

United States Army Corps of Engineers. *Historic Use of Six Reservoir Areas in the Upper Willamette Valley, Lane County, Oregon. Portland: 1982.* (Reviewed by Jessica Bliss)

This resource provides a detailed history of reservoir use preceding dam development on various tributaries of the Willamette River. The reservoirs of Fern Ridge, Cottage Grove, Dorena, Lookout Point, Dexter, and Fall Creek are each considered; information about early exploration, settlement, population distribution, and development accompanies the accounts of pre-dam activity and construction. Each reservoir's natural history is explored individually, revealing details about each site's particular economic and social trends that led to reservoir development. Three personal interviews recorded in the second half of the report include perspectives of local people at sites prior, during, and after construction.

The Flood Control Act of 1936 authorized construction of the six reservoirs, which, due to the adverse effects of flooding, were deemed necessary. Built between 1940 and 1965, the reservoirs called for the removal of several historical and cultural structures (i.e. homes, schools, town halls, cemeteries, churches etc.). This report serves the purpose of informing the interested public about this aspect of natural history, since the structures and areas have been so drastically altered.

Critique

I found this resource to be trustworthy, insightful, and packed with specifics. The sections devoted to specific reservoirs contain bountiful information regarding the origin, occupation, architecture, and social interactions of the concerned locals. This makes comparison between the sites easy, without generalizing the causes or effects that are specific to each reservoir. The brief section containing retrospective views on reservoir construction considers the greater social and cultural impacts that only became clear in hindsight; this could be read independently as a summary of the issue in this region. I found the personal interviews especially intriguing, as I always tend to, and give the resource high recommendations. The only thing it has against it is its age; I am sure that perceptions have changed since 1982. It would be interesting to do an update.

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