

*Marjory Stoneman Douglas talks about early pioneering efforts to establish the Everglades Park:*

Interviewer: You've mentioned Everglades National Park several times now, let's talk about Everglades National Park and the efforts to establish that Park. You were, you lived in Miami at that time. Can you describe those early efforts? Who was involved?

MSD: Well, I was... the man who started the whole idea of a National Park was a marvelous man by the name of Ernest F. Coe. Mr. Coe, C-O-E, who gave his life, the end of his life was given over, completely dedicated to making an Everglades National Park at the end of the peninsula. Now Mr. Coe, I couldn't say exactly when we began, but I would imagine was in the '30s. Because it was really twenty years, well that would make it like, like '27; it could have been way in there. It was about twenty years before we got it. Well, Mr. Coe for a while was the only one. He went to my father, who was Judge Stoneman on the *Herald*, editor of the *Herald*. My father agreed with him perfectly, and they organized a committee to help with the establishment of the Everglades National Park. The committee was headed by Dr. David Fairchild, and Mr. Coe was given a little bit of a salary and a little funny office, and he did it by doing nothing but talk about an Everglades National Park. He talked about it so much, to everybody, over and over again, that people really for the Park dreaded to stop to talk to him about it because he'd show them all the letters he'd written and all the letter he'd had and everything he was doing over and over again and that's what it took to get it established. So I was on later, I was on the committee, under David Fairchild, that brought people in from all over the country, not only the National Park people and government people, but private people interested in National Parks and we took them, we took a great, cruising houseboat called the Everglades, and they were on it. Ruth Bryan Owen, who was our representative from Congress, and I were the only two women. We had a marvelous time, of course, because they were some awfully interesting men. Dr. Gilbert Pearson who was then head of the then Federated Audubon Societies, Dr. Gilbert Grosvenor, who was editor and founder of the National Geographic, Horace Albright, who was the head of the National Park system and Arno Cammerer, who was the assistant and later became the head of the National Park system, and all kinds of other people. We took them around in The Everglades in a dirigible and an airplane and they saw the birds, there were marvelous birds in those days. You could look down on flights of birds covering the Everglades, almost.

We took them in small boats up to bird rookeries in the moonlight, the sunset and the moonlight with the birds coming over, and we were on the cruising houseboat up around the 10,000 islands and all around the edge to see if they thought the place was fit to be a National Park, and they unanimously decided that it must be a great National Park.