



Take Me to the River: Fishing, Swimming, and Dreaming on the San Joaquin

Joell Hallowell

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For ten years, Coke Hollowell and her daughter Joell asked people with deep connections to the San Joaquin, What was your life like along the river? With candor and enthusiasm, people responded. Fishermen, miners, immigrants, Native Americans, hunters, farmers, and environmentalists all clamored to be heard. The result is *Take Me to the River* a collection of thirty-three deeply personal accounts of life along the San Joaquin. These are stories that capture rare snapshots of river history: childhoods spent swimming in the river's ice-cold waters, rafting downstream in a rickety boat with friends, spearing fifty-pound chinook salmon year after year, eating fresh figs picked right from a huge tree on the riverbank, dredging for gold during the Depression, building a coalition to restore the river's health, sharing the very last meal before Friant Dam was built and the salmon runs stopped, and many, many fish stories. *Take Me to the River* recounts the many trials damming, overpopulation, climate change and triumphs that a river undergoes in our times. Each story calls us to discover our own relationships with the natural world and, as a whole, *Take Me to the River* propels us toward a brighter future one that holds the promise of restoring the health and vigor of the San Joaquin.

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