



Dry River: Stories of Life, Death, and Redemption on the Santa Cruz

Ken Lamberton

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Poet and writer Alison Deming once noted, “In the desert, one finds the way by tracing the aftermath of water . . .”

Here, Ken Lamberton finds his way through a lifetime of exploring southern Arizona’s Santa Cruz River. This river—dry, still, and silent one moment, a thundering torrent of mud the next—serves as a reflection of the desert around it: a hint of water on parched sand, a path to redemption across a thirsty landscape.

With his latest book, Lamberton takes us on a trek across the land of three nations—the United States, Mexico, and the Tohono O’odham Nation—as he hikes the river’s path from its source and introduces us to people who draw identity from the river—dedicated professionals, hardworking locals, and the author’s own family. These people each have their own stories of the river and its effect on their lives, and their narratives add immeasurable richness and depth to Lamberton’s own astute observations and picturesque descriptions.

Unlike books that detail only the Santa Cruz’s decline, *Dry River* offers a more balanced, at times even optimistic, view of the river that ignites hope for reclamation and offers a call to action rather than indulging in despair and resignation. At once a fascinating cultural history lesson and an important reminder that learning from the past can help us fix what we have damaged, *Dry River* is both a story about the amazing complexity of this troubled desert waterway and a celebration of one man’s lifelong journey with the people and places touched by it.

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