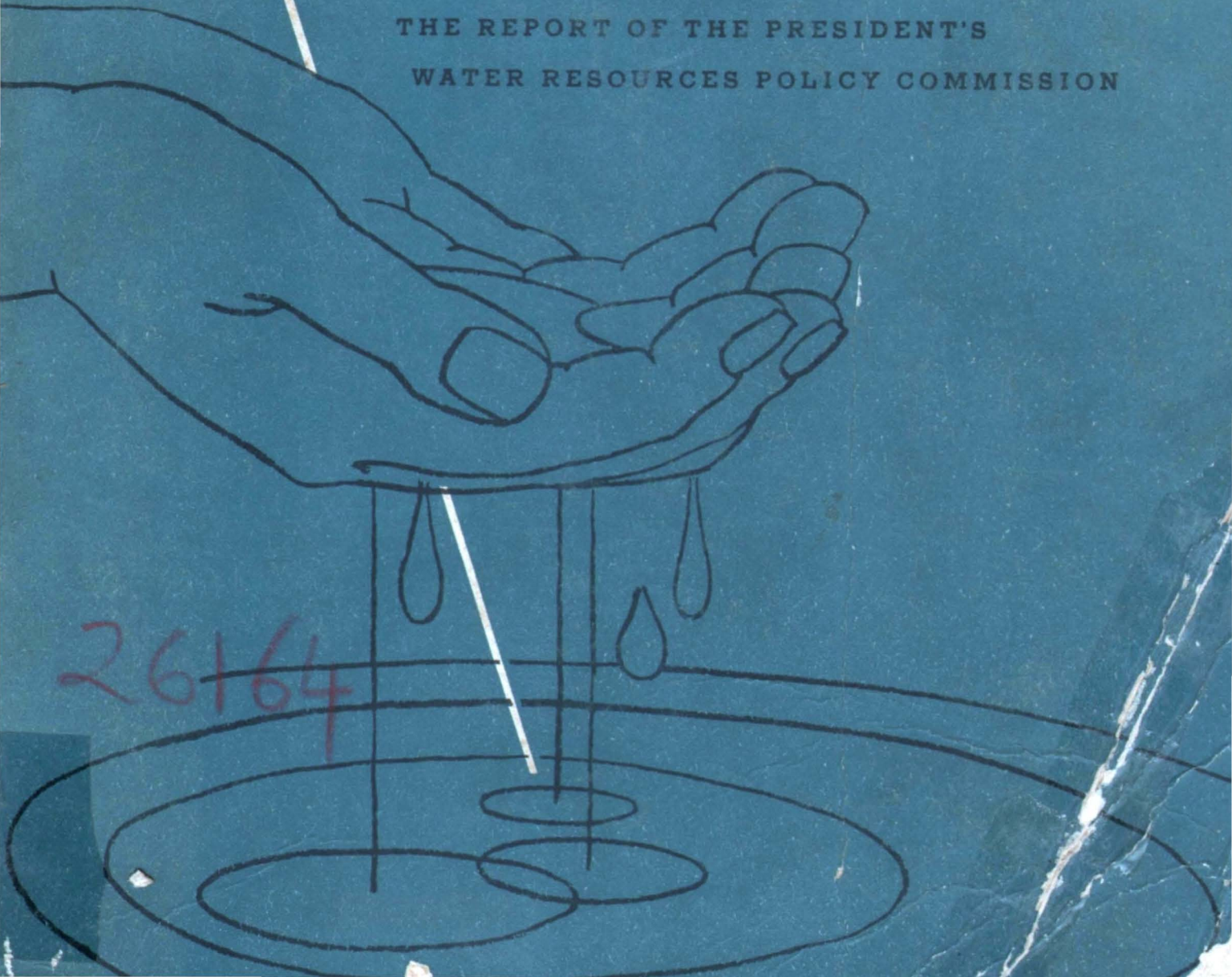


VOLUME 2

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# Ten Rivers in America's Future

THE REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S  
WATER RESOURCES POLICY COMMISSION



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# RIVER BASINS OF THE UNITED STATES

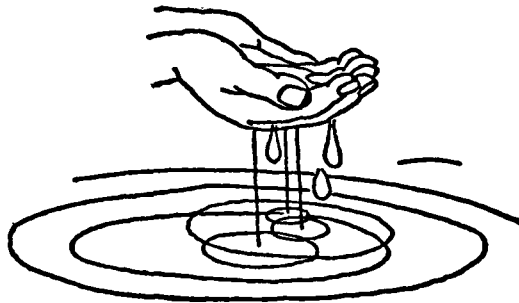
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| hills     | folded mountains | sinks    |
| mountains | basin ranges     | moraines |
| mesas     | volcano and lava | drumlins |

# Ten Rivers in America's Future

THE REPORT OF THE  
PRESIDENT'S WATER RESOURCES  
POLICY COMMISSION  
VOLUME 2 ★ 1950



**IN THREE VOLUMES**

***Volume 1:* A Water Policy for the American People (General Report)**

***Volume 2:* Ten Rivers in America's Future**

***Volume 3:* Water Resources Law**

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THE PRESIDENT'S  
WATER RESOURCES POLICY COMMISSION  
718 EIGHTEENTH STREET NW.  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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LELAND OLDS  
ROLAND R. RENNE

February 19, 1951

The President  
The White House

Dear Mr. President:

We take pleasure in submitting herewith Volume 2 of the report of The President's Water Resources Policy Commission. This volume is entitled "Ten Rivers in America's Future". It consists of ten basin studies prepared as background data to assist the Commission in working out the policy recommendations contained in Volume 1 of its report.

