THE FLOOD CONTROL CONTROVERSY


This book, sponsored by the Conservation Foundation, is written by men who have had experience in the field of hydraulics through work with the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, U. S. Bureau of Reclamation, and U. S. Geological Survey.

Part I presents the flood control program. Part II deals with downstream programs for flood control. Part III is devoted to upstream programs for flood control. Part IV calls attention to important inadequacies in the present flood control program.

In general, the analysis of the many problems relating to flood control is excellent. The authors obviously have had close contact with the groups supporting and opposing various flood control systems. They demonstrate an understanding of the principal arguments for and against big dams, flood-plain zoning, soil conservation flood control practices, floodways, etc. Their analysis of the various claims, benefits, exaggerations, statements, and arguments of different groups to leave the public uninformed is enlightening. Probably only a most ardent supporter of a particular method of flood control would change authors with unwillingness of a given proposal. The authors received the cooperation of various federal agencies in the assembling of the information for the book. The manuscript for the book was read and criticized by several people representing the Department of Agriculture, Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, American Watershed Council, and Engineers Joint Council.

The authors point out that flood damage results from man's utilization of the flood plain which is the right-of-way of the stream. They proceed to discuss means of reducing this damage through zoning and various flood control measures, pointing out the limitations of each and also their interrelationship. It is pointed out that reservoir storage is effective in reducing flood peaks immediately below the dam but that the effect diminishes rapidly with distance downstream. Therefore, levee and floodways are essential even with reservoirs. For great floods the effect of land management is not significant. Upstream storage and downstream storage are not interchangeable. Both measures have a certain value but neither provides completely adequate protection. The over-confidence which the term "flood control" gives to the public has led to more intensive use of hazardous flood-plain areas with resulting increase in damage when floods occur larger than those which can be contained. The flood control controversy is charged with giving inadequate and misleading information.

The book is informative, giving enough detail to permit an insight into the problem of flood control.

A significant idea developed by the authors is summarized in the following paragraph:

"But with all our knowledge of land management, there is still an enormous amount to be learned, and the greatest task of all is to provide the user of the land with incentives to proper management. For every user of productive land is in fact a trustee, responsible for the lives and the future of the human race, which must be dependent on him for food, shelter, and clothing, and for the maintenance of the human race as the people of the earth. The author's conclusions are based on the assumption that flood control is an institutional problem, and that its solution requires the combined efforts of the scientific community and the public. The authors have written a book which is informative, giving enough detail to permit an insight into the problem of flood control."

THE WEB OF LIFE


It is quite safe to say that ecology is not a household word. And it is perhaps strange that the language lacks a warmer and more emotional word than this for the countless events, reactions, and processes which make up the "web of life" and which sooner or later ultimately affect the welfare and happiness of human life. The Web of Life was conceived to fill a need for a simple, elementary book that would explain the average non-scientist reader some of the fundamentals of ecology. Storer writes knowledgeably of the origin and development of soils, the role of weather, the interaction between man and the plant and animal world, and the effect of flood control. And the author's conclusion: "Ecology is the study of the web of life, and the point of view must be broad and synthesizing."

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THE SULPHUR DATA BOOK


This is a compilation of data of interest to engineers and chemists using sulphur. The data presented are taken from the literature, some private sources and from the experience of the Freeport Sulphur Company. According to the editor, contradictory data of different investigators are not included for the purpose of giving the book a maximum of practical usefulness. The principal topics discussed are the nature of sulphur, physical and chemical properties of sulphur, reaction thermodynamics, solubility of sulphur in various substances, and methods of sulphur analysis. Each section is supplemented with numerous tables and charts. Also included are sulphuric acid conversion tables and a detailed bibliography. The volume is compact and typographically excellent. Several blank pages are included at the end of the book for the reader to add his own notes and memoranda. The student in soil chemistry and the agricultural chemist will find the data book a handy reference work.

FIELD CROP PRODUCTION (AGRONOMIC PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES)


This is an excellent textbook for use in an introductory course in Farm Crops. Although it may have some value as a reference, it is definitely a text for beginners.

Written by two capable authors who have had much experience in teaching and writing, the book draws upon a wealth of experiences gained within and outside the classroom. A strong