



Creative Currents

Judge Megan K. Murphy



THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Washington Idaho



NEWS > SPOKANE

Yakima Loses Water Rights In Court Ruling

Fri., Oct. 31, 1997



Associated Press

A judge has issued a preliminary report that would reduce Yakima's claims to surface water for irrigation and domestic use and severely limit the city's options for meeting future water needs.

Yakima Herald-Republic

It Happened Here: Judge Walter A. Stauffacher and the Acquavella water case



Walter A. Stauffacher Yakima Herald-Republic file

JOANNA MARKELL Yakima Herald-Republic

Updated Nov 18, 2021



As the historic Ecology v. Acquavella water rights case came to a close at the Yakima County

Yakima Herald-Republic

Judge's signature ends 42-year legal battle over Yakima basin water



FILE — Court reporter Dorene Boyle looks out at the ...

JOANNA MARKELL Yakima Herald-Republic

Updated Sep 14, 2021



The largest and longest-running water rights court case in the state of Washington has come to an end.

WATER AND GROWTH IN COLORADO

A REVIEW OF LEGAL AND POLICY ISSUES

by Peter D. Nichols, Megan K. Murphy, and Douglas S. Kenney



Natural Resources Law Center
University of Colorado School of Law



In the Rhythm You're Returning To!

Pack your pack, your saddle bags,
your camera, craft, your fishing pole,
your sleeping bag, your pocket knife,
flashlight, poncho, wooly cap

Whichever map will get you back!

To canyon, forest, peak, and stream,
quiet eye of deep-down things,
juice and joy of streaming light
within, along, above, below

What's very good that needs you not!

Paws and claws, gills and wings,
trunk and branch, flower stems,
mother dew and father cool,
beauty's changing discipline

In the rhythm you're returning to!

Ever fresh and ever new,
creation's changing symmetries,
pour off tarns and pocket cirques,
travois tracks and medicine wheels

The smallest thing the hardest to do!

© 2010 by [unreadable]



Research Boat
-Flathead Lake
Biological
Station



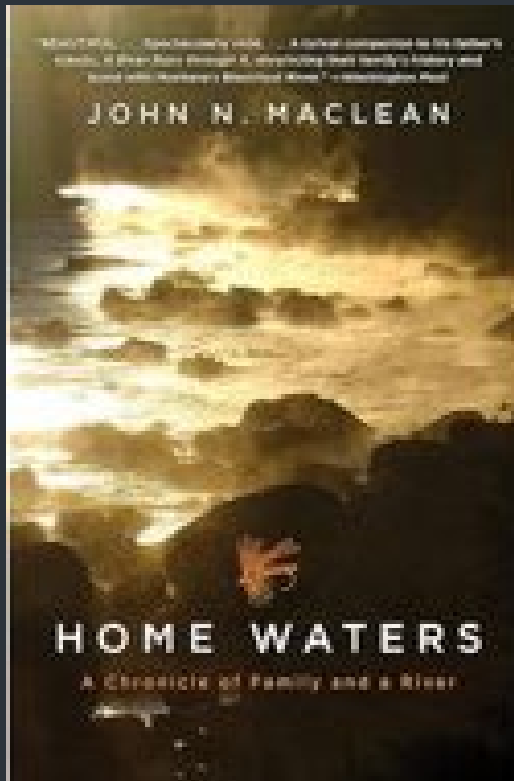
Dividing the Waters

- Multi-western state water law program
- Hosts an in-person conference every 18 months
- Includes water law, water science, and experiential learning
- Hosts authors and local experts to share the significance of water in their community



Sełisę Ksanka Qłispeę (SQK) Dam





Recent Webinars

- Water Federalism
- Groundwater and Surface Water Hydrology
- Tribal Water Law - The Last 30 Years

Tribal-Judicial Summit

- Judges received training on tribal cultural awareness
- State court judges and tribal representatives connected through personal stories and sharing important issues





Creativity

- Thinking several moves ahead
- Adjudications / Negotiations: strategize the true end game: sustainable, enforceable outcomes that serve multiple interests
- Chart paths not previously thought through—novel mitigation packages, creative trust water right arrangements, hybrid storage solutions
- Develop a common language among irrigators, municipalities, tribes, environmental groups, and agencies
- Flexibility as a tool of strength: transfers, banking, leasing, and multi-benefit projects
- Reflection that adherence to priority and beneficial use does not preclude imaginative problem solving

The Creative Water Practitioner

The creative water practitioner combines technical rigor with imaginative vision.

- Educate stakeholders
- Innovate within the law
- Adapt while protecting security and priority
- Build coalitions
- Speak a common language
- Remain flexible without sacrificing reliability

Creativity in water law does not bend the rules—it finds sustainable paths within them.



Thank you