The ten river basins are the Columbia, Central Valley of California, Missouri, Colorado, Rio Grande, Connecticut, Alabama-Coosa, Potomac, Ohio, and Tennessee. The studies are not designed to present final plans for the development of these basins. Rather they provide practical examples of the problems for which a national water policy must furnish workable answers.

The studies were prepared by the Commission's Committee on River Program Analysis, headed by a member of the Commission's staff and composed of experts assigned by Federal agencies responsible for the several aspects of the government's water and land resources program. The studies are based on reports and data contributed by these agencies and critically reviewed in the give and take of committee discussion. Although the material contained in the studies has been available to assist the members of the Commission in their work, this volume of the report has not been reviewed in detail by all of the Commissioners.

We take this opportunity to tell you of the wholehearted response of all executive departments and agencies to your request that they assist the Commission in its work. They made notable contributions to the basin studies contained in this volume.

Yours very sincerely,

*Paul S. Burgess*  
Paul S. Burgess

*Leland Olds*  
Leland Olds

*Lewis Webster Jones*  
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December 1, 1950

Mr. Morris L. Cooke  
Chairman, The President's Water  
Resources Policy Commission  
Washington 25, D. C.

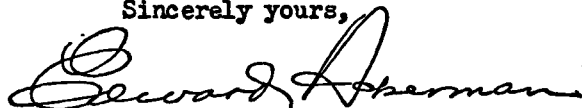
Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am transmitting herewith a survey entitled "Ten Rivers in America's Future." It consists of studies of the Alabama-Coosa, Central Valley of California, Colorado, Columbia, Connecticut, Missouri, Ohio, Potomac, Rio Grande, and Tennessee River Basins, prepared by the two Committees on River Program Analysis and members of the Commission staff. These studies were based on extensive data, many of which were compiled especially for this purpose by Federal departments and agencies responsible for water and land resources activities.

Each of the ten basins analyzed has been studied as a whole in terms of its problems and potentialities. The resulting survey may be considered a progress report for the Commission and the public on water development in the major regions of America. While this survey does not represent a complete examination of all details of the water resources programs of these basins, the important policy problems have been carefully analyzed in terms of the particular characteristics of each basin.

The analyses would not have been possible without the devoted and fair-minded participation of committee members assigned to the Commission by the Federal agencies having responsibilities in the field of water resources development. As committee chairman, I owe them a debt of gratitude, both for the wise counsel and the extensive time and effort which they gave. I also wish to express appreciation to the Commission staff for their equally fine work. Their contribution in research, compilation, and editing has been invaluable.

Sincerely yours,



Edward A. Ackerman  
Geographer-in-Charge

# Contents

## Part I. BASINS OF THE WEST

### No. 1. THE COLUMBIA

<i>Chapter 1</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>Chapter 5</i>	<i>Page</i>
THE BASIN AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS, PROBLEMS, AND POTENTIALITIES . . . . .	1	DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS . . . . .	21
The Land . . . The People: Distribution, Population Growth, and Characteristics . . . The Economy . . . Present Forms of Resource Use . . . Major Basin Problems and Potentialities.		Opportunities for Further Development of Primary Facilities . . . Preservation of Present Assets and Existing or Authorized Facilities . . . Opportunities for Enhancement of Present Water Use.	
		<i>Chapter 6</i>	
<i>Chapter 2</i>		PROJECT ECONOMICS . . . . .	27
THE RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES . . . . .	5	Present and Future Irrigation Developments . . . Electric Power in the Present and Future Program . . . Navigation . . . Flood Control . . . Fish and Wildlife . . . Use of Intangibles as Justification for Construction . . . Inadequacies in Methods of Estimating and Allocating Benefits and Costs, and Assignments of Responsibility for Repayment . . . Experience on the Columbia as a Basis for Standard Evaluation and Financing.	
<i>Chapter 3</i>		<i>Chapter 7</i>	
PRESENT WATER RESOURCES AND RELATED LAND DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	9	POLICY PROBLEMS AND THEIR RELATION TO PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	37
Present Irrigation Development . . . Existing Hydroelectric Power Facilities . . . Navigation Improvements . . . Water Supply Facilities . . . Flood Protection Facilities . . . Related Land Programs . . . Special Developments for Other Purposes . . . Multiple-Purpose Aspects of Existing Facilities.		Distribution of Benefits and Responsibilities . . . Conflicts in Beneficial Use . . . The Character and Rate of Development . . . Unified Operation.	
<i>Chapter 4</i>		<i>Chapter 8</i>	
PROGRAMS FOR ADDITIONAL IMPROVEMENTS . . . . .	17	ELEMENTS OF A PLAN FOR FULL DEVELOPMENT OF COLUMBIA BASIN WATER RESOURCES . . . . .	69
Irrigation . . . Hydroelectric Power Facilities . . . Navigation . . . Flood Protection . . . Special Developments for Other Purposes . . . Unified Operation Plan.		Ultimate Objectives of Development . . . The Rate of Development . . . The Several Stages in Achievement of Full Development . . . The Future Region . . . The Means of Achieving Water Development Objectives.	

