Sedjo’s volume presents a series of papers initially presented at a conference in 1999. Several of the papers are quite good, others add little to our understanding or the search for solutions. Among the best are chapters by Jack Ward Thomas, Clark Binkley, and Sally Fairfax. Former forest service chief Thomas argues that one of the fundamental problems for the USDA is that there are too many laws that direct the agency to do too many things without establishing clear priorities. For many years, Thomas argued that the Endangered Species Act combined with the regulations that implement the National Forest Management Act trumped all of the other laws. When a species is listed as endangered, the management agencies (the USDA and BLM) must have their actions approved by either the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service. These agencies have a very different goal than balancing demands among competing interests. Thomas suggests that the national forests have a new de facto mission—endangered species management. That this has happened without active acknowledgment by the legislature and the executive creates additional problems. Given the high stakes and deeply divided interest groups in federal environmental politics, there is too much to lose and too little to gain for elected officials to provide much leadership.

Binkley argues that in the future management of natural forests for timber production will decline and gradually be supplanted by fiber from plantation forests. This change presents the Forest Service (and BLM) with new opportunities to adopt a mix of management strategies that focus on public (nonmarket) values. Like many forest economists before him (including Clawson), Binkley suggests that the national forests divest themselves of their most productive timber lands and use the proceeds to acquire other lands that are more appropriate for public values. While economically efficient, this suggestion is difficult to take seriously given the politics of public land management. But Binkley suggests that we consider alternative organizational structures including a public corporation (like the U.S. Postal Service) empowered to charge for all of the products that it produces in the market (recreation, water, timber, and livestock forage) and contract with the government for carbon sequestration and other nonmarket values.

Perhaps the most thought provoking of the papers is contributed by Sally Fairfax. Over the last few years, Fairfax and her co-authors have argued for adapting and adopting the trust model for public lands management. Twenty-two western states currently manage state lands under a trust arrangement under which a trustee manages the assets for the benefit of a specific beneficiary. Fairfax argues that important institutional changes during the last 100 years should lead us to significant changes in the mission and structure of the national forests and public lands. Her chapter is an excellent primer on the concept and is probably worth the price of the book by itself.

Many of the other papers lead us toward succotash. Nelson and modeling is discussed, and the importance for setting proper water quality goals is emphasized. Reliable monitoring of using science and technology to overcome values debates. and setting proper water quality goals will maximize the effi-

This is a book that will find a place on the shelves of most natural resources policy scholars. Some of the contributions accurately diagnose the underlying problems of management on public lands, but in the end it is Binkley who give us food for thought.

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Clean Coastal Waters: Understanding and Reducing the Effects of Nutrient Pollution


This book is the result of the collective wisdom of the NRC’s Committee on the Causes and Management of Eutrophication. It contains an introduction to the degree of eutrophication in the U.S. coastal environment, discussion of causes including disturbance, nutrient overenrichment, and suggestion of mitigation strategies to alleviate this phenomenon. This book has three parts. The first part provides an introduction and overview to nutrient overenrichment in coastal waters and its role for causing eutrophication and other consequences such as loss of seagrasses, algal blooms, and coral reef decline. It is clear from this section that nutrient-induced eutrophication is a widely occurring problem along the U.S. coastal lines and has already caused serious disturbances. The second section discusses the importance of using science and technology to overcome values debates. and setting proper water quality goals. It is stressed that while phosphorous is not the only nutrient in coastal systems, it is the most important player in coastal water eutrophication. Eutrophication increases oxygen consumption in the system, and when oxygen levels are low (hypoxic) or oxygen-free (anoxic) we have dead water. This can further lead to fish kills and other more subtle changes. The last chapter reviews strategies for the abatement of nutrient overenrichment in coastal marine ecosystems. The role of nutrient overenrichment is discussed, and the importance of specific water quality goals is emphasized. Reliable monitoring and data collection is stressed, and nutrient overenrichment is further discussed in the context of coastal waters and the roles of specific water quality goals is emphasized.