

**Hulse, David, Stan Gregory, and Joan Baker, ed. *Willamette River Basin Planning Atlas*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2002. (Reviewed by Kate Koehler)**

The *Willamette River Basin Planning Atlas: Trajectories of Environmental and Ecological Change*, an atlas compiled by the Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium, is an excellent source on the Willamette River. This atlas was compiled by a team of more than 30 researchers as a resource for “people interested in what the future may hold for the Willamette River Basin in Oregon.” (pg.1) It examines the physical, biological, and human history of the basin, utilizing scientific data and observations, in order to “help both policymakers and local citizens make better decisions about land and water use in this region” (pg. 1) by providing a “long-term, large-scale perspective on changes in human and natural systems within the basin.” (pg. 5)

## **Critique**

This atlas is presented in a readable fashion, written for the layperson. It is well-organized, beginning with an introduction stating the book's objectives and set-up, before detailing each section. The first five chapters of the atlas explain the human and biological factors and history surrounding the basin, divided into landforms, water resources, biotic systems, human population, and land use and land cover sections. These chapters provide basic background information to the reader.

After presenting a historical and scientific background, the atlas offers three “visions” of what the basin may look like in 2050. These scenarios include the effects of a conservative approach, as well as an approach that follows current trends in policy, and a third developmental approach. These various scenarios are then evaluated on how they will affect the ecological conditions of the tributary streams and Willamette, water availability and use, and the wildlife. The atlas concludes by offering restoration strategies for the Willamette.

The restoration ideas, along with the ecological background and potential scenarios for the future of the Willamette, make this atlas an extremely comprehensive source. It is easy to understand, with facts supplemented by tables, graphs, and maps. In addition, various laws, government agencies, and scientific jargon are defined, enhancing the reader's ability to grasp the concepts presented in the source. The appendix further clarifies the information presented, explaining topics such as topographical maps and map error, geological concepts, vegetation taxonomy, and river channel maps.

Besides presenting information in a clear manner, this atlas includes an extensive bibliography with over 150 sources. The atlas was published in 2002, making it a recent source. However, it also includes an abundance of historical information, offering a complete picture of the Willamette. The researchers come from a variety of government organizations, corporations, and universities. The atlas leans towards a conservation approach, important information to keep in mind with reading this report.

Because of this leaning, some of the statistics should be viewed with scrutiny. For example, in the

introduction it states that “the high quality of life and quality of the environment are major factors in attracting people to this region” (pg. 4), quoting statistics from a website. However, the website which offered the survey is the Willamette Valley Livability Forum, created to “develop and promote a shared vision for enhancing the livability of the Willamette River Basin.” (pg. 4) It is likely that the people responding to this survey do not represent an accurate cross-section of the Willamette valley population. However, overall this atlas appears to offer an abundance of accurate, detailed information about the natural and cultural history of the Willamette, as well as innovative ideas about how to restore the river.

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