Title: The Thousand-Year Flood

Author: David Welky

Description:
Timed to coincide with the flood's seventy-fifth anniversary, The Thousand-Year Flood is the first comprehensive history of one of the most destructive disasters in American history. David Welky first shows how decades of settlement put Ohio valley farms and towns at risk and how politicians and planners repeatedly ignored the dangers. Then he tells the gripping story of the river's inexorable rise: residents fled to refugee camps and higher ground, towns imposed martial law, prisoners rioted, Red Cross nurses endured terrifying conditions, and FDR dispatched thousands of relief workers. In a landscape fraught with dangersfrom unmoored gas tanks that became floating bombs to powerful currents of filthy floodwaters that swept away whole townspeople hastily raised sandbag barricades, piled into overloaded rowboats, and marveled at water that stretched as far as the eye could see. In the flood's aftermath, Welky explains, New Deal reformers, utopian dreamers, and hard-pressed locals restructured not only the flood-stricken valleys, but also the nation's relationship with its waterways, changes that continue to affect life along the rivers to this day.

 A striking narrative of danger and adventureand the mix of heroism and generosity, greed and pettiness that always accompany disasterThe Thousand-Year Flood breathes new life into a fascinating yet little-remembered American story.