

1-1-1994

Tasting the Land

Jarold Ramsey

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.uchastings.edu/hastings_environmental_law_journal



Part of the [Environmental Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Jarold Ramsey, *Tasting the Land*, 1 Hastings West Northwest J. of Envtl. L. & Pol'y 119 (1994)

Available at: https://repository.uchastings.edu/hastings_environmental_law_journal/vol1/iss1/9

This Comment is brought to you for free and open access by the Law Journals at UC Hastings Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Hastings Environmental Law Journal by an authorized editor of UC Hastings Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact wangangela@uchastings.edu.

"To become shamans, Lillooet boys were required to bathe in every lake and stream in their country."

Tasting the Land

by Jarold Ramsey

Wherever water gathers, or pours over stone
in our land, we are sent forth.
The old men, they teach us the spirit
is like the sky, it must have water
to clear itself, and shine
The spirit, they say, can become a rainbow.
Soon I will have taken the powers
of every lake and river, pond and creek
in our world—already I can taste
my way through most of the land,
the sweet, the brackish, the stagnant,
the salty, the ice-cold.
Through the densest thicket at dusk
I can track my mind to that sudden blue opening
where the sky plunges in to a lake,
and ringed by spruce be bathed again anew.
Someday, though we must go through the country of sand
and bones, or the country of smoke and fire,
and our bodies will stiffen and shrivel, still
our spirits will shine, they say, and dance,
on the far waters of home.

