

2026



UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON

School of Law

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Staying the Course: Promoting the
Public Good Amid Public Crises

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON SCHOOL OF LAW
ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES LAW CENTER

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

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ON THE COVER

Imnaha River Canyon by photographer Mike Putnam is part of the Knight Law Center's permanent art installation featuring his photographic explorations of Oregon's scenic waterways and landscapes. Putnam calls Bend, Oregon, home. View his work at www.mikeputnamphoto.com.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON SCHOOL OF LAW

ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES LAW CENTER

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WHO WE ARE



“Part of what distinguishes the Oregon Law community is the collective understanding that each of us has a part to play in unbreaking and remaking our world.”

— Heather A. Brinton, JD '96

Executive Director, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center

Since offering its first environmental and natural resources law courses in the 1960s, Oregon Law has been home to one of the top environmental law programs in the United States. A dynamic hub for environmental-legal research, education, and outreach, the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center supports interdisciplinary solution-building around today's exigent climate and justice issues.

“Part of what distinguishes the Oregon Law community,” says the ENR Center's Executive Director, Heather Brinton, JD '96, “is the collective understanding that each of us has a part to play in unbreaking and remaking our world.” The ENR Center educates, equips, and empowers students, communities, and decision-makers as they imagine and work to secure a more just and sustainable future for all.

Through the ENR Center, faculty experts, students, and collaborators pursue cutting-edge research, build community around environmental advocacy, and develop new approaches for some of the most pressing socioecological challenges of our day. ENR alumni graduate from Oregon Law prepared to continue this work as lawyers, policymakers, advocates, and activists.

Whether we are informing our communities through outcome-driven educational programming, co-producing science-backed policy analysis, or championing new research interests across the field of environmental and natural resources law, the ENR Center actively prioritizes our mission: **engaging the law to support sustainability on Earth.**

A Living Legacy of Leadership in **ENVIRONMENTAL LAW**

A+

**for Environmental
Law Program**

PreLaw Magazine (2026)

#8

**in Environmental
Law Programs**

U.S. News & World Report (2026)

#2

**in Pacific Northwest
Environmental Law Programs**

U.S. News & World Report (2026)

At Oregon Law, we never take our eyes off the horizon.

We continuously strive to educate, equip, and empower the rising generation of environmental lawyers and leaders.

Combining rigorous classroom learning with innovative experiential education to provide comprehensive environmental and natural resources law curriculum

Stewarding thematically organized Interdisciplinary Research Projects to address key climate and justice issues

Hosting world's oldest and largest Public Interest Environmental Law Conference (PIELC) right on campus

Fostering a uniquely connected network of students, educators, alumni, and supporters deeply committed to serving the public interest

Message from the Executive Director



Dear Community,

What a year it has been! I hope this annual year-in-review—filled with example after example of the dedication of Oregon Law students, faculty, alumni, and supporters—is a welcome reminder that, despite tremendous challenges, there remain passionate advocates, visionary scholars, and talented students devoted to engaging the law to support sustainability and justice on Earth.

The University of Oregon's Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center's programmatic vision continues to drive the development of innovative curricula, concurrent degree opportunities, specialized study tracks, and interdisciplinary academic and applied research.

Our faculty members continue demonstrating their commitment to excellence in scholarship, classroom teaching and skills training, and public service. Our alumni continue defending people and places through careers dedicated to advocating for our climate, communities, and democracy. And, in the face of formidable obstacles, our students continue providing inspiration and passion to sustain and evolve our collective work.

This community comprises an impressive group of current and future lawyers and leaders. I am continually buoyed by what we are capable of—the positive change we can help make—when we come together.

As you read this year-in-review newsletter, the ENR Center welcomes your thoughts, questions, and suggestions. And as we continue our efforts to engage the law to support sustainability, we also welcome your support.

Sincerely,

Heather A. Brinton, JD '96

*Executive Director, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center
University of Oregon School of Law
hbrinton@uoregon.edu*

Staying the Course: Promoting the Public Good Amid Public Crises

For more than 60 years, Oregon Law's Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) curriculum—which spans subjects from natural resources, food, water, and energy law to ocean and coastal law, environmental human rights, and climate policy—has helped propel law students toward rewarding careers as public interest practitioners, community organizers, and policymakers. Through a unique combination of traditional classroom learning and innovative experience-based education, ENR students gain the knowledge and skills they need to thrive as advocates for people, principles, and the planet.

While it is essential that ENR faculty equip their students with excellent environmental-legal education, academic excellence is just one pillar of the ENR program. The capacity and drive of these educators to extend their reach beyond the academy is another.

“As law professors, it is imperative that we foster in our students a commitment to integrity, honesty, and the public good,” says Philip H. Knight Professor of Law and Faculty Director of the ENR Center Mary Christina Wood. “It is just as critical that we model that commitment through our public work beyond the classroom and campus.”

Follow conversations with three ENR faculty who are leading by example through their public service.



Adell Amos: Shaping State Water Resources Management

Clayton R. Hess Professor of Law Adell Amos, JD '98, serves as faculty co-leader of the ENR Center's Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project. She teaches Water Law, Federal Administrative Law, Environmental Conflict Resolution, Interviewing and Client Counseling, and the Water Law Writing Colloquium. In April 2026, following a nomination by Governor Tina Kotek, Professor Amos was confirmed by the Oregon Senate to serve on the Oregon Water Resources Commission.

Professor Amos, what does it mean to you to serve on the Oregon Water Resources Commission?