## No. 2. THE CENTRAL VALLEY OF CALIFORNIA

<i>Chapter 1</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>Chapter 4</i>	<i>Page</i>
REGIONAL CHARACTER AND PROBLEMS . . . . .	81	PROJECT ECONOMICS, ACCOUNTING, AND REPAYMENT . . . . .	105
The Basin's Significance . . . Physical Characteristics . . . Population . . . Nature of the Economy . . . Present Forms of Resource Use . . . Major Basin Problems and Potentialities.		Development Program as a Whole . . . Hydroelectric Power . . . Irrigation . . . Navigation . . . Flood Control . . . Debris Control . . . Fish and Wildlife.	
<i>Chapter 2</i>			
STREAMS AND GROUND WATER . . . . .	87	<i>Chapter 5</i>	
<i>Chapter 3</i>			
WATER DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND PROGRAMS . . . . .	89	POLICY PROBLEMS AND THEIR RELATION TO PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	109
Irrigation . . . Hydroelectric Power . . . Navigation . . . Public Water Supply . . . Flood Protection . . . Watershed Control Upstream and Related Land Programs . . . Recreation, Fisheries, and Wildlife . . . Special Developments . . . Multiple-Purpose Aspects of the Program.		Distribution of Benefits and Responsibilities . . . Conflicts in Beneficial Use . . . The Character of Development . . . Program Procedures.	
<i>Chapter 6</i>			
		ELEMENTS OF A PLAN FOR FULL DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	149
		Ultimate Objectives of the Plan . . . Stages in Attaining Full Development . . . The Future Region . . . Achieving Water Development Objectives.	

## No. 3. THE MISSOURI

<i>Chapter 1</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>Chapter 4</i>	<i>Page</i>
THE BASIN AND ITS REGIONAL PROBLEMS . . . . .	161	PROJECT ECONOMICS . . . . .	187
The Land and Climate . . . Some Features of Settlement . . . Regions Within the Basin . . . Summary of Major Problems.		Development Program as a Whole . . . Hydroelectric Power . . . Irrigation . . . Navigation . . . Flood Control . . . Fish and Wildlife.	
<i>Chapter 2</i>			
THE RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES. . . . .	171	<i>Chapter 5</i>	
<i>Chapter 3</i>			
WATER DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND PROGRAMS . . . . .	175	POLICY PROBLEMS AND THEIR RELATION TO PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	193
Hydroelectric Power . . . Irrigation . . . Flood Control . . . Navigation . . . Municipal and Industrial Water Supply . . . Watershed Management . . . Recreation and Fish and Wildlife . . . Multiple-Purpose Aspects of the Program.		The Character of Development . . . Land Problems . . . Problems Related to Inundation . . . Distribution of Benefits and Responsibilities . . . Interrelations Among Proposed Programs, and Their Relation to Existing Developments.	
<i>Chapter 6</i>			
		ELEMENTS OF A PROGRAM FOR ULTIMATE DEVELOPMENT OF WATER RESOURCES . . . . .	273
		Ultimate Objectives of the Program . . . Rate of Development . . . Progress in Attainment of Ultimate Objectives . . . The Future Basin.	



## No. 4. THE RIO GRANDE

<i>Chapter 1</i>	<i>Page</i>
REGIONAL CHARACTER AND GROWTH . . . . .	285
Physical Description of the Basin . . . Socio-Economic Features.	

<i>Chapter 2</i>	<i>Page</i>
THE RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES. . . . .	291
The Upper Rio Grande Sub-basin . . . Lower Rio Grande Sub-basin . . . Pecos River Sub-basin.	

<i>Chapter 3</i>	<i>Page</i>
WATER DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND PROGRAMS . . . . .	297
Erosion and Sediment Control . . . Reduction of Flood Damages . . . Irrigation . . . Public Water Supply . . . Hydroelectric Power . . . Recreation, Fish and Wildlife . . . Pollution Abatement . . . Mosquito Control Measures . . . Multiple-Purpose Aspects of Federal Program.	

<i>Chapter 4</i>	<i>Page</i>
ECONOMICS AND FINANCING OF PROJECTS . . . . .	313
Development Program as a Whole . . . Irrigation . . . Flood Control . . . Hydroelectric Power . . . Other Functions . . . Conclusion.	

<i>Chapter 5</i>	<i>Page</i>
POLICY PROBLEMS AND THEIR RELATION TO PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	317
Problems in Beneficial Use . . . The Character of Development . . . Distribution of Benefits and Responsibilities.	

<i>Chapter 6</i>	<i>Page</i>
ELEMENTS OF A PROGRAM FOR ULTIMATE DEVELOPMENT OF WATER RESOURCES . . . . .	345
Elements of a Program . . . Rate of Development . . . Stages in Attaining Full Development . . . Special Problems of Depressed Areas.	

