



Rivertown: Rethinking Urban Rivers (Urban and Industrial Environments)

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Today's urban riverfronts are changing. The decline of river commerce and riverside industry has made riverfront land once used for warehouses, factories, and loading docks available for open space, parks, housing, and nonindustrial uses. Urban rivers, which once functioned as open sewers for cities, are now seen as part of larger watershed ecosystems. Rivertown examines urban river restoration efforts across the United States, presenting case studies from Los Angeles; Washington, D.C.; Portland, Oregon; Chicago; Salt Lake City; and San Jose. It also analyzes the roles of the federal government (in particular, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) and citizen activism in urban river politics. A postscript places New Orleans's experience with Hurricane Katrina in the broader context of the national riverside land-use debate. Each case study in Rivertown considers the critical questions of who makes decisions about our urban rivers, who pays to implement these decisions, and who ultimately benefits or suffers from these decisions. In Los Angeles, for example, local nonprofit and academic research groups played crucial roles, whereas Chicago relied on a series of engineering interventions. Some cases--such as the innovative cooperative framework adopted to address problems in the Guadalupe River watershed--offer models for other areas. In each case, authors evaluate the ecological issues and consider urban river restoration projects in relation to other urban economic and environmental initiatives in the region. Rivertown is a valuable resource for urban planners and citizen groups as well as for scholars. Paul Stanton Kibel is Director of Policy West, a public policy consultancy, and an environmental and water rights attorney with Fitzgerald Abbott & Beardsley. He is Adjunct Professor at Golden Gate University School of Law, where he also directs the City Parks Project, and teaches water policy at the Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of *The Earth on Trial: Environmental Law on the International Stage*.

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Editorial Review

Review

"From L.A. to New Orleans to Washington, D.C., America's urban waterways are in trouble. This remarkable book gets behind the history, politics, and science of the problem and suggests fresh and intelligent ways to reclaim city landscapes. The stakes are high: environmental stability, social justice, and (for some coastal areas) long-term survival." **Robert R. M. Verchick** , Gauthier-St. Martin Chair in Environmental Law, Loyola University New Orleans

" *Rivertown* is a significant and original contribution to the literature on the restoration of urban rivers. It offers multiple case studies and viewpoints. Although all the contributors are strong advocates for river restoration in some form, they differ in their experiences, their ultimate goals, their levels of satisfaction with recent accomplishments, and their suggested approaches to the problem of wounded (or buried) waterways in our cities." **Patrick Malone** , Department of American Civilization, and Urban Studies, Brown University

"Paul Kibel's book recounts urban rivers in pipes, engineered to flow backwards, locked in concrete, lethal to native fish, and forgotten in the neighborhoods of the poor. He does the valuable service of giving us interesting cases on the new American frontier: returning the environment to people who live in cities. The book describes a new hope for the citizen or professional who wants to improve the quality of life in some of the most unlikely places." **Ann L. Riley** , Watershed and River Restoration Advisor, San Francisco Bay Region Water Quality Control Board

About the Author

Paul Stanton Kibel is Director of Policy West, a public policy consultancy, and an environmental and water rights attorney with Fitzgerald Abbott & Beardsley. He is Adjunct Professor at Golden Gate University School of Law, where he also directs the City Parks Project, and teaches water policy at the Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of *The Earth on Trial: Environmental Law on the International Stage*.

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