Technically speaking, my fellow commissioners and I are charged with providing policy oversight relevant to the Oregon Water Resources Department's management of public water resources. Personally, the role gives me another opportunity to live my commitment to public service, collaborative governance, and sustainability. I am eager to leverage this position to help ensure all who live in Oregon can enjoy equitable access to sufficient and safe water supplies, as well as vibrant thriving watersheds, now and into the future. It is humbling and so rewarding to have this chance to give back to the communities and ecosystems that have inspired and informed my ongoing work on water law, policy, and justice.

How has your background as a scholar, educator, and administrative attorney helped prepare you for this public service role?

Professors do not just profess. Listening to and learning from our students, colleagues, and communities is a vital part of the job. Through my teaching and research, I have

been exposed to so many diverse perspectives—students have spoken about growing up unsure whether their tap water was safe to drink; community members have shared their anxieties related to climate change, drought, and water scarcity; and countless colleagues have raised important questions about water resources management amid institutional instability. My work as Deputy Solicitor for Land and Water Resources in the Obama Administration also exposed me to a myriad of ideas about how to responsibly manage public resources. In that role, I worked on some of the nation's most contentious and high-profile water basins—including the Klamath Basin here in Oregon—and advised on state and federal water rights, major infrastructural projects, and resiliency planning. I feel a responsibility to carry what I have learned from all these experiences forward into my service as commissioner.

How do you see your work as Commissioner connecting to your work in the classroom?

Since joining Oregon Law's faculty in 2006, I have worked to bring reality into the classroom by connecting the curriculum with not only real-world legal issues and water conflicts but also the communities navigating them. I always encourage students to work at the cutting edge of emerging water resources challenges. Because the Commission directly engages with the Oregon Water Resources Department, I have a chance to bring new insights about the Department's ongoing work into the classroom, giving students the opportunity to take on research and other projects that are responsive to the challenges decision-makers face in managing state water resources.

In 2023, Oregon Governor Tina Kotek called on you and three other water lawyers for guidance around modernizing the state's water laws. What issues did you identify and what were your recommendations?

My peers Janet Neuman, David Filippi, Josh Newton, and I identified outdated laws and inflexible and underfunded administrative processes in a letter to Governor Kotek. We offered a litany of recommendations—to name a few: earnestly addressing Tribal water rights; implementing integrated water resources management strategies

that incorporate socioeconomic and socioecological considerations; reallocating resources to ensure equitable outcomes for historically underserved water users; improving the quality, collection, distribution, and use of water data; and consistently engaging diverse water stakeholders and stewards to enhance climate resilience and mitigate climate impacts on water sources.

What do you envision for Oregon's water future?

I envision a *shared* water future, meaning current and future generations of we, the people, will shape and steward it. I dream of a sustainable water future, which starts with healthy ecosystems—keeping our forests balanced and resilient, our soils rich and free from toxins, and our rivers clear and cool—and culminates in healthy communities entitled to equitable, affordable access to the water they need to thrive.

Why is it important for educators to take public service beyond the classroom?

Teaching the rising generation of advocates is serious business, especially in this constitutional moment in our country's history. For me to do my job properly, I cannot be siloed in the legal academy, or even the academy more broadly. It is vital for educators to test our ideas in the real world, to collaborate outside our disciplines and dogmas, and to shape solutions with the communities they are meant to serve. My work on the Oregon Water Resources Commission allows me to do that while bringing my expertise to bear on the water management landscape many of my students will navigate in their postgraduate practice.

What is your favorite body of water in Oregon?

Now, that is a hard question! I like all of them. My favorite body of water tends to be the one I am sitting next to or floating on at the moment.



Greg Dotson: Confronting Climate Change, Data Center Development, and Federal Overreach

Associate Professor Greg Dotson, JD '95, serves as faculty leader of the ENR Center's Energy Law and Policy Project. He teaches Environmental Law, Climate Change Law and Policy, Energy Law, and the Environmental Policy Practicum. He currently serves on the Oregon Data Center Advisory Committee, the Oregon Climate Action Commission, and Oregon Attorney General Dan Rayfield's Federal Oversight and Accountability Cabinet.

Professor Dotson, you serve on three state bodies focused, respectively, on the statewide impacts of data centers, climate change, and federal overreach. Do you see these as separate issues, or are they connected?

It is a privilege to serve the state through participation on these three bodies. Data centers, climate change, and federal overreach may seem unrelated, but they are perhaps surprisingly interconnected. Here in Oregon, we were on track to meet our state's climate goals until two things happened. The federal government established a set of policies to disfavor clean energy and actually increase climate pollution. And the growth of data centers increased demand for polluting energy sources. Serving on these state bodies has

allowed me to focus on related challenges from different angles.

How has your background on Capitol Hill shaped how you approach your current public service?

It is hard to negotiate achievements on Capitol Hill without engaging those with different viewpoints. Trying to find productive ways of engagement at the state level is not so different. My work on these state bodies is advisory in nature. I am not a decision-maker; but understanding the views of as many as possible can only strengthen the value of my participation.

As you explore emerging issues such as unprecedented load growth from rapid data center development, how are you bringing students along for the ride?

I have been fortunate to have several terrific student fellows through the ENR Center who have helped research energy and environmental issues related to data centers. They have been a tremendous help to the advisory committee, and I think they have personally gotten a lot out of it as well.

You teach courses like Climate Change Law and Policy and Energy Law. How have you evolved your teaching to keep pace with changes to the environmental and energy policy landscape?