## No. 5. THE COLORADO

<i>Chapter 1</i>	<i>Page</i>
REGIONAL CHARACTER AND PROBLEMS . . . . .	355
Physical Characteristics . . . Population . . . Nature of the Economy . . . Present Forms of Resource Use . . . Major Problems.	

<i>Chapter 2</i>	<i>Page</i>
THE RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES . . . . .	363

<i>Chapter 3</i>	<i>Page</i>
WATER DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND PROGRAMS . . . . .	365
Irrigation . . . Watershed Management . . . Hydroelectric Power . . . Navigation . . . Flood Protection . . . Water Supplies . . . Recreation . . . Fish and Wildlife . . . Multiple-Purpose Aspects of the Program.	

<i>Chapter 4</i>	<i>Page</i>
PROJECT ECONOMICS . . . . .	383
Flood Control . . . Irrigation . . . Hydroelectric Power . . . Recreation . . . Fish and Wildlife Refuges.	

<i>Chapter 5</i>	<i>Page</i>
POLICY PROBLEMS AND THEIR RELATION TO PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	387
Distribution of Benefits and Responsibilities . . . Conflicts in Beneficial Use . . . Character and Rate of Development.	

<i>Chapter 6</i>	<i>Page</i>
ELEMENTS OF A PLAN FOR ULTIMATE DEVELOPMENT OF WATER RESOURCES . . . . .	451
Ultimate Objectives of the Program . . . Stages of Past Development . . . Program for Achieving Ultimate Development . . . The Future Basin . . . Obstacles to Achievement of Ultimate Water Resources Development.	

# Part II. BASINS OF THE EAST

## No. 6. THE CONNECTICUT

### Chapter 1

REGIONAL CHARACTER AND PROBLEMS . . . . .	Page 467
---	-------------

The Land and Climate . . . Population: Distribution and Growth . . . Nature of the Regional Economy . . . Present Forms of Economic Development.

### Chapter 2

THE RIVER, ITS TRIBUTARIES, AND OTHER WATER SOURCES . . . . .	471
---	-----

### Chapter 3

WATER DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND PROGRAMS . . . . .	473
--	-----

Hydroelectric Power . . . Navigation . . . Water Supply . . . Flood Protection . . . Watershed Control Upstream and Related Land Programs . . . Recreation . . . Fisheries . . . Multiple-Purpose Aspects of the Program.

## No. 7. THE ALABAMA-COOSA

### Chapter 1

REGIONAL CHARACTER AND PROBLEMS . . . . .	523
---	-----

Physical Characteristics . . . Population: Distribution and Growth . . . Nature of the Economy . . . Present Forms of Resource Use . . . Major Basin Problems and Potentialities.

### Chapter 2

THE RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES . . . . .	531
---	-----

### Chapter 3

WATER DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND PROGRAMS . . . . .	533
--	-----

Hydroelectric Power . . . Navigation . . . Water Supply . . . Flood Protection . . . Watershed Control Upstream and Related Land Uses . . . Recreation . . . Fish and Wildlife Resources . . . Multiple-Purpose Aspects of the Program.

### Chapter 4

PROJECT ECONOMICS . . . . .	Page 485
-----------------------------	-------------

Flood Control . . . Navigation . . . Power Rates and Costs.

### Chapter 5

POLICY PROBLEMS AND THEIR RELATION TO PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	489
---	-----

Distribution of Benefits and Responsibilities . . . Conflicts in Beneficial Use . . . The Character of Development . . . Development Procedure.

### Chapter 6

ELEMENTS OF A PLAN FOR FULL DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	515
---	-----

Ultimate Objectives of Developments . . . Rate of Development . . . Stages in Attaining Full Development . . . The Future Basin . . . Achieving Water Development Objectives.

### Chapter 4

ECONOMICS AND FINANCING OF PROJECTS . . . . .	543
---	-----

Projects Completed or in Operation . . . Projects Authorized but Not Under Construction . . . Approved Projects to Complete the Basin-Wide Plan . . . Power and Basin Development.

### Chapter 5

POLICY PROBLEMS AND THEIR RELATION TO PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	547
---	-----

Distribution of Benefits and Responsibilities . . . Problems of Beneficial Use . . . The Character of Development . . . Program Procedures.

### Chapter 6

ELEMENTS OF A PLAN FOR FULL DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	567
---	-----

Ultimate Objectives of Program . . . Rate of Development . . . Status of Existing Plans and Authorization . . . Stages of Attaining Full Development . . . The Future Basin.

## No. 8. THE POTOMAC

*Chapter 1*

	<i>Page</i>
REGION AND REGIONAL PROBLEMS . . .	577
The Land and Climate . . . The People: Distribution and Population Growth . . . The Economy . . . Present Forms of Resource Use . . . Major Basin Problems.	

*Chapter 2*

THE RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES . . .	581
-------------------------------------	-----

*Chapter 3*

WATER DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, PROGRAMS, COSTS, AND BENEFITS . . .	583
Watershed Control and Land Programs . . . Recreation . . . Water Supply Facilities . . . Flood Protection Facilities . . . Hydroelectric Power . . . Navigation . . . Future Construction Program for Reservoir Development.	

