

What's at Stake?

by James Milton Carson

There are in the Everglades more than three million acres of land. More than a million acres of it are owned by the State of Florida - at present prices that million acres is worth from forty to a hundred million dollars - That is smallest of the things at stake -

In each ton of Everglades muck soil there is locked up plant food, which at government figures, has a fertilizing value of from six to eleven dollars a ton - Any one with the curiosity can figure for himself the potential value of the upper twelve inches of an acre of this land - I shall not put down the results; they are incredible - And there are three million acres -

But there are greater things at stake than these. Thousands of people, all over the country, are waiting now to go upon this land, make their homes,

and till the soil - Without allowing for towns and cities at all, there are in the Everglades, counting five to each family, future homes for more than a million people -

How much will the Everglades, when reclaimed, settled and cultivated, add to the taxable valuation of the state? How much per year will they add to the public revenues? How much to the wealth of the state and nation? And to their prosperity?

What is the worth to the state of one man, or woman? or child? What the worth of a million?

These stakes are large; but there is a greater still, the good name of the State of Florida and her people is that greater stake -

All these things are at stake in the Everglades of Florida, and upon the integrity, public spirit, and intelligence of five men at Tallahassee they now depend -