In the United States we enjoyed a fairly stable energy and environmental law and policy world for many years, but that has shifted in the last decade. With changing presidential administrations, we have seen the policy pendulum swing. Today, the federal government seems disinterested in addressing pollution issues and in some cases seems perfectly content with increasing pollution. The important thing from a teaching perspective is to help students develop a fact-based understanding of what is happening in the energy and environment space.

Why is it important for educators to take public service beyond the classroom?

I know from serving as a congressional staffer that it can be hard to have the time to develop a perspective about how a pending policy matter fits into a historical context. Perhaps there have been failures or unintended consequences from similar policies that have been tried in the past, but that might not always be widely known. Academia provides an opportunity to understand this history, and it is valuable to share that beyond the classroom.

How do you stay connected with nature in your free time?

I chose the path of environmental law because of my love of the outdoors, so



it is important to me to stay connected, whether through hiking with my family, skiing, or cycling.

Chuck Sams: Centering Communities in Conservation

Mr. Charles F. “Chuck” Sams III (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation) serves as Oregon Law’s inaugural Oregon Tribes Scholar-in-Residence and is a Senior Fellow with the ENR Center’s Native Environmental Sovereignty Project. In these roles he has delivered several public lectures and co-launched, with Professor Wood, a prospectus for the Indigenous Creation Law Initiative (ICLI). Grounded in the stewardship principles embedded in Tribal creation stories, the ICLI is geared toward advancing Indigenous environmental sovereignty over on- and off-reservation lands and resources. Senior Fellow Sams currently serves on the Northwest Power and Conservation Council and is Co-Chair of the Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund.

Senior Fellow Sams, before joining the academic community at Oregon Law, you served as Director of the National Park Service, becoming the first Tribal member to act in that capacity. How was your approach to leadership different from your predecessors?

Everyone has their own style of leadership, and I learned a great deal from my predecessors—both living and passed on—by reading about or speaking with them. My approach, like anyone’s, is informed by my upbringing and background. Being

raised on the Umatilla Indian Reservation, I learned at a very early age the importance of servant leadership. One cannot ask another to do something one would not do themselves. Having served in the U.S. Navy, I also know the importance of taking care of those you are charged to lead by ensuring they have the necessary knowledge, skills, and tools to carry out the mission at hand. Because of these experiences, I saw my role as Director as a responsibility to provide all the support staff needed to meet the demands of protecting, preserving, and enhancing our national park system.

You have been a public servant for decades. What have you learned that you carry into your current public service roles?

Listen more than you talk. Be prepared to really engage with people, especially the public. Answer questions truthfully, thoughtfully, and openly. I have learned to recognize when I do not know the answer—in those moments, I know not just to say I do not know the answer, which is important. I also try to find the answer and report back to whoever raised the question, because follow-through is essential. You cannot build trust without it.

As Co-Chair of the Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund, you are responsible for helping advise how the state uses a nearly \$700M pollution settlement from Monsanto. How are you working to ensure your decision-making supports positive outcomes for communities across Oregon?

I am honored to Co-Chair the OERF alongside former Oregon Senator Michael Dembrow. His years of service and our working relationship have helped me better understand and embrace public accountability. The funding we help oversee is the result of environmental damage suffered all across Oregon. By directing these financial resources toward state agencies, Tribal governments, and public entities to repair and restore the damage, we seek to ensure the funding reaches the most critical environmental needs of our state. We also continue working closely with diverse stakeholders



Staying the Course *continued*

to shape our administrative rules and regulations so they serve the people, places, flora, and fauna impacted by Monsanto's pollution.

Why is it important to you to engage in public service beyond campus?

University life is rich with many opportunities for learning within and beyond the classroom. But experiences off campus give students, staff, and faculty the chance to put these lessons into practice. Public servants learn to apply their knowledge in the real world, build and strengthen relationships, and contribute to a community. Public service also brings people together from different backgrounds and understandings, helping build bridges across social, economic, and cultural differences. This diversity of thought helps create better outcomes, in my experience.

What advice do you have for those interested in pursuing careers as public servants?

Serving the greater good—prioritizing something bigger than oneself—brings many rewarding opportunities and experiences. You have the chance to share your knowledge and, by doing so, you can help create a stronger community. Public service is also humbling and gives you insights on new or unfamiliar ideas and perspectives, making you a better steward of our democratic values.

What is your favorite national park?

I have two: Grand Tetons National Park and Fort Pulaski National Monument. The Grand Tetons' majestic grandeur has always captivated me. To wake up early and step from my tent to see the morning sunshine splashed across the mountains is awe inspiring. Fort Pulaski tells a deep story—not just about the Civil War, but about the history and legacy of slavery in this country. The fort protected the river entrance into Savannah, Georgia, a regional hub for the slave trade prior to the Civil War. Enslaved laborers, including enslaved children, built the fort itself. From my first visit to this site in 1989, it has felt to me like a warning to current and future generations about how cruel and unjust we can be to one another when we fail to remain vigilant and committed to human rights.

SIDEBAR

Senior Fellow Sams, Professor Reyes-Santos, and Alumna Cheyenne Holliday Help Guide Investments in Environmental Restoration Following Historic Monsanto Settlement

In December 2022, Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum, JD '75, announced a \$698M settlement with agrochemical and biotechnological titan Monsanto. Arising from the corporation's long-term pollution of Oregon's landscapes, waterways, and wildlife, the historic award remains the largest of its kind nationally.

Following the state's legal victory against Monsanto, Governor Tina Kotek launched the Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund (OERF) as a basin for the settlement dollars, ordering that the funds be funneled toward communities and ecosystems impacted by Monsanto's pollution.