*Chapter 4*

	<i>Page</i>
POLICY PROBLEMS AND THEIR RELATION TO PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT	591
Protection of Basic Resources . . . Apparent Conflicts in Beneficial Use . . . The Character and Rate of Development . . . Distribution of Responsibilities.	

*Chapter 5*

ELEMENTS OF A PLAN FOR ULTIMATE DEVELOPMENT OF WATER RESOURCES . . . . .	617
Ultimate Objectives of Development . . . Rate of Development . . . Stages in Attaining Full Development . . . The Future Basin . . . Achieving Water Development Objectives.	

## No. 9. THE OHIO

*Chapter 1*

REGIONAL CHARACTER AND PROBLEMS . . . . .	627
Physical Characteristics . . . Socio-Economic Features . . . Major Basin Problems.	

*Chapter 2*

THE RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES. . .	633
------------------------------------	-----

*Chapter 3*

WATER DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND PROGRAMS . . .	637
Flood Control . . . Pollution Control . . . Public and Industrial Water Supplies . . . Watershed Management . . . Navigation . . . Hydroelectric Power . . . Fish and Wildlife.	

*Chapter 4*

ECONOMICS AND FINANCING OF PROJECTS . . . . .	655
Program as a Whole . . . Reservoir Program . . . Local Flood Protection Program . . . Navigation Program.	

*Chapter 5*

POLICY PROBLEMS AND THEIR RELATION TO PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT	659
Comprehensive Planning and Interagency Cooperation . . . Problems Related to Specific Functions in Multiple-Purpose Programs . . . Land Problems.	

*Chapter 6*

ELEMENTS OF A PLAN FOR FULL DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	697
Elements of a Program . . . Rate of Development . . . The Future Region.	

## No. 10. THE TENNESSEE

### *Chapter 1*

THE TENNESSEE RIVER BASIN . . .	<i>Page</i> 705
---------------------------------	--------------------

The Valley and Its People . . . Nature of the Economy . . . Current Regional Problems.

### *Chapter 2*

THE RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES .	711
---------------------------------	-----

### *Chapter 3*

EXISTING FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS . . . . .	715
--	-----

Navigation . . . Flood Control . . . Hydroelectric Power . . . Water Supply . . . Malaria Control . . . Steam Sanitation . . . National Defense . . . Use of Marginal Lands.

### *Chapter 4*

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY PROGRAM: COSTS AND BENEFITS . .	739
--	-----

Reports on TVA Project Economics . . . Methods of Allocation . . . Navigation Costs and Benefits . . . Flood Control Costs and Benefits . . . Electric Power Costs and Benefits . . . Conclusions of Federal Power Commission Report.

### *Chapter 5*

POLICY PROBLEMS AND THEIR RELATION TO BASIN DEVELOPMENT . . .	<i>Page</i> 745
---	--------------------

Relation of the Tennessee Valley Program to Other Water Resources Development Programs and Potentialities . . . Relations to State and Community . . . Character of Planning and Operation.

### *Chapter 6*

PROGRAMS FOR ADDITIONAL IMPROVEMENTS . . . . .	789
--	-----

Need for More Electric Power . . . Further Navigational Developments . . . Plans for Future Flood Protection . . . Soil Conservation and Fertilizer Programs . . . Pollution Abatement . . . The Application of Resource Improvements to the General Economic and Social Problems of the Valley.

### *Chapter 7*

VALUE OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE . . . .	795
--	-----

Influence of the Tennessee Experience on Foreign Basin Development . . . Influence of the Valley Experience on Water Resources Development in the United States.

APPENDIX . . . . .	799
--------------------	-----

Request for Analyses of River Basin Programs.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

### *No. 1. The Columbia*

<i>Figure</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. Major hydrologic regions . . . . .	6
2. Utilization by salmon and steelhead trout . . . .	46
3. Potential reservoirs and railroad relocation possibilities . . . . .	62
4. Bonneville Power Administration transmission facilities . . . . .	75
5. Water resources and land use . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 78

### *No. 2. The Central Valley of California*

1. Average annual precipitation . . . . .	83
2. Existing and potential hydroelectric power developments . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 154
3. Water resources and land use . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 154

### *No. 3. The Missouri*

<i>Figure</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. Average annual precipitation . . . . .	163
2. Population trends, 1920-50 . . . . .	164
3. Sub-regions, Missouri River Basin . . . . .	165
4. Average annual runoff . . . . .	172
5. Watershed conditions . . . . .	207
6. Missouri River Basin power systems . . . . .	255
7. Existing and potential hydroelectric power developments . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 282
8. Water resources and land use . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 282

### *No. 4. The Rio Grande*

1. Average annual precipitation . . . . .	286
2. Physiographic regions . . . . .	288
3. Average annual runoff . . . . .	292
4. Storm of September 20-24, 1941, Pecos River Basin . . . . .	294

<i>Figure</i>	<i>Page</i>
5. Summary of sedimentation rates, Upper Rio Grande sub-basin . . . . .	298
6. Sediment production, Upper Rio Grande and Pecos Basins . . . . .	300
7. Water resources and land use . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 346

