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1991

**Controlling Water Use: The Unfinished Business of Water Quality Protection**

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DAVID H. GETCHES, LAWRENCE J. MACDONNELL & TERESA A. RICE, CONTROLLING WATER USE: THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF WATER QUALITY PROTECTION (Natural Res. Law Ctr., Univ. of Colo. Sch. of Law 1991) [abstract and table of contents only].

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Controlling Water Use: The Unfinished Business of Water Quality Protection


Extensive water development in arid western states has left many streams and lakes degraded in quality. While laws exist to regulate the direct introduction of pollutants into streams, the negative impact on water quality resulting from diversions and river depletions are often beyond the scope of existing legal regimes. As the western states seek to maintain and improve the water quality of their lakes, streams and aquifers, they are learning that the full spectrum of causes of water quality problems must be addressed.

Controlling Water Use: The Unfinished Business of Water Quality Protection addresses this issue in four sections. Part One gives an overview of state water pollution control in the West. Typical state programs are examined, as well as the federal framework in which they exist. The programs are discussed in light of achievement of water quality goals based on comments received from state officials, federal agencies, citizen action groups, and others. Part Two explores several situations in which water uses authorized under state law can result in degraded water quality. The examples fall into four categories: (1) depletion degradation; (2) physical alteration; (3) pollution migration; and (4) incidental pollution. Part Three surveys several approaches that can be taken at the state level to protect water quality in prior appropriation jurisdictions; examples are taken from existing state programs but most have not been broadly applied. Finally, in Part Four, general recommendations are offered for policies, programs and procedures to achieve the water quality necessary to ensure a continuation and expansion of valuable uses of water. This section is intended as a guide for public officials and concerned citizens interested in improving water quality.
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