

*Marjory Stoneman Douglas proves that the Everglades is actually a river and not a swamp*

Marjory Stoneman Douglas: But the Everglades is rightly described as the area of the flowing water and the sawgrass. When you have the sawgrass and the flowing water, you have the Everglades. That is flow, that's not a swamp. For years and years and years it was considered a swamp; but it never was. It's completely flowing water and I think the only smart thing I did about that book was to decide that it was a river. I found out the definition of a river is a body of fresh water moving more in one direction than another. And I was given a map and I kept looking at it and I thought, "Well, then why isn't it a river?" You've got a source up here, of course you have rainfall but you also have the ground source you have the east bank, the edge of oolitic limestone in the Atlantic Ocean and the Everglades, the edge where the cities are. On the west side you have the almost right-angle triangle area of the Big Cypress and Devil's Garden to the north, south of the Caloosahatchee River, which is the west bank of the river, and you have the Ten Thousands Islands and the lower Cape Sable and all that as the delta, so I said, why isn't it a river? And I had been working with Mr. Parker, the hydrologist, who wrote the great report on the groundwater of Southeastern Florida, I said, "Well, Mr. Parker, do you think I can get away with calling it a river of grass?" 'Cause he's the one who told me about the grass and the water. And, the Indians call it Pah-hay-okee, or Grassy Water. And he said, "Why I think you could." Well, I saw him later and I said, "Well Mr. Parker, we got away with calling it 'The River of Grass,' as now has been pretty well adopted and it gets quoted here and there and all that." And he said, "Yes, you got away with it, but you know why you did?" He said because it's true! (*Laughter*). So, that really was well established and I've been very much amused. Mr. Parker is one of our greatest hydrologists and another man who used to be the head of the Geological Survey, Jim Hartwell. They have to go and testify in court cases that it's a river, (*laughter*). It amuses me very much that I really thought it up and now it's been proved to be legal. Hurray, hurray for our side! (*audience laughter*)