### *No. 5. The Colorado*

1. Average annual precipitation . . . . .	358
2. Colorado sub-basins, according to agreement of Colorado River Compact . . . . .	389
3. Existing and potential hydroelectric power developments . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 458
4. Federal land management responsibilities . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 458
5. Water resources and land use . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 458

### *No. 6. The Connecticut*

1. Water resources and land use . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 466
2. Potential hydroelectric power and interconnections in New England and New York . . . . .	474
3. Connecticut River Basin . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 506

### *No. 7. The Alabama-Coosa*

1. Major river systems in the Southeast . . . . .	524
2. Areas of similar land features . . . . .	525
3. Average annual precipitation, Southeastern United States . . . . .	527
4. Average annual runoff, Southeastern United States . . . . .	528
5. Existing and potential hydroelectric power, Southeast region . . . . .	569
6. Water resources and land use . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 570

### *No. 8. The Potomac*

1. Indicated water quality . . . . .	595
2. Development of lower Potomac River . . . . .	604
3. Water resources and land use . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 618

### *No. 9. The Ohio*

<i>Figure</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. Average annual precipitation . . . . .	634
2. Average annual runoff . . . . .	635
3. Existing and potential inland navigation, Central United States . . . . .	646
4. Existing and potential hydroelectric power developments . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 698
5. Water resources and land use . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 698
6. Cumberland river basin water resources and land use . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 698

### *No. 10. The Tennessee*

1. Average annual precipitation . . . . .	712
2. Pickwick Landing—sectional view of dam . . . . .	713
3. Existing and potential inland navigation, Central United States . . . . .	719
4. Present-day Chattanooga under 1867 flood conditions . . . . .	723
5. TVA power system . . . . .	748
6. Trends in the average rate for residential electricity in Tennessee, 1929-49 . . . . .	771
7. Regional trends in sales of electric energy, 1929-49 . . . . .	773
8. Use and cost of electricity in the average home in the Tennessee Valley, 1933-50 . . . . .	774
9. Growth in residential use of electricity in Tennessee, with comparative data for the entire United States, 1927-49 . . . . .	776
10. Growth in the annual use of electricity by large commercial and industrial consumers in the Tennessee Valley . . . . .	777
11. Typical monthly bills, TVA basic rate compared with average bills in cities of over 50,000 population . . . . .	790
12. Water resources and land use . . . . .	<i>facing</i> 794

## TABLES

### *No. 1. The Columbia*

<i>Table</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. Existing hydroelectric power developments . . . . .	10
2. Potential hydroelectric power in Columbia River Basin . . . . .	22
3. Repayment record on selected irrigation projects, to 1947 . . . . .	28
4. Cost of irrigation facilities recommended by Bureau of Reclamation . . . . .	29
5. Regional electric power costs, revenues of selected utilities from sale of electric power to commercial and industrial consumers, 1948, in 6 United States regions . . . . .	31

### *No. 2. The Central Valley of California*

<i>Table</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. Existing hydroelectric power developments . . . . .	92
2. Hydroelectric power developments under construction, authorized, and recommended . . . . .	95
3. Tentative list of hydroelectric power possibilities other than at projects under construction, authorized, and recommended . . . . .	96
4. Initial stages of Central Valley projects and programs . . . . .	154

### No. 3. The Missouri

<i>Table</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. Estimated electric power demand, 1970 . . . . .	176
2. Existing hydroelectric power developments . . . . .	177
3. Federal hydroelectric developments—under construction, authorized, and recommended or contemplated . . . . .	178
4. Tentative list of hydroelectric power possibilities other than at projects under construction, authorized, and recommended or contemplated . . . . .	179
5. Analyses common to numerous North and South Dakota municipal water supplies from ground water sources . . . . .	185
6. Tentative allocation of costs, Corps of Engineers projects, October 1950. . . . .	189
7. Repayment history of older Bureau of Reclamation projects in the Missouri Basin . . . . .	190
8. Degree of land deterioration . . . . .	208
9. Federal and State-owned lands, by areas . . . . .	208
10. Estimated approximate land use conversion needed . . . . .	209
11. Estimated approximate area in land-capability classes, by land use . . . . .	209
12. Progress and accomplishments in soil conservation districts and other program areas, with Soil Conservation Service assistance, to 1950 . . . . .	210
13. Sedimentation rates as developed from reservoir surveys . . . . .	218
14. Lands lost by Indians to specified Federal projects, and Indian lands benefited. . . . .	235
15. Population changes, 1920-50 . . . . .	263

### No. 4. The Rio Grande

1. Existing and potential hydroelectric developments . . . . .	309
2. Multiple-purpose aspects of Federal projects . . . . .	312
3. Area and ownership of land in Rio Grande Basin in New Mexico above Elephant Butte, 1938 . . . . .	328

### No. 5. The Colorado

1. Area of the Colorado River Basin by States . . . . .	357
2. Hydroelectric power developments—existing, under construction, and authorized. . . . .	370
3. Undeveloped hydroelectric power possibilities other than at projects under construction and authorized . . . . .	372
4. Existing and planned potential multiple-purpose projects. . . . .	379
5. Existing water resources development projects . . . . .	380
6. Potential water resources development projects . . . . .	381
7. Existing and potential fish and wildlife water resources development projects . . . . .	386