Today, three members of Oregon Law's academic community—Oregon Tribes Scholar-in-Residence and Senior Fellow Chuck Sams; alumna Cheyenne Holliday, CRES '20; and Professor of Practice Alai Reyes-Santos—serve on the OERF Advisory Council. In their roles on the Council, they are helping direct state-level investments in community-based conservation projects across Oregon.

- 25% dedicated to nine federally recognized Tribal Nations in Oregon to support Tribal environmental stewardship
- 50% dedicated to support state agencies working to address pollution and public health
- 25% dedicated to public projects and programs focused on benefitting impacted communities



Chuck Sams
Council Co-Chair



“Serving as Vice Chair of the Council is an opportunity to help shape a future where investments heal both our ecosystems and the communities that have borne the greatest environmental burdens. By stewarding these resources with care and vision, we can create lasting benefits for generations to come.”

Cheyenne Holliday
CRES '20, Council Vice Chair



“With these investments, we seek to magnify the impact of the settlement for our waters, soils, and peoples. By focusing in particular on upholding Tribal sovereignty, supporting community-led initiatives, and funding projects proposed by state agencies, we aim to ensure that Oregon's future is shaped by all who live here.”

Dr. Alai Reyes-Santos
Council Member

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE:

Faculty Appointments Beyond the Classroom

SARAH ADAMS

- Chair, Housing Law Committee, State, Local, and Tribal Government Law Section, American Bar Association
- Member, Transportation Planning Rulemaking Advisory Committee, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
- Member, Advisory Board, Housing Land Advocates
- Member, Editorial Board, *The Urban Lawyer*

ADELL AMOS

- Commissioner, Oregon Water Resources Commission, Oregon Water Resources Department
- Member, Executive Committee, Administrative Law Section, Oregon State Bar

HOWARD ARNETT

- Member, Steering Committee, Central Oregon Campaign for Equal Justice
- Member (Emeritus), Oregon Lawyers Campaign for Equal Justice

JOHN BONINE

- Chair, Board of Directors, Ecology-People-Law
- Member, Board of Directors, Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide
- Member, Commission on Environmental Law, International Union for Conservation of Nature

GREG DOTSON

- Commissioner, Oregon Climate Action Commission
- Member, Oregon Data Center Advisory Committee
- Member, Oregon Attorney General's Federal Oversight and Accountability Cabinet
- Member, Board of Advisors, Environmental & Energy Law Program, Harvard Law School

MICHAEL FAKHRI

- United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food (2020 – 2026)
- Member, Board of Directors, Erosion, Technology, and Concentration Group
- Member, International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems

SUSAN GARY

- Lead, Lawyers Work Group, Purpose Trust Ownership Network
- Reporter, Partition of Heirs Property Work Group, Oregon Law Commission
- Member, Heirs Property Task Force, American College of Trust and Estate Counsel
- Member, Fiduciary Duty and Policy Group, Intentional Endowments Network
- Member, Retirement Protection Task Force
- Member, Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act Work Group

TOM LININGER

- Commissioner, Oregon Public Defense Commission

ROBERTA MANN

- Fellow, American College of Tax Counsel
- Deputy Associate Editor, *The Tax Lawyer*
- Member, Advisory Board, The Tax Policy Institute

DOUGLAS QUIRKE

- Advisory Member, Executive Committee, Sustainable Future Section, Oregon State Bar
- Member, Board of Directors, Friends of Land Air Water

CHUCK SAMS

- Co-Chair, Advisory Council, Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund
- Indigenous Programs Director, Center for Environmental Justice, Yale University
- Montgomery Fellow, Dartmouth College
- Oregon Member, Northwest Power and Conservation Council
- Member, Board of Directors, REI Co-Op
- Member, Advisory Board, Delaware North
- Member, Board of Directors, Oregon Community Foundation
- Member, Board of Directors, St. Anthony Hospital Foundation

ALAÍ REYES-SANTOS

- Director, Oregon Water Equity Fund
- Member, Advisory Council, Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund
- Member, Environmental Equity Committee, Oregon Racial Justice Council, Office of the Oregon Governor
- Member, Board of Directors, Bohio Cibanani
- Member, Board of Directors, Northwest Health Foundation
- Member, Board of Directors, Civil Liberties Defense Center
- Member, Oregon Water Futures Collaborative

MICHELLE SMITH

- Member, Board of Directors, Oregon Natural Desert Association
- Member, Board of Directors, Northwest Environmental Defense Center
- Member, Oregon Water Futures Collaborative



FELLOW FEATURE

Lexi Hernandez is a first-generation, Mexican-American law student from Riverside County, California, where she saw and experienced firsthand the impacts of climate change on environmental justice communities. After graduating from Chapman University with degrees in environmental science and sociology, she worked with Intersectional Environmentalists and spent three years organizing with an Orange County-based climate policy nonprofit.

In her first year at Oregon Law, Hernandez served as a Dean's Distinguished Fellow with the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center, joining the Energy Law and Policy Project (ELPP) in climate policy and energy law research. That summer, she worked with the Natural Resources Defense Council on national environmental policy and state-level community involvement in energy policy development.

As a 2L, Hernandez continued her fellowship with the ENR Center's ELPP, engaging in policy research to support the Oregon Data Center Advisory Committee in developing policy recommendations relevant to data center development across the state. Through this experience, she not only gained expertise on the regulatory structures that govern Oregon's energy procurement and implementation; she also became embedded in a larger network of public servants, policymakers, and practitioners committed to sustainability.

