



# **A Land Made from Water: Appropriation and the Evolution of Colorado's Landscape, Ditches, and Water Institutions**

*Robert R. Crifasi*

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*A Land Made from Water* chronicles how the appropriation and development of water and riparian resources in Colorado changed the face of the Front Range—an area that was once a desert and is now an irrigated oasis suitable for the habitation and support of millions of people. This comprehensive history of human intervention in the Boulder Creek and Lefthand Creek valleys explores the complex interactions between environmental and historical factors to show how thoroughly the environment along the Front Range is a product of human influence.

Author Robert Crifasi examines the events that took place in nineteenth-century Boulder County, Colorado, and set the stage for much of the water development that occurred throughout Colorado and the American West over the following century. Settlers planned and constructed ditches, irrigation systems, and reservoirs; initiated the seminal court decisions establishing the appropriation doctrine; and instigated war to wrest control of the region from the local Native American population. Additionally, Crifasi places these river valleys in the context of a continent-wide historical perspective.

By examining the complex interaction of people and the environment over time, *A Land Made from Water* links contemporary issues facing Front Range water users to the historical evolution of the current water management system and demonstrates the critical role people have played in creating ecosystems that are often presented to the public as “natural” or “native.” It will appeal to students, scholars, professionals, and general readers interested in water history, water management, water law, environmental management, political ecology, or local natural history.

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