SELECTED READINGS IN THE
HISTORY OF THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Introduction to the Selected Readings List

Readers in the history of Reclamation will quickly learn that writers differ markedly on how to interpret its past. Historical accounts about the Bureau of Reclamation often, more so than for other Department of the Interior bureaus, have been colored sharply by their time and by the personal views of the author. Writers over time have perceived Reclamation as both hero and villain. Historical interpretation of Reclamation is a very complex task because a constantly evolving body of legislation, decisions, policies, and politics has combined with the changing economic health of the nation to shape Reclamation over nearly a century.

This “Selected Reading List” is an attempt to provide a starting point for readers interested in the history of Reclamation or the evolution of Western water policy and development. Various, occasionally extreme, points of view are represented in this list. Before arriving at final conclusions about the difficult public policy issues raised by Reclamation’s historic role in Western water development and management, the careful researcher will read fairly extensively. Charles Wilkinson’s Crossing the Next Meridian contains a brief overview of Reclamation’s history and evolution that is generally good, and readers might find that a useful place to begin looking at Reclamation’s history.

Primary and original records related to Bureau of Reclamation history. Unlike the situation with most other Federal agencies, researchers in the history of Reclamation will find the Bureau of Reclamation’s historic records concentrated in one location — the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) branch on the Denver Federal Center in Lakewood, Colorado. Records held there include over 9,000 cubic feet of material which include correspondence, memoranda, project histories, construction notes, drawings, plans and maps, and photographs. More recent Reclamation records of interest to researchers are held in Reclamation offices in Washington, D.C. and Denver, regional offices, area offices, and field offices.

In addition, the records of the Secretary of the Interior and of other Federal agencies may be useful research sources. These records are located in NARA in College Park, Maryland, and in various Federal offices and NARA branches in the West.

Selected Reading List


Selected Bibliography: Bureau of Reclamation


Allen, Marion V., collection editor, Pacific Constructors, Inc.. “The Headtower” a monthly newsletter aimed at safety of the workers of Pacific Constructors, Inc., published monthly at Shasta Dam, California from June 1941 to June 1944.

Allen, Marion V. Shasta Dam and Its Builders. Shingletown, California: Marion V. Allen, 1987 (second printing).


American Indian Lawyer Training Program. Indian Tribes and Sovereign Governments. Oakland, California: American Indian Resources Institute, 1988


Selected Bibliography: Bureau of Reclamation


Downey, Senator Sheridan. *They Would Rule the Valley.* San Francisco: Sheridan Downey, 1947. [Central Valley Project and acreage limitation to which Senator Downey was opposed.]


Selected Bibliography: Bureau of Reclamation 16


Kipp, Henry W.,”A Short History of Irrigation of Indian Agricultural Lands of the United States,” Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1988?.


Mawn, Geoffrey Padraic. “Phoenix, Arizona: Central City of the Southwest, 1870-1920,” a two volume unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Arizona State University, August 1979. (This is not held by University Microfilms of Ann Arbor, Michigan.)


Selected Bibliography: Bureau of Reclamation 23


__________. *Water, Land, and Law in the West.* Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1996.


Selected Bibliography: Bureau of Reclamation 26


Selected Bibliography: Bureau of Reclamation 30


Sheller, Roscoe. *Irrigation in the Valleys of the Yakima*. Denver: Bureau of Reclamation, n.d..


Udall, Stewart L. Interviews by Joe B. Frantz, 1969, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, Austin, Texas.


10. "Native Americans"


Selected Bibliography:  Bureau of Reclamation


Zuniga, Jennifer, “Clotilde Amador de Terraza’s Damage Claim Against the Bureau of Reclamation,” Edited papers from the Archives of the New Mexico State University collections held in the library of the Bureau of Reclamation, Denver.