

*Marjory Stoneman Douglas discusses issues with water management and the importance of water for everything in the Everglades*

(2:12)

Interviewer: (15:12) Can you describe how the living system in the Park relies on water supply? What is the interaction between the water and the animals and the plant communities?

Marjory Stoneman Douglas: Well, if you don't have water they won't live: it's very simple. Same reaction there is with anybody; if you don't have water, you'll die. So they don't get water enough in the Park, which is a wetlands park. In the first place, if it doesn't get water enough, it dries, and it has been drying. And the melaleuca and the Brazilian pepper have been coming in, even down where the mangroves should be; it would be changing the whole nature of the Park. And of course the animals and the birds have to have water, you've gotta have water. So it's ridiculous that the water should not be sent down to the Park, and instead what they've been doing is dumping the water out down the Caloosahatchee and down the St. Lucie out to sea. Getting rid of it from the Okeechobee Basin without any consideration at all. Of course it is a problem when there is too much water to know what to do with it, but they haven't considered it properly. They haven't gotten together. This attempt on the part of Governor Graham to get the heads of the state departments together is the first time people have come together to consider the whole Everglades, and it's got to be a continuing process. And I, before, they could work with the federal government, even. I applaud heartily the Governor's effort to get going with some conferences on what must be done, not only to save the Park, but the whole system.

(17:00)