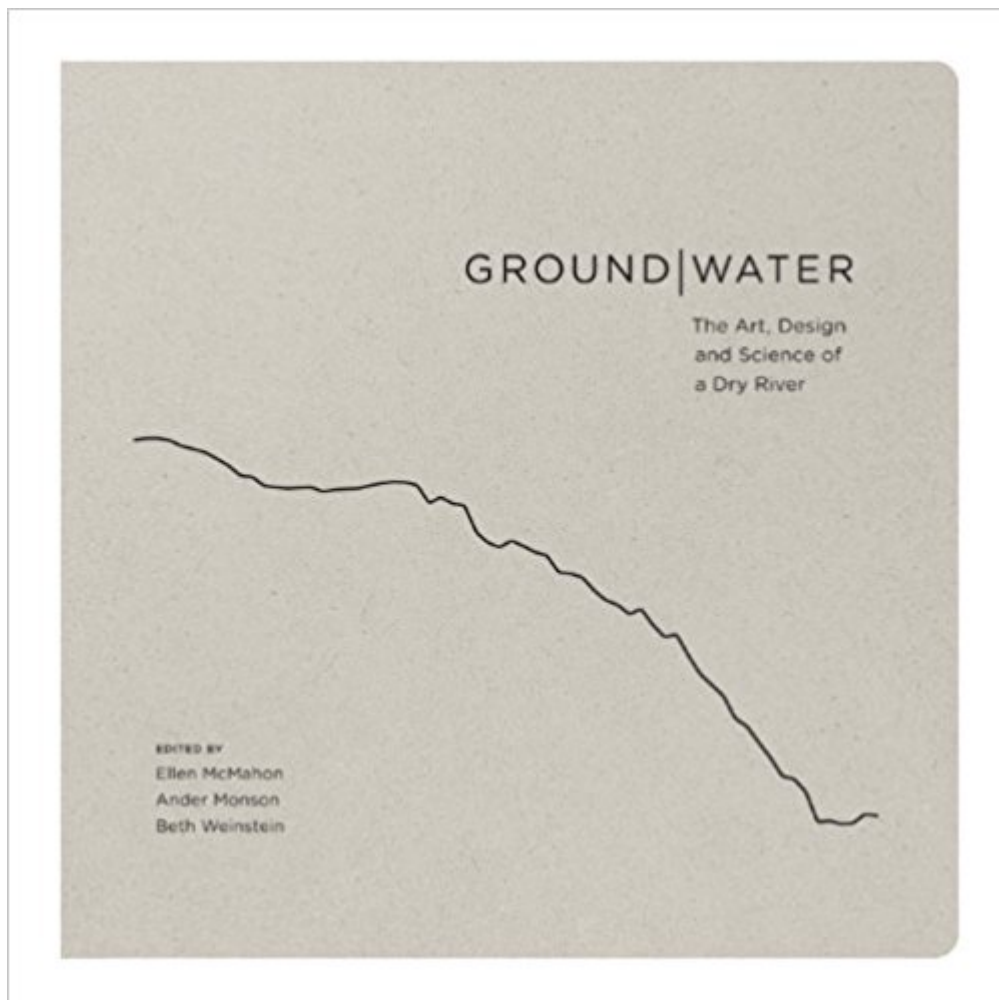


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# Groundwater: The Art, Design And Science Of A Dry River (Confluencenter Beyond Boundaries)



## Synopsis

Groundwater brings together a diverse community of artists, designers, and scientists interested in understanding and raising public awareness about local water and its relationship to global climate. This engaging collection of photographs, graphic design, architectural drawings, artist books, essays, and poems by University of Arizona faculty and students is an ode to the dry rivers of Tucson, Arizona. Poems and essays by Nathaniel Brodie, Alison Deming, Allison Dushane, Gregg Garfin, Ander Monson, Logan Phillips, and Paul Robbins provide poetic perspectives on the Rillito River; an overview of the region's climate, hydrology, and water policy; a comparison between the theory and practice of interdisciplinary research; and a trail of the overlapping roles of science and art in the construction of contemporary concepts of nature from the Romantic period to the present. Art and design projects include intercontinental comparisons of arid regions and river systems, finely detailed drawings and photographic series reflecting direct encounters with the local landscape, and collaborations with the Rillito River Project. One scientist in the project describes the ability of these creative projects to "transform messages from the stilted language of scientific literature into rich, multifaceted vocabularies that can be grasped by those interested, but inexpert, in the subject matter." Turning the desecrated and overlooked dry rivers of Tucson into muse and inspiration, this project speaks volumes about community, creativity, and responsibility. Groundwater is a work of art in itself, beautifully designed and produced with lush color reproductions, letterpress printed covers and open-sewn binding.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“There is wisdom as well as beauty in this book, which starts from the premise that we do have choices and that the future brings great promise [and goes on to encourage] us to examine our own roles in this desert ecosystem and to individually and collectively invest in the social and natural systems that support us.” • Katharine L. Jacobs, Director of the National Climate Assessment

“I immediately obtained a copy of Ground|Water and found myself holding an artifact that is as ecocritical as one could envision, right down to its physical substance produced and contracted for entirely by writers, artists and print artisans on eco friendly materials, ranging from recycled paper to the vegetable inks, an elegant miscellany of texts, essays, photos, drawings all pertaining to the Rillito as it runs through the metro area.” • Harold Fromm, Hudson Review

“It seems an object of art before you even turn a page. Hopefully this is the direction in which bookmaking is headed in the digital age, toward the small-batch and the quirky—something worthy of being called a genuine artifact.” • Tim Hull, Tucson Weekly

Ellen McMahon is a Fulbright Scholar and University of Arizona professor of Art and Visual Communications. Her interest in combining the perspectives and methods of artists, designers, and scientists has led her into several collaborative projects focusing on environmental issues. Ander Monson is the author of a number of paraphernalia, including a website ([otherelectricities.com](http://otherelectricities.com)), a decoder wheel, several chapbooks, as well as five books. Beth Weinstein is an architect, associate professor in the University of Arizona School of Architecture, and a performance scholar and designer.

Ground|Water is an artifact as ecocritical as one could envision, right down to its physical substance produced and contracted for entirely by writers, artists, professors, and print artisans on eco-friendly materials. From the recycled paper to the vegetable inks, it is an elegant miscellany of text, essays, photos, drawings all pertaining to the Rillito River as it runs through the Tucson metro area as a drainage confluence revealing an ecological history of the Sonoran Desert. Like other desert rivers, this became dry as a result of the pumping of ground water for an exploding population and its trajectory and landscape are literally "inscribed" as a geological and cultural history of a vast geographical area. This handsome book both represents and is in itself a conservation project.

Ground|Water is proof that when artists and scientists converge to examine a public problem like

climate change, awareness, intelligence and imagination flow like those old-time Southwest rivers! I hope that we see more communal efforts like this one between the University of Arizona and the Rillito River Project.

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