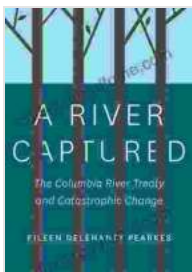


The Columbia River Treaty and Catastrophic Change: A Wake-Up Call for the Pacific Northwest

The Columbia River Treaty is a 50-year agreement between the United States and Canada that governs the operation of the dams on the Columbia River. The treaty was signed in 1961 and has been in effect since 1964. The treaty has had a profound impact on the Pacific Northwest, providing flood control, irrigation, and hydroelectric power. However, the treaty is now up for renewal, and there are growing concerns that it is not sustainable.



A River Captured: The Columbia River Treaty and Catastrophic Change by Bonnie Louise Kuchler

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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The Columbia River Basin is home to over 8 million people and is one of the most important agricultural regions in the United States. The dams on the Columbia River provide flood control, irrigation water, and hydroelectric power for the region. However, the dams have also had a negative impact

on the environment, including blocking salmon migration and creating reservoirs that trap sediment.

Climate change is also posing new challenges to the Columbia River Treaty. The glaciers that feed the Columbia River are melting at an accelerated rate, which is reducing the amount of water available for flood control and irrigation. Climate change is also increasing the risk of extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, which could put the dams at risk.

The Columbia River Treaty is up for renewal in 2024. There is a growing consensus that the treaty needs to be updated to address the challenges of climate change and sustainability. However, there is no consensus on what the new treaty should look like.

This book explores the potential consequences of renewing the Columbia River Treaty in its current form. The book also provides a roadmap for a more sustainable future, including recommendations for how to reduce the environmental impacts of the dams and how to adapt to the challenges of climate change.

The Consequences of Renewing the Columbia River Treaty

The Columbia River Treaty has had a profound impact on the Pacific Northwest, both positive and negative. The dams on the Columbia River have provided flood control, irrigation water, and hydroelectric power for the region. However, the dams have also had a negative impact on the environment, including blocking salmon migration and creating reservoirs that trap sediment.

Climate change is posing new challenges to the Columbia River Treaty. The glaciers that feed the Columbia River are melting at an accelerated rate, which is reducing the amount of water available for flood control and irrigation. Climate change is also increasing the risk of extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, which could put the dams at risk.

If the Columbia River Treaty is renewed in its current form, the following consequences are likely to occur:

- The dams will continue to block salmon migration, which could lead to the extinction of some salmon runs.
- The reservoirs behind the dams will continue to trap sediment, which will reduce the amount of water available for flood control and irrigation.
- The dams will continue to generate hydroelectric power, but the amount of power generated will decline as the glaciers that feed the Columbia River melt.
- The dams will be at increased risk of failure due to climate change, which could lead to catastrophic flooding.

A Roadmap for a More Sustainable Future

The Columbia River Treaty needs to be updated to address the challenges of climate change and sustainability. The following recommendations provide a roadmap for a more sustainable future:

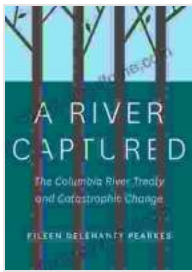
- **Remove the dams on the lower Snake River:** This would allow salmon to migrate to their spawning grounds and would reduce the risk of catastrophic flooding.

- **Install fish ladders on the remaining dams:** This would allow salmon to bypass the dams and would help to restore salmon runs.
- **Reduce the amount of water stored in the reservoirs:** This would reduce the risk of sediment trapping and would increase the amount of water available for flood control and irrigation.
- **Increase the use of renewable energy sources:** This would reduce the reliance on hydroelectric power and would help to mitigate the effects of climate change.
- **Develop a comprehensive flood management plan:** This would help to reduce the risk of flooding and would protect communities from the impacts of climate change.

The Columbia River Treaty is a critical agreement that has a profound impact on the Pacific Northwest. The treaty is up for renewal in 2024, and there is a growing consensus that it needs to be updated to address the challenges of climate change and sustainability. The recommendations in this book provide a roadmap for a more sustainable future for the Columbia River Basin.

About the Author

Dr. Robert Lackey is a professor of fisheries science at Oregon State University. He has been studying the Columbia River Basin for over 30 years and is a leading expert on the environmental impacts of dams. Dr. Lackey is a member of the Independent Scientific Advisory Board for the Columbia River Treaty and is the author of numerous publications on the Columbia River Basin.



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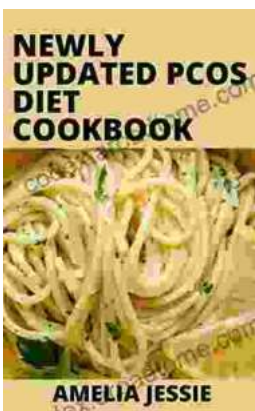
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