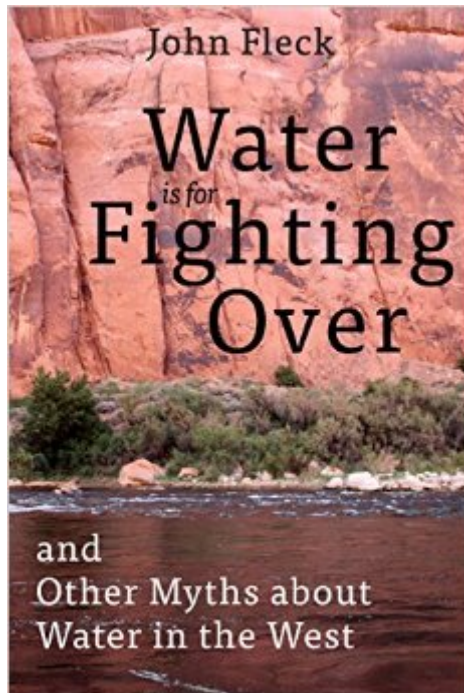


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# Water Is For Fighting Over: And Other Myths About Water In The West



## Synopsis

When we think of water in the West, we think of conflict and crisis. In recent years, newspaper headlines have screamed, "Scarce water and the death of California farms." "The Dust Bowl returns." "A 'megadrought' will grip U.S. in the coming decades." Yet similar stories have been appearing for decades and the taps continue to flow. John Fleck argues that the talk of impending doom is not only untrue, but dangerous. When people get scared, they fight for the last drop of water; but when they actually have less, they use less. Having covered environmental issues in the West for a quarter century, Fleck would be the last writer to discount the serious problems posed by a dwindling Colorado River. But in that time, Fleck has also seen people in the Colorado River Basin come together, conserve, and share the water that is available. Western communities, whether farmers and city-dwellers or US environmentalists and Mexican water managers, have a promising record of cooperation, a record often obscured by the crisis narrative. In this fresh take on western water, Fleck brings to light the true history of collaboration and examines the bonds currently being forged to solve the Basin's most dire threats. Rather than perpetuate the myth "Whiskey's for drinkin', water's for fightin' over," Fleck urges readers to embrace a new, more optimistic narrative—a future where the Colorado continues to flow.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a native of the Rocky Mountains, the Colorado River is a part of the soul of everyone who cares

about water in the west. While many stories, books, and symposiums dwell on the doom and gloom aspect of water in the West, John Fleck has written a book that dispels the myths of the system and how people and agencies can work together with legal or court mandated rules. If water in the Colorado River basin has any interest for you, you need to read this book to get a real grasp of how water is managed today! My father was very involved in water for both agriculture and for citizens, he knew and worked hard on the uses and sharing of water. It is a critical resource in the west. Cooperation, not legal battles, are the real need for water now and in the future. John Fleck's book will be a real source of information for anyone wanting to grasp the full story of where the Colorado River water is and where it is going. Well written and even better researched and documented.

John Fleck's writing style is such that I could read and enjoy nearly anything he chose to write. That is certainly the case here. While I am no expert in the water issues of the Western US, only a few chapters in and I was already rethinking my assumptions. Perhaps the most important thing this book provides, however, is a positive outlook on a large and divisive problem. We could use a lot more of that these days.

After years of delving deep into western water issues as a journalist and an academic, John Fleck has produced a clear and sometimes counterintuitive look at the way the West handles its water, trying to make growth and water-heavy agriculture compatible with declining supplies. Clear, insightful, and for fans of the convoluted history of water distribution in desert lands, "Water is for Fighting Over" is worthy of placement on the shelf next to "Cadillac Desert."

For anyone who wants to understand how the Colorado River actually works today - John Fleck's book is a must read. The author has done the hard work (so you don't have to) to understand - and explain - the complex system of laws, agreements and relationships on the Colorado River. The writing is clear and the observations are full of insights. It's a peek inside a system that has offered solutions over the past two decades - solving Indian water rights, forging agreements across state and international borders. The question is whether society can keep up with the rate of change that is unfolding. This book will give you balanced doses of realism and optimism. Buy it. Read it.

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