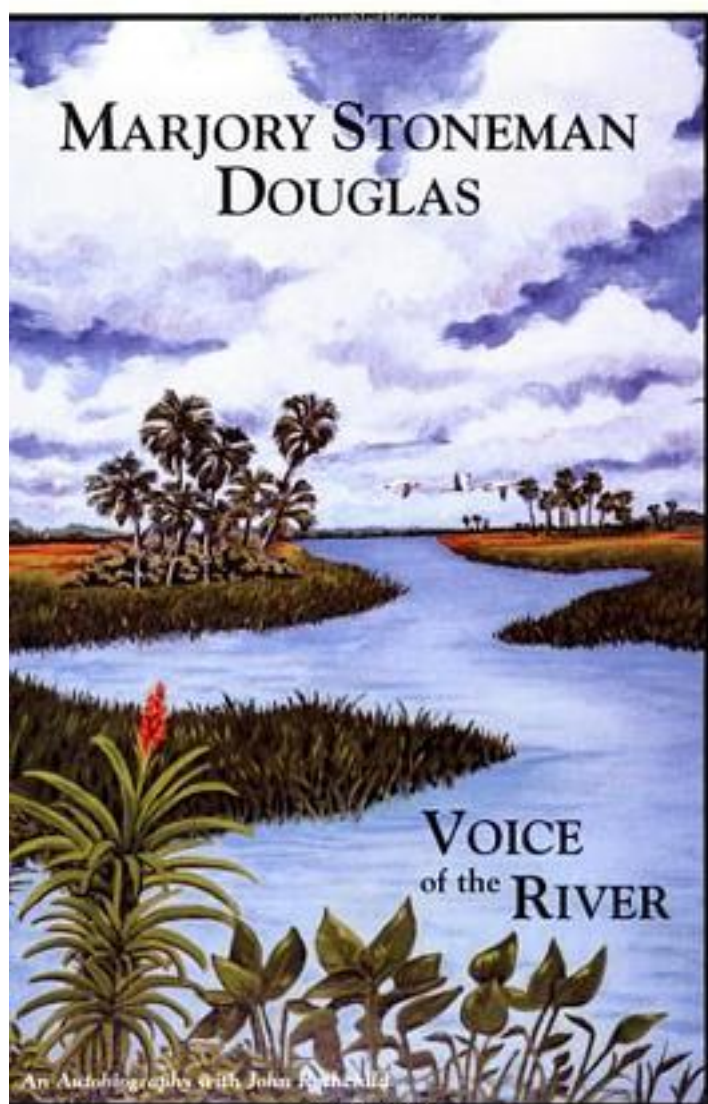


Voice of the River



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Introducnon.

Notes from a Fan

by John Rothchild

The first time I saw Marjory Stoneman Douglas was in the gymnasium of the Everglades City school. It was 1973, sometime in late summer, known locally as the mosquito season. An incredible optimist in this town of 100 stone crabbers and a handful of odd Yankees, lost in the fog of mosquitoes at the edge of the Everglades National Park, had proposed to build a suburb. The optimist needed a bridge permit, which was the subject of this public hearing, sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The suburb idea stirred up environmentalists from both sides of the state, and they were fighting the bridge permit. We townspeople, most of us opposed to the development ourselves, were delighted when Mrs. Douglas appeared in her famous floppy hat. We d heard that this powerful woman, old enough to be prehistoric by Florida standards, would not allow any suburbs in the Everglades. In fact, it was rumoured that she d more or less created the Everglades and was as fiercely protective as a

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