

Claiborne Ashby

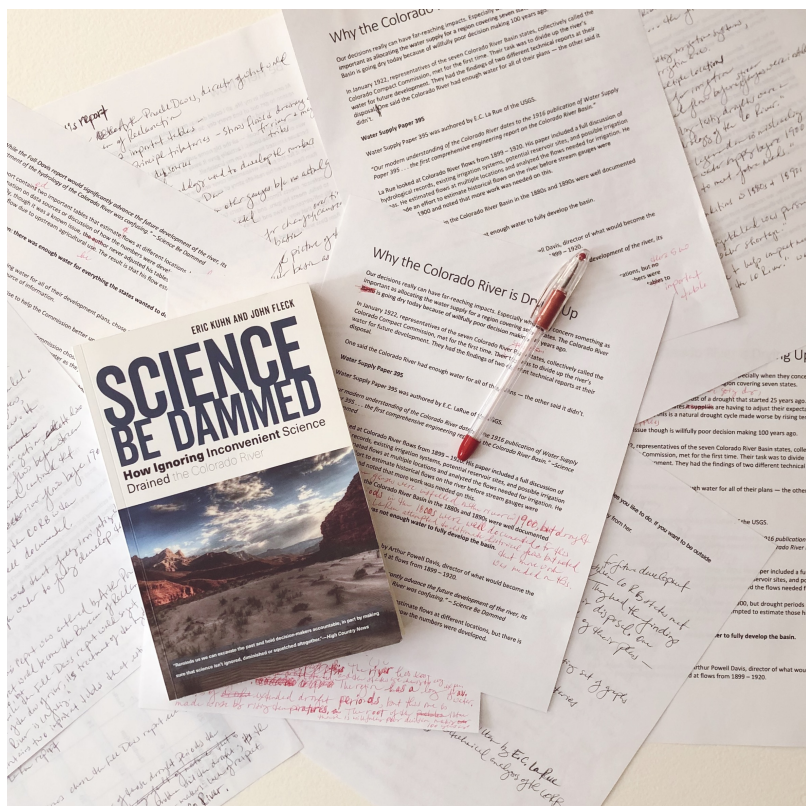
July 6, 2025

Good morning,

I hope you're well. After an unplanned hiatus, I'm pleased to be back to writing and drawing and painting, and sending out these emails. For the foreseeable future this is going to be a monthly newsletter with blog posts, interesting links and notes, and updates on new artwork.

As always, I hope you'll find something valuable here.

The Colorado River and its struggles have been on my mind a lot lately. Over 100 years ago, the powers that be in this country decided to develop every inch of the West — even the parts the Native people told them were too dry. I read a great book that details the history of how seven states, intent on growth, divided up the Colorado's annual flows while ignoring critical available data.



