florida to help facilitate sustainable relationships between people and nature. We utilize cooperative initiatives with other local groups, educational programs and community outreach to advocate for good stewardship.

We aim to use the Gore Sanctuary to create an attractive natural environment where the public can connect with nature and come to learn about health, wellness and sustainable lifestyles. Some of the organizations and schools we are developing cooperative initiatives and relationships with include FGCU, Florida Southwestern State College, Ave Maria University, Conservation Collier, the Conservancy of SW Florida, the Trust for Public Lands, the Responsible Growth Management Coalition, Environmental Confederation of Southwest Florida, the Florida Wildlife Federation, Blue Zones and Preserve Our Paradise.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
Bobbie Lee Davenport
Patty Whitehead
Janet Weisberg
Amy Tayler
Silvia Casablanca
Jo Ann Vaccarino

ADVISORY COMMITTEE:
Mike Barry
Edwin M. Everham III
David W. Ceilley
Jim Beever
Brooke Hollander

Learn more:
www.cypresscoveconservancy.com
facebook.com/cypresscoveconservancy
Cypress Cove Conservancy needs your help to make The Gore Sanctuary Project a success! Opportunities include:
• Advocacy
• Volunteer positions
• Single and Monthly Contributions
• Founding Partner Donations

BECOME A FOUNDING PARTNER...

Sponsor one of these aspects of the project which include donor recognition by plaque or within title:
• Nature Center - Renovation
• Herb, Orchid, Aloe, Butterfly or Meditation Gardens
• Outdoor Meeting Structures: Gazebo, Meeting and Event Pavilions
• Walking Trail: boardwalks, species ID plates, bridges
• Resting Benches, arches and more

Please request a complete list by emailing bleegruninger@comcast.net or attend one of our upcoming fundraising events (we would love to meet you!)

LEARN MORE...

Please visit our website: http://www.cypresscoveconservancy.com

View this short video about our organization and our current project. https://youtu.be/j5ASNJPZrJZs
The wildlife footage was taken recently and shows the importance of preserving this wildlife corridor.

Learn more about Dr. Robert Gore
He was able to piece together 200 acres of environmentally sensitive land to create a very special place. With his passing we feel there is a responsibility to preserve what he worked so hard to protect. http://www.naplesnews.com/story/news/environment/2017/03/18/conservation-group-hopes-save-bob-gore-collier-sanctuary-naithloriendun/99170428/
RESPONSIBLE GROWTH MANAGEMENT COALITION, INCORPORATED

RGMC, Inc
POBox 1826,  
Fort Myers, Florida, 33902

Ms Alexandra Sulecki,
Conservation Collier Coordinator,
Parks and Recreation Department,
Golden Gate Community Park,
3300 Santa Barbara Boulevard
Naples, Florida, 34106

March 20, 2018

Dear Ms Sulecki:

The Responsible Growth Management Coalition is a regional citizens’ organization that promotes that mixture of infrastructure, conservation of lands, and compact development. It is in light of that mission RGMC supports the acquisition of the Gore Property.

The Gore Property is an important link for panther movement in an area of high traffic and water drainage demand. Lands have been acquired for habitat for the panther within Collier County, and this property is important for connecting some of these pieces. Its importance is also represented by the activity of citizens as individuals and as public interest groups who are devoting time and effort in getting the property known, and in fundraising to assist in the purchase.

Conservation Collier is the leading local land purchase program, and its participation is critical. The property’s natural values deserves to be considered part of the A list considered for acquiring, and RGMC so supports it being placed on that list.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter,

On Behalf of RGMC,
Wayne Daltry,
Treasurer.