

Bud Jordan  
12 Castle Hill Way  
Stuart, FL 34996

January 11, 2017

**AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC COUNCIL OF MARTIN COUNTY**

As the last of the five founding members of the Economic Council of Martin County, these are my thoughts:

The Economic Council's mission is the promotion of initiatives that benefit businesses. In my opinion the largest economic engine in Martin County is the St. Lucie River. The pollution damage to this body of water has cost local businesses millions of dollars. The Economic Council should be front line fighters in the effort to clean up the river. Lake Okeechobee discharges need to go south to relieve the pressure on the southern part of the dam and reduce discharges to the St. Lucie River. The lake is too large to have only two outlets. If Big Sugar does not join the effort to get water south, the battle will continue. I worry about the safety of the dam and a possible breach which could be catastrophic for both businesses and the safety of lives. New Orleans, Mississippi Delta, North Carolina, West Virginia and Pennsylvania have all had these "low probability" disasters in the past few years. We do not want to see the result of an extended storm over Lake Okeechobee. Climate change can cause unbelievable results not contemplated by our forecasters.

The problems I see are:

1. Big Sugar sends large contributions to political candidates. Elected officials may say they are not affected by this. They may also believe in the Easter Bunny.
2. It is hard to overcome 50+ lobbyists in Tallahassee and 100+ lobbyists in Washington, D.C. trying to influence our legislature in favor of Big Sugar's interests.

3. Some farm land in Martin County is now converting to sugar cane production.
4. A sugar representative is now a top level member of our Economic Council.
5. Sugar is a master at suggesting water control options that sound reasonable but compromise the real need to send water south. South Florida Water Management District had a study saying water stored south of the lake is three times better than northern storage. The northern storage suggestion will not solve the problem because once filled the maximum capacity would only equal to one foot of water from the top of Lake Okeechobee. Then water would still flow south into the lake and under the current release schedule cause the St. Lucie River to be inundated with billions of gallons of water a day for multiple days. This causes pollution beyond reason. Northern storage could cost a billion dollars and take 20 years to complete. In the meantime there is no relief for our water shed.
6. The Economic Council has not put their solutions in the proper priority order. In my opinion sending water south must be the first solution. After that other storage and distribution solutions will help.

It is with a heavy heart that I resign my membership in the Economic Council of Martin County because I believe their major objectives have been compromised.

Sincerely,

Bud Jordan

cc: Mr. Nat Reed

Mr. Kevin Henderson