

# Proposal on the Need for New Economic Modeling in the Lee County DR/GR Studies

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The DR GR Studies in Lee County could clearly use a REMI (Regional Economic Modeling Inc) model for several reasons:

1. To estimate and compare the employment, income, and population projections under different assumptions of growth, of both the County and the DR/GR area.
2. To understand the DETAILED sectors in the regional economy, and hence, the REAL demand for land and water and also the derived demand for limestone rock, other than relating “need for mines” to “general population growth.”
3. The DETAILED sectors in a growth model connect us more accurately to the need for land, water, and social infrastructure, and pinpoint where “creative substitutions” or “best practices” might be employed to reduce ecological
4. Fortunately, the SFWMD already has a general license of the most detailed multi-sector county-level model for each county in the District. The Regional Planning Council might also have access to this, and the County might make some arrangement to piggy-back on the existing license. The REMI model is the most complete and state-of-the-art device available, but the off-the-shelf model must be “customized” and adapted to be of best use for Lee County.
5. An economic model tells, in great detail, about people, employment, migration, traffic, income, taxes, imports, etc., for the County. But it does not tell you WHERE in the county! It is not a spatial model. Nor does it say, “Sorry, not enough land. Not enough water.” It just assumes the resources are there. In that way, the economic model does give us a wonderful idea of the great economic pressures that are building under different growth scenarios (which the user specifies).
6. The detailed REMI model has a single general “Mining” sector and a general Agriculture sector. Therefore, I suggest hybridizing REMI with an IMPLAN model, which has much more detail, for example, “Crushed Rock” within the general “mining” and “Fruits,” “Cattle,” “Vegetables,” and “Nurseries,” within “agriculture.”
7. All the above I have already computed for the years through 2030 for the Lower West Coast Region (i.e. 4 counties, Collier, Lee, Hendry, and Glades) in my book, I also compare my land use findings to other researchers (i.e. Burchell). The methodology is hence laid out and tested. Perhaps the actual computations might be of use as well.
8. Thinking out loud, it might be useful for me to present an “open-ended seminar” on the uses of economic modeling to give you a better idea of how my work would be helpful to you. For example, Chapter 4 in my book is entitled, “Forecasting the Demand for Urban Land,” and it deals with transforming the results of the Economic Model into acres of land – under different growth paths. What will be left for Nature?
9. The Supply for Limestone Rock is quite another question, but the Demand for rock is best approached with industry projections tied to certain sectors of the economy, not simply to “population” growth, as is routinely done. Furthermore, the Supply of rock is, in itself, worthy of some research, not only on the existing permits in the county (and their yields), but also other conditions in the state, new mines, and expanding ports. I have been working on these subjects since August 2006.
10. Attached is a resume. Do call Richard Weisskoff, [rwecon@gate.net](mailto:rwecon@gate.net), phone: 305 651 2911.

Reference: Dean Liz Plater-Zybert is acquainted with my work on parkland acquisition in Central Broward.