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In recent years, water resource management in the United States has begun a shift away from top-down, government agency-directed decision processes toward a collaborative approach of negotiation and problem solving. Rather than focusing on specific pollution sources or specific areas within a watershed, this new process considers the watershed as a whole, seeking solutions to an interrelated set of social, economic, and environmental problems. Decision making involves face-to-face negotiations among a variety of stakeholders, including federal, state, and local agencies, landowners, environmentalists, industries, and researchers. *Swimming Upstream* analyzes the collaborative approach by providing a historical overview of watershed management in the United States and a normative and empirical conceptual framework for understanding and evaluating the process. The bulk of the book looks at a variety of collaborative watershed planning projects across the country. It first examines the applications of relatively short-term collaborative strategies in Oklahoma and Texas, exploring issues of trust and legitimacy. It then analyzes factors affecting the success of relatively long-term collaborative partnerships in the National Estuary Program and in 76 watersheds in Washington and California. Bringing analytical rigor to a field that has been dominated by practitioners' descriptive accounts, *Swimming Upstream* makes a vital contribution to public policy, public administration, and environmental management.