



The River Returns: An Environmental History of the Bow

Christopher Armstrong, Matthew Evenden, H.V. Nelles

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Alberta's iconic river has been dammed and plumbed, made to spin hydro-electric turbines, and used to cleanse Calgary. Artificial lakes in the mountains rearrange its flow; downstream weirs and ditches divert it to irrigate the parched prairie. Far from being wild, the Bow is now very much a human product: its fish are as manufactured as its altered flow, changed water quality, and newly stabilized and forested banks. The River Returns brings the story of the Bow River's transformation full circle through an exploration of the recent revolution in environmental thinking and regulation that has led to new limits on what might be done with and to the river. Rivers have been studied from many perspectives, but too often the relationship between nature and people, between rivers and the cultures that have grown up beside them, have been separated. The River Returns illuminates the ways in which humans, both inadvertently and consciously, have interacted with nature to make the Bow.



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