

STANDING BETWEEN LIFE AND EXTINCTION

ETHICS AND ECOLOGY OF CONSERVING AQUATIC SPECIES IN NORTH AMERICAN DESERTS

Edited by **David L. Propst, Jack E. Williams,**
Kevin R. Bestgen, and Christopher W. Hoagstrom
With a Foreword by Senator Tom Udall



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North American deserts—lands of little water—have long been home to a surprising diversity of aquatic life, from fish to insects and mollusks. With European settlement, however, water extraction, resource exploitation, and invasive species set many of these native aquatic species on downward spirals. In this book, conservationists dedicated to these creatures document the history of their work, the techniques and philosophies that inform it, and the challenges and opportunities of the future.

A precursor to this book, *Battle Against Extinction*, laid out the scope of the problem and related conservation activities through the late 1980s. Since then, many nascent conservation programs have matured, and researchers have developed new technologies, improved and refined methods, and greatly expanded our knowledge of the myriad influences on the ecology and dynamics of these species. *Standing between Life and Extinction* brings the story up to date. While the future for some species is more secure than thirty years ago, others are less fortunate. Calling attention not only to iconic species like the razorback sucker, Gila trout, and Devils Hole pupfish, but also to other fishes and obscure and fascinating invertebrates inhabiting intermittent aquatic habitats, this book explores the scientific, social, and political challenges of preserving these aquatic species and their habitats amid an increasingly charged political discourse and in desert regions characterized by a growing human population and rapidly changing climate.

“A tribute to pioneering legends of early desert fish conservation and a synthesis of ongoing work that reveals successes, failures, and challenges. . . . A valuable addition to the conservation literature that will be read widely and cited extensively.”

—Michael S. Parker, Southern Oregon State University

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