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20 Things Every Rivers Coalition Member Should Know

1. What year was the C-44 canal connecting Lake Okeechobee and the South Fork of the St Lucie River completed, so as to drain wetlands for agricultural purposes south of the lake?

1923

2. What years was the C-44 canal majorly "improved" for more water to flow through to the St Lucie and why?

1926, 1928, 48 after deathly/flooding/crop destroying hurricanes

3. What are some of the recent groups/and or leaders that have fought for clean water in Martin County over the years?

Stuart News Editor, Ernest Lyons and the St Lucie Restoration League-1961; St Lucie River Initiative-1992

4. What year was the Rivers Coalition Formed?

1998

5. What is the mission of the Rivers Coalition?

"To fight for a healthy and ecologically balanced St Lucie River and Indian River Lagoon, natural resources that are vital to the economy and quality of life of Martin County and the Treasure Coast."

6. What happened in 2005 that caused such huge public outcry that the Rivers Coalition filed a law suit in Federal Court?

Hurricanes in 2004 and 2005 caused enormous discharges from the lake which in turn caused hideous green toxic al-gae blooms; the county health department posted NO SWIMMING signs; fish died, wildlife suffered, property values were a concern.

7. What was the outcome of the lawsuit filed and fought in the mid 2000's on behalf of the Rivers Coalition Defense Fund?

The judge handing the case cited "statute of limitations and the RC did not "win" but won huge public and state support

8. When is the last time the Army Corp of Engineers released polluted water from Lake Okeechobee into our St Lucie River?

2017

9. What are the names of the other two canals in our county not connected to Lake Okeechobee whose polluted freshwater runoff also pollutes our rivers and what do they drain?

C-23/C-24; they mostly drain St Lucie County agriculture lands, parts of western Martin County and the City of Port St Lucie

10. What are two things that individuals can do on their own properties to help promote clean river water?

Septic system maintenance and to refrain from fertilizing during rainy season.

11. According to Mark Perry of the Florida Oceanographic Society, how much water annually on average is diverted out of Lake Okeechobee?

717 billion gallons

12. What percentage is diverted to the St Lucie and Caloosahatchee Rivers, east and west of the Lake?

64%

13. What percentage goes to agriculture south of the lake?

23%

14. What percentage gets to the Everglades?

13%

15. Presently the South Florida Water Management District and the Army Corp of Engineers are working on the Central Everglades Planning Project to send 65 billion gallons a year south from the lake to the Everglades, when might this project be approved and completed?

By the end of 2013 but not completed for 10-13 years

16. What business is located directly south of the lake and what role do they play/not play in Everglades restoration and the removal of C-44 canal water flooding and polluting the St Lucie River?

Everglades Agricultural Area/their lands are key for a "flowway" south as they are in between Lake O and the Everglades

17. What is "nutrient pollution" and where does it come from, and how does it affect our rivers?

Many forms but primarily from Agri/Dairy Business's fertilizers/runoff; residential septic tanks and fertilizers

18. What does "nutrient" pollution do to the St Lucie Estuary and Indian River Lagoon?

It causes too many nutrients in the water that can lead to toxic al-gae blooms and unhealthy seagrasses as well as fish and dolphin immune deficiencies leading to disease

19. Who is primarily paying to clean this pollution up?

Taxpayers

20. What is the name of the youth, advocacy group of the Rivers Coalition and why are they so important?

(The River Kidz, they are important because we need people to fight our fight for many generations! We must pass the torch!

Extra Credit: What project is being built in western Martin County by the Army Corps and the South Florida Water Man. Dist. that will help enormously with C-44 BASIN runoff to the rivers and still needs help getting federally funded for completion?

C-44 STA/Storm Water Treatment Area