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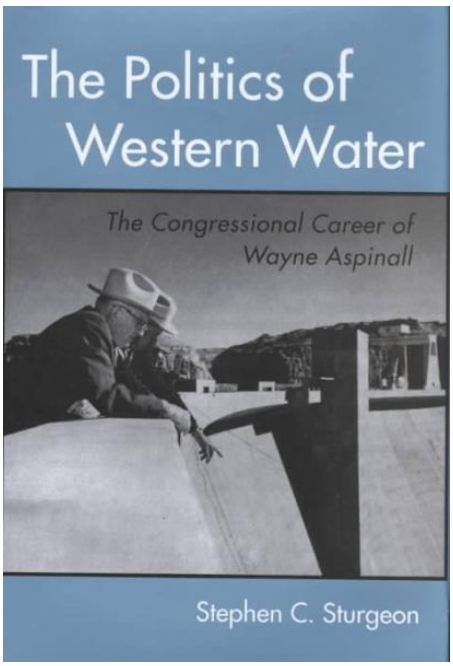
The Politics of Western Water: The Congressional Career of Wayne Aspinall

Sturgeon, Stephen C.



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Sturgeon, Stephen C. *The Politics of Western Water: The Congressional Career of Wayne Aspinall*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2002. As the Democratic congressman from Colorado from 1949 to 1973, Wayne Aspinall was an advocate of natural resource development and, in particular, reclamation projects. Fiercely protective of western Colorado's water supply, Aspinall sought to secure prosperity for his district by protecting its share of Colorado River water through federal reclamation projects. This full-length study of Aspinall's importance to reclamation in the West clarifies his role in influencing western water policy. Stephen Sturgeon provides a detailed account of the political machinations and personal foibles that shaped Aspinall's efforts to implement water reclamation legislation in support of Colorado's Western Slope, along the way shedding new light on familiar water controversies. Sturgeon meticulously traces the influences on Aspinall's thinking and the arc of his career, examining the congressman's involvement in the Colorado River Storage Project bill and his clash with conservationists over the proposed Echo Park Dam; recounting the fight over the Frying Pan-Arkansas

Project and his decision to support diverting water out of his own district; and exploring the battles over the Central Arizona Project, in which Aspinall fought not only environmentalists but also other members of Congress. *The Politics of Western Water* is an insightful account of the political, financial, and personal variables that affect the course by which water resource legislation is conceived, supported, and implemented—a book that is essential to understanding the history and future of water in the West. (Text adapted from University of Arizona Press website.)

Related links:

- H-Environment, H-Net Reviews, reviewed by Kathleen Brosnan
  http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php
- University of Arizona Press featuring this book
  http://www.uapress.arizona.edu/Books/bid1459.htm

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