

[PDF] River Of Lakes: A Journey On Florida's St. Johns River

Bill Belleville - pdf download free book



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Description:

Less well known than the embattled Everglades, northern Florida's St. Johns River has long been subject to the same forces that have imperiled that vast wetland. "The St. Johns," writes naturalist Bill Belleville, "is surely one long and meandering palimpsest," a place that has been remade many times over as humans have sought to grow crops, raise livestock, and otherwise make the river bend to their will. With 3.5 million people now living in its broad valley, the St. Johns is coming under

increased pressure to change, its dense forests cleared for shopping malls and housing developments.

The river harbors many secrets, and Belleville is only too happy to share them as he makes a case for why the river should be allowed to follow its own path. It is a place, he writes, of giant snails and nesting herons, a place of wild storms and suffocatingly hot days. And more: it is a place of rare qualities, one that deserves to be protected. The author writes approvingly of grassroots efforts to do just that. His book is a fine piece of advocacy journalism blended with memoir, as he recounts his long history kayaking and hiking the length of the St. Johns. In Belleville, the river has a gifted champion. --*Gregory McNamee* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Library Journal The St. Johns River flows for 310 miles from its headwaters near Lake Okeechobee northward through Jacksonville to the Atlantic. John James Audubon and Winslow Homer painted the river; Friedrich Delius was inspired by it to compose Florida Suite. John and William Bartram, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Sidney Lanier, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, and James Branch Cabell described its scenery and wildlife. Belleville, an environmental writer and filmmaker, ambitiously becomes the St. Johns's latest chronicler. His narrative of a journey through its waters, though perhaps less lyrical than his predecessors', is knowledgeable and compelling. Although much of the river's beauty endures, farm runoff, industrial pollution, and overdevelopment threaten its unique ecology. Although he does not neglect the historical and cultural richness that led to the river's 1998 designation as an "American Heritage River," Belleville emphasizes the need for careful stewardship of its unique biological diversity. Essential for Florida libraries, this is recommended as well for ecological or natural history collections.

--*Kathleen Arsenault, Univ. of South Florida at St. Petersburg Lib.*

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