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Bradley John Monsma
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Bradley John Monsma : The Sespe Wild: Southern California'S Last Free River (Environmental Arts and Humanities Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Sespe Wild: Southern California'S Last Free River (Environmental Arts and Humanities Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I was super excited. I had heard great things about it ...By ZachWhen I received this book, I was super excited. I had heard great things about it whilst I was hiking in the Sespe with a buddy. I opened the box, and I read the book the first day, nearly without stopping. It was so good. It kept me intrigued, and offered valuable insight. I salute Mr. Monsma for this book. To be honest, I already want to read it again. Awesome!2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Word Painting to RememberBy California BillI devoured Doctor Monsma's book. I know the Sespe but never have appreciated it so much as I do after reading his book. I love the Sespe and like Dr. Monsma, I sometimes traverse it alone. I have camped, driven off road, fished, hunted and backpacked in this magical place. Dr. Monsma captured its greatness. He put into words what I have felt so many times in this wild, quiet, awesome wilderness.Unlike other books that are quickly researched and penned in robotic academic fashion, this book oozes the rich experience of a man who knows the deep secret meaning of his subject. His thoughts are carefully set forth in a caring, contemplative style that shows his respect for the Sespe Wilderness. Thanks to Dr. Monsma for penning a book that I will never part with.9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A Compelling Description of the Sespe WildernessBy Nicholas RobertsDrawing on his personal experiences of backpacking in the Sespe Wilderness over many years, Monsma revels in the beauty of the landscape, and its bird and animal life. His descriptions of early mornings in the wilderness are compelling; they make me want to reach for my backpack and hiking boots and head out to the backcountry.Drawing on extensive scholarship, he tells the chequered history of the Sespe and the story of its preservation only 50 miles from the Los Angeles metropolis. Describing the threats from oil drilling, dam building and suburban development, he not only points out the short-sightedness of current energy and development policies, but also shows the remarkable ability of the wilderness to regenerate itself and obliterate the traces of earlier intruders.He uses rhetorical figures such as the native american shamans, tricksters and bear-men to introduce different ways of seeing nature and connecting it to everyday urban life. The traces of zen buddhism and Carlos Castaneda appear hokey at the beginning, but become an integral part of the book's structure.By the end this is the kind of book that makes you not only want to visit the wilderness, but also makes you see under the surface of urban life. Every freeway drainage ditch, patch of scrub, and visiting hummingbird comes alive with layers of meaning.

A hundred miles northwest of Los Angeles, Sespe Creek flows through some of the wildest territory in California. A mostly roadless expanse of chaparral and mixed forest, in many places nearly inaccessible even on foot, the Sespe is the untamed heart of Southern California, a wilderness on the edge of one of the worlds major metropolitan developments. To nature writer and outdoorsman John Bradley Monsma, the Sespe is both his place of escape and the place that teaches me to be fully alive. In *The Sespe Wild*, Monsma shares his exploration of this unique and fantastic region. His attention ranges from the physical Sespe, examined on foot or by kayak, to the subsurface geology that shaped it, the Chumash people who first occupied it, and the impact of Spanish and then American settlers. He also considers the Sespe through the eyes of some of its nonhuman populationsthe nearly extinct condors, the vanished grizzlies, the mountain sheep, the steelhead trout, the red-legged frogs. Through the metaphor of the river, he ponders the tensions between preservation and overmanagement of wildlife and wilderness areas, the ecology of fire, the intricate connections between species, and the almost miraculous ways that the Sespe has escaped the fate of other Southern California streams, dammed or carved up into canals by development. To consider this place, Monsma says, is to call up issues crucial wherever wilderness and cities meet: recreational impacts on wildlife habitat, the dynamics of accessibility and protection, the physical and psychological need for healthy ecosystems, threats of development and resource extraction. Monsmas engaging text addresses the Sespes losses and its ongoing pattern of creation and renewal, leading us through rich layers of natural and cultural history in a narrative as colorful and exciting as a day on a Sespe trail. The Sespe, existing at the intersection of ecological processes and human ideals of wilderness, reminds us that nature and culture have always intermingled, and that the past and present, animal and human, natural and unnatural are ultimately and irrevocably inseparable.

Every river deserves an interpreter, an advocate, and a poet. Sespe Creek now has all of these, thanks to Bradley Monsmas insight, persuasion, and literary grace. His exquisite narrative reveals why this place is so important to all of us, and why the choices we make are important to the fate of all that is wild. Tim Palmer, author of *California Wild*