<i>Table</i>	<i>Page</i>
8. The lower Colorado River Basin's long-run average water supply and distribution thereof among the States of the basin, according to views expressed by California and Arizona . . . . .	392
9. Summary of survey of land holdings larger than 160 irrigable acres per ownership on Bureau of Reclamation projects in the Colorado River Basin receiving water in 1946 . . . . .	394
10. Approximate acreage of public lands by major agencies in Colorado Basin . . . . .	408
11. Precipitation and runoff for forest and nonforest areas in the Colorado Basin. . . . .	418
12. Annual water yield. . . . .	418
13. Annual water and silt volumes measured on Colorado River . . . . .	418
14. Percentage of farms by types according to source of income (1939) in upper basin States . . . . .	419
15. Federal grazing district lands in Colorado Basin States (1948) . . . . .	420
16. Cattle and sheep numbers in Colorado River Basin States (average 1924-41). . . . .	424
17. Source of forage in western Colorado . . . . .	424
18. Erosion in Colorado River lands . . . . .	431
19. Colorado River Storage Project facilities, as proposed by the Bureau of Reclamation . . . . .	459

### No. 6. The Connecticut

1. Present hydroelectric power facilities. . . . .	475
2. Undeveloped hydroelectric power possibilities . . . . .	478

### No. 7. The Alabama-Coosa

1. Existing hydroelectric power development . . . . .	534
2. Undeveloped hydroelectric power possibilities . . . . .	535
3. Residential sales, average annual use, average price per kilowatt-hour, average annual bill, Alabama, TVA power market area, United States, 1940-49. . . . .	546

### No. 8. The Potomac

1. Existing and undeveloped hydroelectric power projects. . . . .	587
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### No. 9. The Ohio

1. Metropolitan areas in Ohio River Basin . . . . .	628
2. Per capita income payments in Ohio Basin States . . . . .	629
3. Percentage of income payments from major sources in Ohio Basin States, 1949 . . . . .	629
4. Value added by manufacture in Ohio Basin States. . . . .	630

<i>Table</i>	<i>Page</i>
5. Existing reservoirs in the Ohio River Basin operated for flood control . . . . .	638
6. Reservoirs under construction in the Ohio River Basin. . . . .	639
7. Reservoirs authorized but not under construction .	640
8. Existing hydroelectric power developments, Ohio River Basin (exclusive of Tennessee River) . . .	648
9. Authorized hydroelectric power projects, Ohio River Basin (exclusive of Tennessee River) . . .	649
10. Other projects to complete the ultimate plans as now envisioned, Ohio River Basin (exclusive of Tennessee River). . . . .	650
11. Summary of existing and potential power plants, including power storage at multiple-purpose reservoirs, Ohio River Basin (exclusive of Tennessee River). . . . .	652

<i>Table</i>	<i>Page</i>
12. Economic summary of authorized reservoir program. . . . .	656

*No. 10. The Tennessee*

1. Characteristics of the principal tributaries of the Tennessee River . . . . .	712
2. Flood control storage available in TVA reservoirs .	721
3. Total ultimate installation of electric generating capacity at existing plants . . . . .	729
4. Principal features of water control projects .	734
5. Multiple-purpose system costs, June 30, 1945 . .	740

# Request for Analyses of River Basin Program

The Commission, early in its study, sought the cooperation of various agencies of government having expert knowledge of various phases of water-resources problems in their relation to basin development. This was done by means of the following letter, sent to the head of each of the agencies.

The response of the Federal agencies furnished much of the basic material from which the 10 river basin studies were prepared.

MARCH 20, 1950.

HON. NELSON LEE SMITH,<sup>1</sup>  
Chairman, Federal Power Commission,  
Washington, 25, D. C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: In order to provide a basis for testing proposed policy conclusions against a wide range of conditions the Commission needs to obtain as soon as possible separate analyses of present plans looking to the comprehensive development of the water resources of certain of the country's important river basins. Those selected for analysis include (1) the Columbia, (2) the Central Valley of California, (3) the Colorado, (4) the Missouri, (5) the Arkansas-White, (6) the Ohio, (7) the Connecticut, (8) the Delaware, (9) the Potomac, (10) the Tennessee, (11) the Alabama-Coosa, and (12) the Rio Grande.<sup>2</sup>

As a basis for such analyses we will appreciate it if you will prepare for us reports on the present plans of the Federal Power Commission for development of the water resources, including related land uses, of each of the above-named rivers to the extent that their development and use in any part comes within the jurisdiction of your agency. In order to meet the requirements of our work as at

<sup>1</sup> Letters similar to this were sent to the Secretaries of the Interior, Commerce, Army, and Agriculture, the Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, and the Chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

<sup>2</sup> In the course of the study, the Delaware and the Arkansas-White river basins were omitted from the list.

present outlined, we would like to have the report for each river basin in approximately the following form.

*Part I.*—The essential physical and economic facts about the Commission's program in the particular basin, including constructed projects, projects under construction, projects authorized, projects not yet authorized but for which definite plans are approaching completion, and other projects in contemplation. This should afford an integrated picture approximating your agency's part in the full development of the water resources of each basin. It should include not only what is presently planned, but also, as far as possible, what should be planned in the picture to complete the program for each basin.

