Eco-disaster

Our water, our homes, our livelihoods and our children have been put at risk over the last 60 years by South Florida Water Management, Big Sugar and, unwittingly, the Army Corps of Engineers.

The property owned by “big sugar” was simply part of the wetlands until it was drained. It is incredibly fertile “muck” created by the draining of 400,000 acres of swampland by Army Corps and now owned by the sugar industry.

The land is available, or was, at $4,500 per acre. Even the acquisition of the land would not resolve the threat of a dike breach at Lake Okeechobee but, if the land was returned to its original marshland state, there would be no reason for the “farming” community of Clewiston, which consists of about 35,000 residents, not to be relocated. They are there, by in large, to serve the labor requirements of the sugar industry.

The five counties being damaged by the toxic pollutant “blue-green” algae shipped out of Lake O down the St. Lucie and the Caloosahatchee Rivers have a population of about 1.8 million residents.

The damage to our property values, the ecosystems and the tourist industries on both coasts from this unchecked problem is virtually incalculable and a satisfactory solution to end this nightmare has been avoided like the plague by our longest sitting senator. Why is that?

Max Christian, St. James City

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