In addition to her fellowship with the ELPP, Hernandez completed an ENR externship with the California Air Resources Board, worked with the Western Environmental Law Center through the environmental law clinic, co-directed events for the Latinx Law Student Association, and participated at the Public

Interest Environmental Law Conference. After summering with Stoel Rives, LLP, in Sacramento, she entered her third year of law school as a third-year ENR Fellow.

"I have gained invaluable legal experience through the ENR Center, which has made me more confident and prepared to enter the legal workforce," Hernandez says.

"I couldn't imagine my law school experience without the programming, research opportunities, and community I have access to through the Center."



LEXI HERNANDEZ



Impact of Giving

PROTECTING PEOPLE AND THE PLANET

In an era of constant (and often unwelcome) change, we must seek opportunities for creative problem-solving and positive transformation. Today's law students are seizing these opportunities and pursuing legal training because they truly believe a better world is possible.

Through Oregon Law's ENR Center—one of the best environmental law programs in the country—future environmental lawyers and leaders gain the expertise and skills required to navigate complex shifts across law, policy, economics, and science. Along with their coursework and research, ENR students become embedded in a network of engaged “Law Ducks” and other professionals dedicated to public interest environmental advocacy.

For decades, the ENR Center has been engaging the law to promote sustainability on Earth, producing groundbreaking interdisciplinary research; informing local, regional, and international decision-making; and training budding advocates to tackle emerging environmental challenges. With your support, the Center can continue the vital work of educating, equipping, and empowering tomorrow's changemakers.

Jennifer W. Reynolds

Dean

Dave Frohnmayer Chair in Leadership and Law
University of Oregon School of Law

To make a contribution to the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, contact the ENR Center's Executive Director, Heather Brinton, JD '96, at hbrinton@uoregon.edu, or scan the QR code to visit the Center's online philanthropy portal.



Leaving a Legacy:

Valens-Golden Gift Creates Endowment to Support Rising Generation of Lawyers and Leaders

In honor of her late husband Marc Valens, JD '79, philanthropist Anne Golden has generously given \$100,000 to create the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center Legacy Fund, an endowment to support Oregon Law's ENR Center in educating, equipping, and empowering communities, decision-makers, and the rising generation of environmental lawyers and leaders.

For more than 50 years, Marc Valens, JD '79, and his wife, Anne Golden, strived to build a legacy of sustainable stewardship in rural Oregon. They spent decades working to establish an environmental haven—the Moondance Ranch in Beatty, Oregon—where they relied on solar power and composting toilets, raised cattle, and dreamed of a more just and livable future for all.

When the devastating Bootleg Fire of July 2021 left the property in ruins, Valens—afflicted by an aggressive cancer—knew he wanted to dedicate his remaining years to furthering the same values of responsible



Marc Valens, JD '79 (left), and Anne Golden (right) sit together at the ENR Center's annual Alumni Reception, held at the 43rd annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference in March 2025.

stewardship and environmental protection that first led him to imagine the Moondance Ranch as a young man.

Before his passing on October 14, 2025, Valens expressed a deep appreciation for the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center, the hub of the nationally renowned environmental law program

he engaged with as a student at Oregon Law.

That spring, he and Golden had returned to his alma mater for one of their favorite events, the one-of-a-kind Public Interest Environmental Law Conference (PIELC), which they had been consistently attending together for 25 years (and which Valens had

been attending since the conference's inception at Oregon Law in 1983).

At PIELC 2025, Valens and Golden witnessed and gleaned hope from the tenacity of the public interest environmental law community.

Engaging with law students, legal scholars, attorneys, activists, and fellow concerned community members during the conference not only strengthened the couple's shared commitment to advancing environmental protection; it also affirmed their shared belief in the importance of the ENR Center's work as a seedbed for impactful, justice-oriented community engagement and environmental solution-building.

A former environmental lawyer, Valens was inspired and mentored by the late Professor Charles Wilkinson, a giant in the field of Indian Law who taught at Oregon Law from 1975 to 1987. In addition to volunteering with and serving on the boards of several public interest environmental organizations, Valens was actively engaged in the Native-led movement to undam—and prevent further damming of—the mighty Klamath River. After four decades of supporting the activism of the Klamath, Yurok, Karuk, and Hoopa Tribes, he was overjoyed to see in his lifetime the historic removal of four dams from the Klamath River, and to learn of the return of native salmon to the River's long fishless tributaries.

Toward the end of his life, Valens became especially passionate about the ENR Center's ongoing work to advance Native environmental

sovereignty across and beyond reservation lands.

In honor of her husband's nearly lifelong commitment to environmental protection, his passion for promoting Indigenous self-determination over vital natural and cultural resources, and his tireless efforts to advance sustainability on the ground, Golden remains dedicated to the legacy she and Valens sought to build together.

In February 2026, Golden made a generous contribution of \$100,000 to reinforce the ENR Center's community-oriented programs and initiatives—efforts her husband valued greatly.

The Valens-Golden gift launches an endowment, appropriately named the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center Legacy Fund.

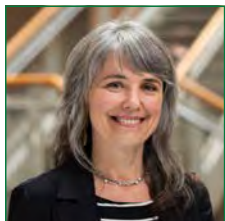
With this endowment, Golden also brings to fruition the legacy she and Valens dreamt of leaving together—one that will help ensure the sustainability of the ENR Center's efforts to educate, equip, and empower communities, decision-makers, and the rising generation of environmental lawyers and leaders.

To read Marc Valens' full obituary, visit <https://ashland.news/obituary-marc-j-valens/>.

