

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910961631503321
Titolo	Irrigation-induced water quality problems : what can be learned from the San Joaquin Valley experience / / Committee on Irrigation-Induced Water Quality Problems, Water Science and Technology Board, Commission on Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Resources, National Research Council
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Washington, D.C., : National Academy Press, 1989
ISBN	9786610214426 9781280214424 1280214422 9780309564168 0309564166
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (171 pages) : illustrations
Disciplina	363.73
Soggetti	Irrigation farming - Environmental aspects - California - San Joaquin Valley Water - Pollution - California - San Joaquin Valley Water quality - California - San Joaquin Valley
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references.
Nota di contenuto	Irrigation-Induced Water Quality Problems -- Copyright -- Preface -- Contents -- Irrigation-Induced Water Quality Problems -- Executive Summary -- KESTERSON AS AN EXAMPLE OF A BROADER PROBLEM -- UNDERSTANDING THE SCIENTIFIC DIMENSIONS OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM -- UNDERSTANDING THE INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSIONS OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM -- RESOLVING PROBLEMS: ESSENTIAL STUDY ELEMENTS -- RESOLVING PROBLEMS: IDENTIFYING AND EVALUATING ALTERNATIVES -- RECOMMENDATIONS -- Planning Issues :Related to Irrigation-Induced Water Quality Problems -- Policy Issues -- Responding to Irrigation-Induced Water Quality Problems: A Shared Responsibility -- 1 Introduction: Kesterson as an Example of a Broader Problem -- WESTERN U.S. AGRICULTURE -- THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY -- The Natural History of the San Joaquin Valley -- Differences Between

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Sommario/riassunto

When waterfowl began to die from selenium poisoning at Kesterson National Wildlife Refuge in California's San Joaquin Valley, considerable alarm arose among environmental and agricultural specialists. This new volume suggests that Kesterson is not a unique problem and the events there offer important lessons for the future. Irrigation-Induced Water Quality Problems uses the San Joaquin experience to suggest how we can prepare for similar problems elsewhere. As one committee member put it, "There will be elsewhere's"--trace elements and organic contaminants are being concentrated by irrigation in many river basins. This book addresses how the Kesterson crisis developed, how irrigation can endanger water quality, and how economic, legal, and other factors impede our ability to respond to water quality problems. The committee explores how to study these problems, unraveling complex issues and clarifying the varying perspectives of farmers, environmentalists, scientists, and other key figures. This dispassionate analysis of a controversial topic will be useful to policymakers, resource

managers, and agricultural specialists and farmers, as well as specialists in hydrology, water quality, irrigation, law, and environmental quality. It will also be useful as a case study in the environmental policy classroom.
