

*Marjory Stoneman Douglas talks about the derivation of South Florida's Drinking Water:*

Interviewer: When you were, Marjory, when you were talking before about the pollution that comes from the Kissimmee system and ends up in the drinking water... Please describe how, what is the derivation of that drinking water?

MSD: Yes. Well, you see, the pollution that comes down the canal that was put through the meanders of the Kissimmee River comes chiefly from the dairy farms, the cattle meadows, the filling stations and whatever settlements have been built along that canal. I think the principle pollution seems to be untreated cow manure that the dairy people dump into the canal water, and that water comes rushing down to Lake Okeechobee, so that all that Northern portion of Lake Okeechobee is polluted, so that when you fly over it, you can see the water's brown. And it's polluted with plants, like this dreadful hydrilla, which floats just below the surface, and water hyacinths that, whatever it does to the water, it kills the fish. So that it is not only polluting the water, it is destroying the excellent freshwater fishing that has always existed in Lake Okeechobee. Then on the south, the sugar people irrigate, short irrigation canals. When they plant the sugarcane, they need water, and when the cane is growing, they back pump that water into the lake, well of course then it carries with it the ash of the burning fires and whatever pesticides and all that nutrients and human waste all sorts of things back into Lake Okeechobee, so the southern part of Lake Okeechobee is all polluted also. In fact you could be pretty sure all the water is polluted. That is the water that flows down the canals into the number two and number three conservancy basin, and again flows into our well fields from the other canals. You see, when they make a pond and pour the polluted water in it; it will not clean itself up. We understand, you learn from school, that running water always purifies itself. Well it does if it comes slowly enough and if there are meadows, grasses and plants along the way. But where they put it in standing ponds, the pollution just sticks to the bottom in a kind of nasty ooze, and there it is, and that gets into the other water. So the pond conditions do not clean it up. And what, of course, must be done with all that is very simple: you've got to make the people who cause the pollution stop it. The dairy people should keep that manure and put it into ponds or reservoirs or whatever they call it, and if there's a process by which they can divide or separate it off so they'll get very good fertilizer for their... they can make that, oh dear, what's that stuff? Gas, what is it, methane or something? Out of all that, and they can run, make electricity out of it, and they waste it as part of the stupidity of the whole process. It's just so stupid, as if we haven't grown up enough yet, as if we haven't known enough yet how to run profitable businesses with water taken care

of properly. That's the whole problem is that people along the banks and then they want the State of Florida to do the cleaning up. There has been all this talk about making the Rotenburger track and the Holyland into other basins in which the water could be poured and cleaned up, I don't know if they will make additional ones, I'm sure. They want that back pumped from the sugar farms into the basins by the State. Well, the sugar people should clean up their own act. So, just like the dairy farmers, it's no sense. Why should the people pollute the water and the State clean it up? There's no sense in it. The whole thing is very silly.