This part should also include, to the extent available, a summary of the important economic data for each project including cost to construct, annual cost, annual benefits broken down to reflect the several purposes on which the project was justified, annual revenue, actual or anticipated, from different groups of beneficiaries, and peculiar need for the project in the region. It should include any facts as to the relation of these projects to each other and to the programs of any other Federal agencies authorized to participate in the development of the water or land resources of the basin.

*Part II.*—Brief statement of principles and practices in the particular basin with regard to the estimating of project benefits and costs. This should include the principles and standards used in (1) identification of the benefits and basis for such identification; (2) determination of the amount of benefit for each type of benefit; (3) identification of beneficiaries (individuals, groups, or levels of government) and allocation of benefits among such beneficiaries; (4) measurement of costs; (5) allocation of costs; (6) determination as to which of the beneficiaries should make repayments and the formula for repayment in each case; and (7) general project formulation.



This part of the report should also contain an analysis of how these principles and practices are working out in the particular basin.

*Part III.*—More extensive discussion of specific policy problems which are of particular significance in the basin covered by the report. The discussion in this part of the report should be under the general captions of the problems themselves and should set forth all the facts in the particular basin necessary to understand, and to work out a solution of the problem so far as the basin is concerned, and to test tentative policy conclusions in terms of their effect on the development of its water resources. The Commission staff is available for consultation on the matter of problem selection.

Some of the problems which we would like to have covered in this part of the report, to the extent that they are significant in the subject basin, are:

(1) Application of the principle of acreage limitation for lands benefited by Federal expenditure, as in the Central Valley, Calif., Columbia and Missouri Basins;

(2) Application of principles for determination of economic feasibility in cases where project costs appear very high in terms of that portion of the benefits which can be readily expressed in monetary terms, as in the Colorado and Columbia Basins;

(3) Use of basin account and interest component to assist in establishing economic justification for specific program objectives which separate feasibility determination do not show to be self-supporting, as in the Columbia Basin;

(4) Resolution of apparent conflicts between upstream and downstream interests in the use of the water resources of the basin;

(5) Resolution of the conflict between plans for conservation storage reservoirs and regional or local interests in preventing land inundation, as in the Missouri, Connecticut, and White River Basins;

(6) Resolution of conflicts between multiple-purpose planning and advocates of single-purpose projects, as in the Arkansas Basin;

(7) Resolution of apparent conflict between urban water supply and other water resource values in the basin, as in the Delaware Basin;

(8) Resolution of possible conflict between conservation storage and recreational interests, including preservation of National and State parks and monuments, as in the Columbia, Colorado and Ohio Basins;

(9) Resolution of conflicts between general river basin programs involving storage of floodwaters and development of hydroelectric power and fish and wildlife interests, as in the Columbia Basin;

(10) Resolution of conflicting theories governing the marketing of power from Federal river basin projects, as in the Colorado Basin;

(11) Sediment problems, as in the Colorado, Missouri, and Rio Grande Basins;

(12) Adaptation of projects and programs to take account of existing improvements and programs, as in Columbia, Missouri, and Alabama-Coosa Basins;

(13) Specialized problems involving project and program plans, including that of coordinating the interests of the several agencies of the Commission within the basin;

(14) Problems of securing adequate basic data for planning and programing, whether for lack of sufficient appropriations or other reasons;

(15) Problems of securing local participation;

(16) Problems of international coordination, as in Columbia and Rio Grande Basins.

Those preparing the reports should not feel limited by the above suggestions as to the problems we would like to have discussed or as to the river basins in which these problems occur. They are offered merely as illustrations. The problems suggested should be dealt with in the report on any river basin where they are significant and any other problems of similar importance in any river basin should be dealt with; for we are seeking the facts necessary to enable us to formulate policy conclusions covering the control and use of the country's water resources.

Furthermore, we are not asking that these reports propose solutions of the problems, although any observation those preparing the reports may wish to bring to our attention will be welcome. What we are looking for particularly is a complete statement of the basic facts required for an understanding of the effect of policy determinations on the plans for basin development.

In general, and without limitation, the report should take into consideration all the purposes which water resources programs can serve, including domestic and industrial water supply, livestock watering, pollution abatement, flood control, watershed management, reforestation, ground-water recharge, irrigation, navigation, hydroelectric power, fish and wildlife, and recreation. Where such purposes may best be served by a coordinated approach to portions of two or more rivers, this should be noted.

We will appreciate receiving 25 copies of each report, prepared on letter-sized paper (8 by 10½ inches). We would like the report single-spaced, with a short introductory résumé, and such maps, profiles, and pictures as may serve to illustrate the program.

Similar requests are going to other departments and agencies concerned with development of water resources. We would like to have the data prepared for the separate basins in the order in which

they are mentioned in paragraph 1 of this letter and to receive each basin analysis as soon as it is completed. In order that we may meet the schedule set by the President, we will appreciate receiving the last memorandum by May 15.

Should questions arise as to the significance of

any part of the above outline I will appreciate the opportunity to provide such clarification as may be needed.

Sincerely,

**LELAND OLDS,**  
*Commissioner in Charge of Studies.*



# RIVER BASINS OF THE UNITED STATES

selected for study in this volume

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