

*Marjory Stoneman Douglas talks about sources of Everglades Pollution:*

Interviewer: Are there sources of pollution...?

MSD: Man-made pollution. Originally there wasn't; it was good, clear water, because, why, there wouldn't be much pollution just birds and animals, and the sewage doesn't amount to anything from that. That would be cleaned up by the natural process of the flowing water. But with man around, egads, we've got every sort of thing. There is something like fifty-three sewerage plants up and down that stretch of canal, many of which don't do a very good job. It's almost untreated sewage that goes into the canal. Well that's silly. The whole thing's ridiculous.

I: And is it possible to do anything at the receiving end of... When we get it here in the city, is there anything that can be done to remove the pollutants?

MSD: Well no, we can't do anything, all we do is put all these chemicals; our water is overloaded with chemicals that can kill us. But you can't, either pollutants should be removed before you put it in the water, because that's where it should be handled. They should never have been allowed to dump untreated stuff into the water. And the funny part about it is that we have laws on the books, both state laws and federal laws, to prevent just that kind of pollution. But we cannot get the laws enforced; you can't tell the state departments to clean up their act, because the people who have all the, well the sugar people and the agriculture people and the cattle people have very strong lobbies, they have some of the strongest lobbies in the State of Florida. And they were forced; they don't want to clean up their act, they want the state to do it. Well, that's the way, the rest of us are stupid for not making them do it. Some years ago, Johnny Jones, who is head of the National Wildlife Federation, and I for the Friends of the Everglades, and, God bless them, the Coral Gables Women's Club, threatened to bring suit against the State of Florida and the federal government for not enforcing their own laws. And we had a big hearing, for a hearing officer; before you threaten to sue the government as a state, you have to give them sixty days in which there is a public hearing with a hearing officer, and they go over the evidence and see whether or not they are justified or not. So we had a hearing in which the wildlife people and ourselves, the Friends of the Everglades and the Women's Club, were represented by two very smart young lawyers. (Phone rings, then interruption) We had two very smart lawyers you see, and the other side, we sued the State of Florida, we sued

the Water Management District, we sued the DER, the DNR and everything else we could lay our hands on, but we did not sue the sugar people. They were the ones; it was the government we were suing for not enforcing the laws. Well, the sugar people came in as interveners, and they had six or seven lawyers; you've never seen so many lawyers. Only one of them was very good, really, the rest of them weren't very good, we didn't think. And our two smart boys and our case, and the hearing officer said, "No problem, they've got to clean up their act. You're completely right." So he told the DER to order the sugar people to clean up their act. Well, so then the DER said to the sugar people "you've got to clean up your act, but you can have two-three years to do it in." So there we were, back where we were again. And we didn't sue the federals, because it would have taken a year and a half to get on the agenda, so we gave up on the whole thing. But that's the kind of run around we've been getting. The sugar people, of course, are going to have to go, because they are exhausting the soil to such an extent. We will be rid of them, but I don't think we will be rid of them as soon as I would like. There may be fifteen years yet before they go. They ought to go sooner than that, really, if they had any sense, they would. So...