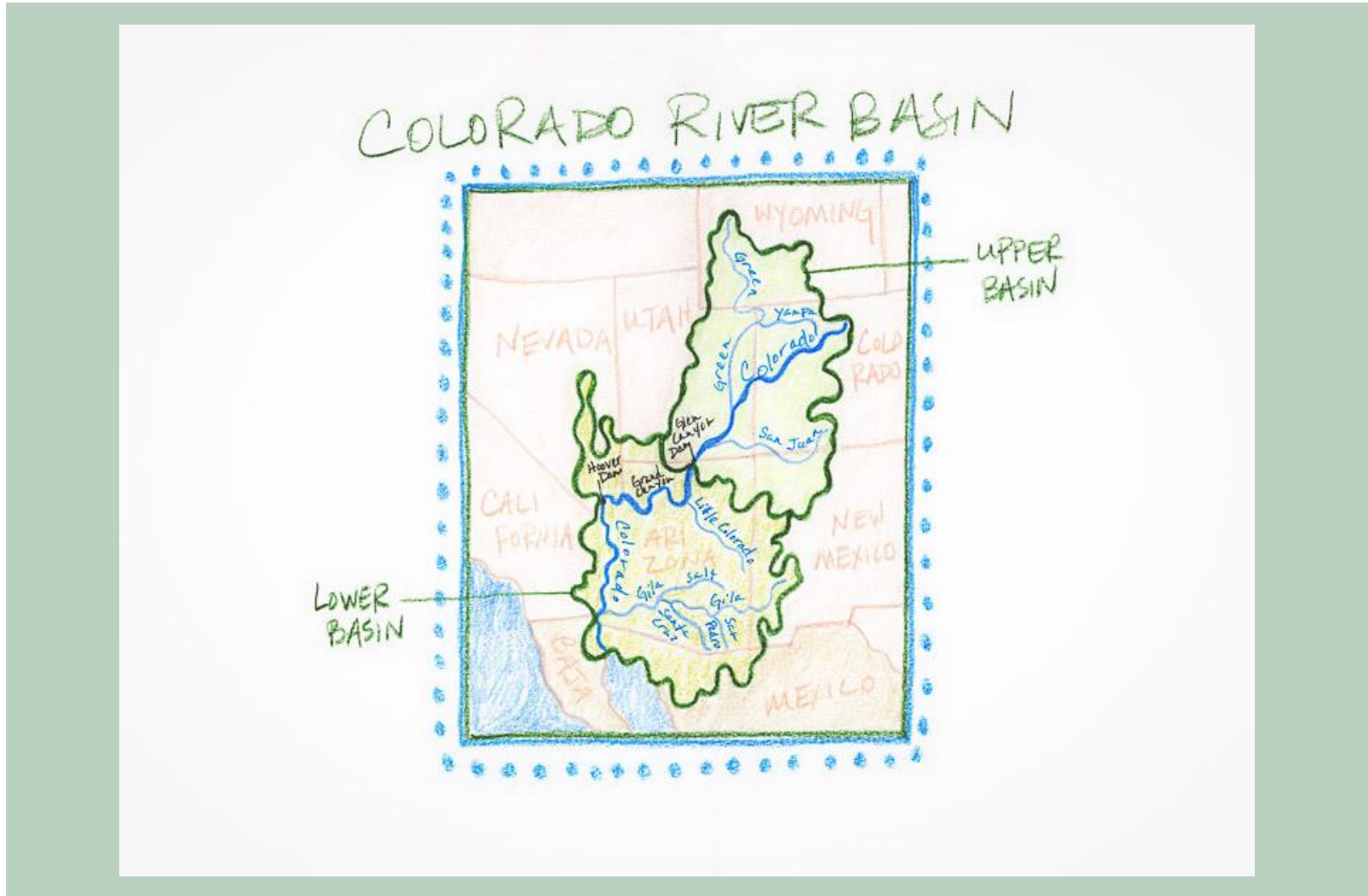
Keep scrolling for the blog post.

Thanks for being here and happy 6th of July.

xo,
Clay

On the Blog

Why the Colorado River is Drying Up



Our decisions really can have far-reaching impacts. Especially when they concern something as important as allocating the water supply for a region covering seven states.

The Colorado River Basin is in the midst of a drought that started 25 years ago. The river has lost 20% of its flow, and the states it serves are having to adjust their expectations for available water. In part, this is a natural drought cycle made worse by rising temperatures.

The root of the issue though is willfully poor decision making 100 years ago.

In January 1922, representatives of the seven Colorado River Basin states, collectively called the Colorado Compact Commission, met for the first time. Their task was to divide up the river's water for future development. They had the findings of two different technical reports at their disposal.

One said the Colorado River had enough water for all of their plans — the other said it didn't.

[READ IT ON THE BLOG](#)

Links & Notes

- Tribes along the Gila River, a tributary of the Colorado River, are planning to float solar panels on a reservoir to prevent evaporation. This article investigates whether floating solar could be a way to conserve water on the main Colorado River.

“Gila River Tribes Intend to Float Solar Panels on a Reservoir. Could the Technology Help the Colorado River?” ~ [Inside Climate News](#) ~

- Virginia's Rappahannock Tribe is the first tribe in the US to adopt a Tribal Constitution that recognizes the rights of nature. Their new constitution gives legal rights to the Rappahannock River.

“River gains ‘rights of nature’ under Rappahannock tribal law” ~ [Bay Journal](#) ~

In the Studio

Coming soon :)



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