

## Don't Touch the Water!

Can you believe that St. Lucie River pollution has gotten so bad that we were warned not to make contact with the water?

That's a truly amazing insult to what was North America's most diverse and bountiful river.

The Florida Health Department posted the warning signs (shown above) all through the summer and fall. Muddy discharges still continue as never before to defile our waters.

Health authorities warn that swimming in waters with blue-green algae can cause "skin rash, runny nose...irritated eyes." Swallowing such water "can cause vomiting or diarrhea, affect your liver, poison pets."

Never has the St. Lucie suffered so much. Never has it needed your support so much.

## "We Won't Take It Any More!"

Those words form the rallying cry of the Rivers Coalition Defense Fund. We demand action. We must raise funds for an historic legal battle to save the wonderful but assaulted river we love so much.

The legal warfare will be tough, lengthy and costly. But the fight is worth it to restore our quality of life and our economy. Countless efforts over many years through political channels failed to stop the horrendous discharges that ruin our waters.

Now, we have no choice but to attack in court. With your help, we will win.

The Defense Fund is organized as a non-profit 501c.3 corporation. Read more about it at [RiversCoalition.org](http://RiversCoalition.org).

Send donations payable to:

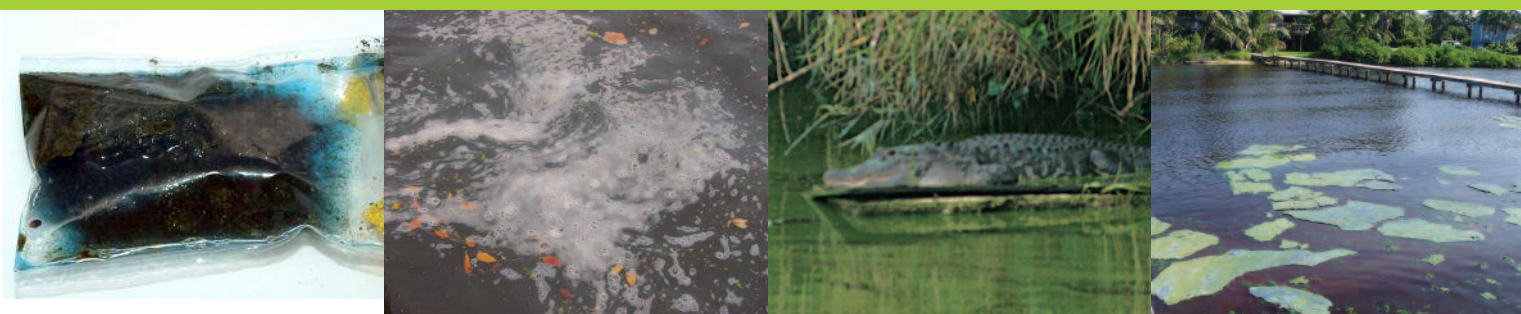
### Rivers Coalition Defense Fund

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# Enough Is Enough!



## Save Our River! Stop the Discharges



# We MUST Go to Court

Only a major court battle can bring back and save the great St. Lucie River. And only you can make it happen.

United, we can force state and federal authorities to stop the massive discharges from Lake Okeechobee that have degraded the St. Lucie to the point that it is a health hazard. Fish and other wildlife suffer, or leave.

Kids and grandkids are told to stay away. Water sports cease.

As expected, property values slide as a formerly pristine estuary is turned into a lifeless mudbath.

At the heart of the problem is Florida's Drainage Machine. This huge network of canals and control structures manipulates Lake Okeechobee water mainly for the benefit of the Everglades Agricultural Area. More than 500 billion gallons of turbid fresh water are discharged annually from the lake to ocean through the man-made St. Lucie Canal and to the west coast.

The Rivers Coalition Defense Fund intends to stop the large-scale discharges in the name of our citizens' basic right to enjoy clean water and the high quality of life that should go with a beautiful waterfront community.

**Q** *But what exactly do you want?*

**A** Our focus is to halt the huge discharges made to the estuaries when Lake Okeechobee is allowed to reach excessive heights. The high water virtually destroys the lake's ecosystem as well as ruining the rivers.

**Q** *How could they stop the big discharges?*

**A** By maintaining the lake at a much, much lower level while making "trickle" releases year-around, much of the problem can be solved.

**Q** *Even so, the water has to go somewhere, right?*

**A** Yes, and authorities must increase storage areas to retain more water. Once government makes a bonafide decision to stop the massive releases, there are many options in its "toolkit."

**Q** *What about the "bold and aggressive Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Recovery plan" we've been hearing about?*

**A** Unfortunately, the plan is neither bold nor aggressive and the planned projects are a re-hash of long-pending works that are too small to prevent the big discharges. Everything is designed to assure farmers of perfect drainage on property that was Mother Nature's wetlands, the River of Grass.

**Q** *But now they say hurricanes and record rainfall caused our troubles.*

**A** The truth is that the discharge assaults on our estuaries go back years before the storms. And last year's so-called record rains were only ten percent above average. Plus, some of our worst discharges occurred in under-average rain years.

**Q** *Sometimes we see the river cleaning up. Does this mean we're recovering?*

**A** No, the nasty water will hit us again as soon as the gates are opened more. Occasionally we do have some better times all right, but that's just a deceptive "calm eye in the discharge machine."

**Q** *Well, since the Florida Constitution says the state "shall" keep the rivers clean, why haven't lawmakers been made to answer for this outrage?*

**A** Sadly, it's very difficult to sue government, but the Rivers Coalition Defense Force, working with a nationally acclaimed legal team, believes it has grounds to require authorities to clean and protect the estuaries for the benefit of Florida citizens.