To join Valens and Golden in contributing to the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center Legacy Fund, contact the ENR Center's Executive Director, Heather Brinton, JD '96, at hbrinton@uoregon.edu, or scan the QR code to visit our online philanthropy portal.



FACULTY UPDATES



**Sarah
Adams**

Assistant Professor of Law

Sarah J. Adams, “Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox,” 36 *STANFORD LAW & POLICY REVIEW* 47 (2025), republished in *Zoning and Planning Law Handbook*, 2026 Edition, by Patricia E. Salkin, *Thomson Reuters* (2026).

Sarah J. Adams, Panelist, “Climate Maladaptation, Land Law Localism, and the Climate Resilience Paradox,” Earth Day Conference Plenary Panel, University of Connecticut School of Law, Hartford, CT (April 17, 2026).



**Adell
Amos**

Clayton R. Hess Professor of Law

Adell Amos, “Testing Prior Appropriation as Drought and Climate Change Push States Toward Water Code Reform: Lessons From and For Oregon,” 49 *PUBLIC LAND & RESOURCES LAW REVIEW* 49 (2026).

Adell Amos, *Water Law in a Nutshell* (7th Edition), with Sandra Zellmer and Melissa Scanlan, *West Academic Publishing* (2026).

Adell Amos (advisor), “Allocating In Situ Groundwater Rights in Oregon to Protect Groundwater-Dependent Ecosystems: Opportunities and Challenges,” by Michelle Smith and ENR Fellows Andy Archer and Max McCool, *Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center* (2025).

Adell Amos, Panelist, “The Clean Water Act,” ELI Summer School Seminar Series, Environmental Law Institute, Virtual (June 24, 2026).

Adell Amos, Panelist, “Saving the Great Salt Lake,” with Karrigan Bork, Reed Benson, Brigham Daniels, Beth Parker, and Avery Emery, 44th Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 14, 2026).

Adell Amos, Panelist, “Sustainable Groundwater Management in Oregon Requires Rule Changes,” with William Jaeger and Lisa Brown, 44th Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 15, 2026).

Adell Amos, Presenter, “Protecting Conservation Values in Water Law—How Citizens Can Engage with Federal and State Water Law,” Webinar on Western Water, Sierra Club, Virtual (November 8, 2025).



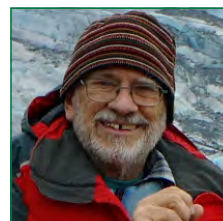
**Howard
Arnett**

Professor of Practice

Howard Arnett, Co-Presenter, “The Federal-Tribal Relationship in Practice: Trust Responsibilities and Current Indian Law Developments,” with Chuck Sams, Oregon Law Perspectives Webinar Series, University of Oregon School of Law, Virtual (August 5, 2026).

Howard Arnett, Moderator, “Representing Tribal People(s) and Interests,” Summit for Northwest American Indian Law, UO Native American Law Students Association, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (February 7, 2026).

Howard Arnett, Co-Presenter, “Treaties, Trust, and Tomorrow: Navigating the Legal Landscape of Native Lands,” with Chuck Sams, Oregon Law Perspectives Webinar Series, University of Oregon School of Law, Virtual (August 8, 2025).



**John
Bonine**

Professor Emeritus

John Bonine, Keynote Speaker, “Creativity, Passion, Hope, and Courage,” 31st Annual Environmental Law and Policy Summit, Tulane Law School, New Orleans, LA (March 6, 2026).

John Bonine, Keynote Speaker, “Creativity, Passion, and Persistence,” Southeastern Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, University of the South, Seawee, TN (October 11, 2025).

John Bonine, Presenter, “Creativity Overcoming Constraints in Legal Thinking,” EPL Summer School, Ecology-People-Law, Lviv, Ukraine (June 13, 2025).



**Greg
Dotson**

Associate Professor of Law

Greg Dotson, “Deregulation by the Judicial and Executive Branches: Can Congress Respond?,” *HARVARD ENVIRONMENTAL LAW REVIEW* (forthcoming, 2027).

Greg Dotson, “Reconciliation, Rescissions, and Review: Climate Change and the 119th Congress,” 56 *ENVIRONMENTAL LAW REPORTER* 10478 (2026).

Greg Dotson, Brief of *Amicus Curiae*: Greg Dotson in Support of Defendants’ Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment and in Opposition to Plaintiffs’ Motion for Summary Judgment, *Daimler Truck North America LLC v. California Air Resources Board*, Case No. 2:25-cv-02255-DC-AC (August 7, 2026).

Greg Dotson, Brief of *Amicus Curiae*: Greg Dotson in Opposition to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss, *State of California, et al., v. United States of America, et al.*, Case No. 4:25-cv-04966-HSG (January 29, 2026).

Greg Dotson, "The Epstein Files and the Seven Member Rule," *Just Security* (January 5, 2026).

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Greg Dotson, Presenter, "Data Centers Deep Dive—Impacts & Opportunities for Oregon," Making Energy Work Webinar, Sustainable Northwest, Virtual (June 23, 2026).

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Greg Dotson, Presenter, "Disruption vs. Stability: Impacts on People and Policy Under a New Republican Majority," Defending Democracy Series, Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics, Virtual (February 25, 2026).

Greg Dotson, Presenter, "Federal Landscape: Climate, Energy, and Environment," Testimony before House Interim Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment, Oregon State Legislature, Salem, OR (September 29, 2025).

Greg Dotson, Presenter, "Federal Landscape," Multistate Collaboration to Support State Goals Conference, Conveners Network, Portland, OR (July 10, 2025).



