

"Crying Cow" cover illustration from a 1947 flood damage report

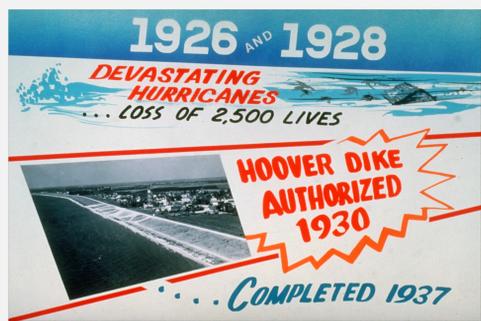
# FLORIDIANS SEEK MORE FEDERAL RELIEF

In the years before World War II, Florida begins an economic recovery and military buildup, spurring population growth. In 1940, the population reaches almost 2.9 million. For the first time, women outnumber men at 50.3 percent of the population. In 1947, after years of drought, the state is deluged by rainfall averaging 100 inches along the lower east coast, almost twice the norm. Much of the ground is saturated when two hurricanes hit the state late in the year; flooding throughout the region is catastrophic. Floridians ask the federal government for a master plan to balance the need for flood protection and reliable water supply.

## 1938

### Herbert Hoover Dike is completed.

Comprised of 67 miles of dikes along Lake Okeechobee's south shore and 15 miles of levees along the north shore near the town of Okeechobee, the dike is completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Additionally, the Caloosahatchee River is deepened to provide greater capacity to discharge water from the lake. The Corps begins regulating the lake's water level — maintaining a level between 14 and 17 feet — through discharges to the St. Lucie Canal and Caloosahatchee River.



Poster for Hoover Dike construction (actually completed in 1938)

## 1938

### Reservations are created for Seminoles.

In an effort to assist Seminoles suffering from the Great Depression, the federal government creates reservations at Big Cypress, Brighton and Hollywood. Other reservations in Tampa, Immokalee and Fort Pierce follow. Many move onto the reservations and today continue to promote and preserve Seminole culture.

## 1947

### Everglades National Park is established.

This same year, Marjory Stoneman Douglas publishes *The Everglades: River of Grass*. Decrying the fragmented drainage efforts of the state, she argues that to restore the beauty and natural condition of the Everglades, "a single plan of development and water control for the whole area" needs to be instituted. She concludes that the people of South Florida need to cooperate with the federal government to develop this project. Douglas is a lifelong staunch defender of the Everglades. She lives to be 108 and dies in Coconut Grove in 1998.



## 1947

### More than 90 percent of southeastern Florida floods.

Two hurricanes and a tropical disturbance only a few weeks apart result in more than \$59 million in damages. Water covering central and southern Florida is 6 to 7 feet deep in some areas and takes months to dissipate. Floridians south of the lake and in the southeastern coastal areas are stunned by the damage and duration of the flooding and demand that the federal government step in with a plan.



World War II GIs are welcomed to Morrison Field in West Palm Beach

## 1941 - 45

### Florida is a training ground for soldiers.

Tens of thousands of World War II soldiers train in the Sunshine State. The white sand and turquoise seas lull them back as residents or tourists in later years.



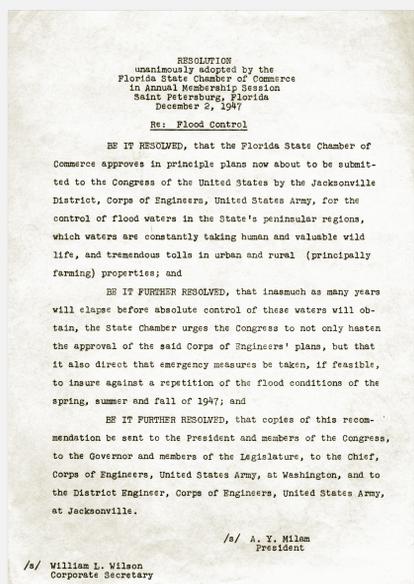
Farmers sandbagging in Okeechobee, July 1947

1938

1941

1947

1948



## 1948

### Congress adopts the Central and Southern Florida (C&SF) Project.

To better control extreme fluctuations of water, Congress authorizes \$208 million for a massive flood control project to cover 16,000 square miles of central and southern Florida. The federal Flood Control Act of 1948 includes the C&SF Project and begins the implementation of a comprehensive water management program in South Florida.