



# The Western Confluence: A Guide To Governing Natural Resources

*Will Harmon, Matthew McKinney*

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For 150 years, the American West has been shaped by persistent conflicts over natural resources. This has given rise to a succession of strategies for resolving disputes-prior appropriation, scientific management, public participation, citizen ballot initiatives, public interest litigation, devolution, and interest-based negotiation. All of these strategies are still in play, yet the West remains mired in gridlock. In fact, these strategies are themselves a source of conflict.

The Western Confluence is designed to help us navigate through the gridlock by reframing natural resource disputes and the strategies for resolving them. In it, authors Matthew McKinney and William Harmon trace the principles of natural resource governance across the history of western settlement and reveal how they have met at the beginning of the twenty-first century to create a turbid, often contentious confluence of laws, regulations, and policies. They also offer practical suggestions for resolving current and future disputes. Ultimately, Matthew McKinney and William Harmon argue, fully integrating the values of interest-based negotiation into the briar patch of existing public decision making strategies is the best way to foster livable communities, vibrant economies, and healthy landscapes in the West.

Relying on the authors' first-hand experience and compelling case studies, The Western Confluence offers useful information and insight for anyone involved with public decision making, as well as for professionals, faculty, and students in natural resource management and environmental studies, conflict management, environmental management, and environmental policy.

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