Michael Fakhri

Professor of Law
James O. and Alfred T. Goodwin
Senior Fellow

Michael Fakhri (editor), *Research Handbook on Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL)*, with Antony Anghie, B.S. Chimni, Karin Mickelson, and Vasuki Nesiah, *Edward Elgar* (2026).

Michael Fakhri, "Food Sovereignty," chapter in *Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL)*, edited with Antony Anghie, B.S. Chimni, Karin Mickelson, and Vasuki Nesiah, *Edward Elgar* (2026).

Michael Fakhri, "Land and the Right to Food — Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food," UN General Assembly (A/HRC/61/51) (2026).

Michael Fakhri, "What Does Oregon's New Groundwater Use Exemption Mean for Community-Scale Producers?," with Michelle Smith and ENR Fellows Blakely Durham, Kelly Keith, James Meschia, and Nicole Morshead, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (2026).

Michael Fakhri, Panelist, "Dismantling Colonial Apartheid: From International Law to Palestinian Liberation," Global Sumud Parliamentary Congress, Global Sumud Flotilla, Brussels, Belgium (April 22, 2026).

Michael Fakhri, Keynote Speaker, "The Gaza Famine: International Law, Politics, and History," 7th Annual Human Rights & History Lecture, Towson University, Towson, MD (April 7, 2026).

Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Who Decides About Our Land? Foreign Investment, International Arbitration, and Agrarian Reform," International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development +20, Cartagena, Colombia (February 24, 2026).

Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Ensuring Sustainable Food Security in Times of Crisis," Social Affairs Committee Hearing, Council of Europe, Virtual (February 4, 2026).

Michael Fakhri, Keynote Speaker, "The Right to Food and the Global Order," Annual Human Rights Lecture, Human Rights Law Centre, University of Nottingham, Virtual (January 27, 2026).

Michael Fakhri, Keynote Speaker, "Are We Making America Hungry Again?," National Food Systems Conference, Institute for Social and Economic Development Solutions, Portland, OR (June 23, 2025).

Michael Fakhri, Keynote Speaker, "The Right to Food and Land," ILC Global Land Forum, International Land Coalition, Bogotá, Colombia (June 17, 2025).



Susan Gary

Professor Emerita

Susan Gary, "Investor Fiduciary Duties: Dangerous Legislation and the Evolving Nature of Prudence," with Keith Johnson and Nicholas W. Zuiker, *MARYLAND LAW REVIEW ONLINE* (forthcoming, 2026).

Susan Gary, "Planning with Purpose: Purpose Trusts, Charitable Gifts, and Business Succession Planning," 56 *HONG KONG LAW JOURNAL* 269 (2026).

Susan Gary, "State Attorneys General Must Correct Investor Fiduciary Duty Guidance," with Keith Johnson and Maurits Dolmans, *Columbia Blue Sky Blog* (June 23, 2026).

Susan Gary, Presenter, "The Legal Case for Holistic Fiduciary Duty," with Keith Johnson, IEN Annual Forum, Intentional Endowment Network, Virtual (June 2, 2026).

Susan Gary, Presenter, "Purpose Trusts and How California Practitioners Can Use Them," with Jeff Patterson and Jocelyn Borowsky, 48th Annual Estate Planning Institute, University of California, Los Angeles, Virtual (April 23, 2026).



Tom Lininger

Orlando John and Marian H. Hollis
Professor of Law

Tom Lininger, "Theorizing Wildlife Privacy," chapter in *The Ethics of Captivity*, Oxford Centre on Animal Ethics (forthcoming).

Tom Lininger, Presenter, "The Ethical Case Against 'Virtual Captivity' for Wildlife," Oxford Centre on Animal Ethics, Oxford, England (August 4, 2025).

Tom Lininger, Presenter, "Mobility and Resilience in Wildfire-Prone Regions," Conference on Climate, Mobility, and Resilience, Columbia University, New York, NY (June 16, 2025).

Faculty Updates *continued*

Tom Lininger, Presenter, “Theorizing Nonhuman Privacy,” Animals and Equality Conference, Duke University School of Law, Durham, NC (October 20, 2024).



Roberta Mann

Professor Emerita

Roberta Mann, Presenter, “Can Taxation Save the Planet from Data Centers?,” Annual Meeting, Society for Environmental Law and Economics, London, England (June 1, 2026).

Roberta Mann, Presenter, “Can Taxation Save the Planet from Data Centers?,” Annual Meeting, Law and Society Association, San Francisco, CA (May 29, 2026).



Charles “Chuck” Sams III

Oregon Tribes Scholar-in-Residence Senior Fellow, Native Environmental Sovereignty Project

Chuck Sams, “Wasn’t On My Bingo Card of Life,” *Perspectives*, American Bar Association (August 7, 2026).

Chuck Sams, “The Trump Administration Wants to Kill a Rule that Protects Millions of Acres of National Forests,” *The Guardian* (June 5, 2026).

Chuck Sams, “The Indigenous Creation Law Initiative: A Prospectus to Advance Tribal Environmental Sovereignty Beyond Reservations,” with Mary C. Wood, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (2026).

Chuck Sams, Co-Presenter, “The Federal-Tribal Relationship in Practice: Trust Responsibilities and Current Indian Law Developments,” with Howard Arnett, Oregon Law Perspectives Webinar Series, University of Oregon School of Law, Virtual (August 5, 2026).

Chuck Sams, Commencement Speaker, 2026 Commencement, Willamette University, Salem, OR (May 10, 2026).

