

*Marjory Stoneman Douglas talks about the source of Water, Rain and Desertification of the Everglades*

Marjory Stoneman Douglas: I hope we can all see the map, if I stand over here on this side, I think perhaps you can all get an idea of it. It shows the whole lower shape of Florida, of which you're perfectly familiar. But this map does not show, which I wish it had, that the South Florida Water Management area, which legally designates the confines of South Florida, begins just north of the Caloosahatchee River, which is here. And I had a big, black pencil or pen, I'd be marking this with an area that would go all the way up to... I hope I'm including Lake Kissimmee; I can't see it very well. We come down around the Kissimmee Valley over here to the east north of St. Lucie County and then so on down. So the shape of the South Florida water management area, and of South Florida, is not just the natural shape of the southern peninsula, but this funny shape going up to include the Kissimmee Basin, the Kissimmee River. Now, in South Florida, we have actually only one source of water, and that is rainfall. That theory has been kicking around for a great many years, but it was declared so by the EPA some years ago as a sole source area, which means that the federal government, or at least in the administration before this one, could step in and say, "If the sole source of water is going to be in danger, we will not supply any federal money if it's in danger." I don't think this administration would particularly care, but I hope that it's not going to last forever, so that that provision will take place again, that no federal money would be allowed for anything that would disturb the sole source of water. Now, the rainfall, and we've only recently brought the studies of the rainfall together, in a little booklet that I should have brought you copies of, which the Friends of the Everglades printed, a little book that's called that says, *Who Knows the Rain?* I got three different people to write essays in it that were people in authority. And we know now that our rain comes from three sources: on the prevailing westerlies, which are the prevailing westerlies of the entire country, when they come south of it we are likely to get rain from there, in the summers, chiefly, and the heavy rainfall season, we get rain bands and thunderstorms from the Atlantic. And the rest of the water that we get comes from the evaporation of rainwater in the wet Everglades. This theory is not necessarily new, but Dr. Patrick Gannon of NASA had been studying the Everglades for a great many years, and came up definitely with that theory, which is another reason for keeping the Everglades wet. If we have, if we let the Everglades dry up by over-drainage, we will lose a third, or at least a third, perhaps more, of our rainfall. If you don't have rain from the

water that evaporates and goes up into the clouds and comes down as rain, if you don't have that rainfall and that great cycle out of the Everglades, we are many more steps towards becoming a desert, which we could well become.