Chuck Sams, Keynote Speaker, “Welcome to the Fight: Environmental Justice for All,” 44th Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 13, 2026).

Chuck Sams, Keynote Speaker, “Moving Beyond Acknowledgment,” Summit for Northwest American Indian Law, UO Native American Law Students Association, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (February 7, 2026).

Chuck Sams, Presenter, “Rights of Nature,” 2025 Livable Future Forum, Central Oregon LandWatch, Bend, OR (October 30, 2025).

Chuck Sams, Co-Presenter, “Treaties, Trust, and Tomorrow: Navigating the Legal Landscape of Native Lands,” with Howard Arnett, Oregon Law Perspectives Webinar Series, University of Oregon School of Law, Virtual (August 8, 2025).

Chuck Sams, Recipient, Honorary Doctorate in Public Service, Willamette University (2026).

Chuck Sams, Recipient, LaGasse Medal, American Society of Landscape Architects (2025).

Chuck Sams, Recipient, Lone Sailor Award, U.S. Navy Memorial (2025).



Dr. Alai Reyes-Santos

Professor of Practice

Alai Reyes-Santos, *Intimidaciones caribeñas: raza y nación en el Caribe neoliberal*, translation of *Our Caribbean Kin* (10th Anniversary Edition), *Emergente* (2026).

Alai Reyes-Santos, Presenter, “Dreaming Just Futures Together,” Water and Energy Justice Convening, Oregon Water Futures Collaborative, Oregon Department of Energy, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, Climate Solutions Center, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (May 28, 2026).



Michelle Smith

Research Associate Pro Tem Instructor

Michelle Smith, “An Assessment of Oregon’s Drought Policies,” chapter in Oregon Drought Vulnerability Assessment, Oregon Water Resources Department (2026).

Michelle Smith, “Groundwater Management,” with Madi Prue and ENR Fellows Andy Archer and Max McCool, *Oregon Water Matters* Video Series, supported by the Oregon Water Equity Fund and Oregon Water Futures Collaborative, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (2026).

Michelle Smith, “Rainwater Harvesting,” with Madi Prue and ENR Fellows Andy Archer and Max McCool, *Oregon Water Matters* Video Series, supported by the Oregon Water Equity Fund and Oregon Water Futures Collaborative, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (2026).

Michelle Smith, “Renters’ Rights,” with Madi Prue and ENR Fellows Andy Archer and Max McCool, *Oregon Water Matters* Video Series, supported by the Oregon Water Equity Fund and Oregon Water Futures Collaborative, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (2026).

Michelle Smith, “What Does Oregon’s New Groundwater Use Exemption Mean for Community-Scale Producers?,” with Michael Fakhri and ENR Fellows Blakely Durham, Kelly Keith, James Meschia, and Nicole Morshead, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (2026).

Michelle Smith, “Allocating In Situ Groundwater Rights in Oregon to Protect Groundwater-Dependent Ecosystems: Opportunities and Challenges,” with Adell Amos (advisor) and ENR Fellows Andy Archer and Max McCool, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (2025).



**Andy
Winden**

Assistant Professor of Law

Andy Winden, “Governance by Trust,” *BROOKLYN LAW REVIEW* (forthcoming).

Andy Winden, Presenter, “Governance by Trust,” PTON Annual Conference, Purpose Trust Ownership Network, Austin, TX (February 26, 2026).

Andy Winden, Presenter, “Governance by Trust,” Winter Deals Conference, Brigham Young University, Park City, UT (February 6, 2026).

Andy Winden, Presenter, “Governance by Trust,” 4th Annual Junior Faculty Workshop, Institute of Law & Economics, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA (January 23, 2026).

Andy Winden, Presenter, “Governance by Trust,” Business Association Section Works-in-Progress Session, AALS Annual Meeting, Association of American Law Schools, New Orleans, LA (January 8, 2026).



**Mary C.
Wood**

**Philip H. Knight Professor of Law
Faculty Director, ENR Center**

Mary C. Wood, “Research Handbook on Climate Change Law and Loss and Damage,” *Edward Elgar* (forthcoming)

Mary C. Wood, “Pacific Northwest Framework for Atmospheric Recovery,” with Tom Housel and Douglas Quirke, *Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center* (forthcoming).

Mary C. Wood, 2026 Supplement to *The Public Trust Doctrine in Environmental and Natural Resources Law* (4th Edition), with Michael C. Blumm and John Dernbach, *Carolina Academic Press* (2026).

Mary C. Wood (advisor), “The Public Trust Doctrine as a Tool for Environmental Justice” by ENR Fellow Daniel Billick, *Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center* (2026).

Mary C. Wood, “The Indigenous Creation Law Initiative: A Prospectus to Advance Tribal Environmental Sovereignty Beyond Reservations,” with Chuck Sams, *Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center* (2026).

Mary C. Wood, *The Public Trust Doctrine in Environmental and Natural Resources Law* (4th Edition), with Michael C. Blumm and John Dernbach, *Carolina Academic Press* (2025).

Mary C. Wood, Panelist, “The Public Trust Doctrine in a Time of Public Crisis,” with Scott Stern, Yume Hoshijima, and Keith Underkoffler, 44th Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 13, 2026).

Mary C. Wood, Panelist, “Holding Polluters Accountable for Natural Resource Damages: PCB, MTBE, PFAS, and Climate Liability as Guidance for Atmospheric Recovery Litigation,” with Maddie Holmes, Allan Kanner, Victor Marcello, and Justin Massey, 44th Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 14, 2026).

Reporting Out: Professor Fakhri Reflects on Six-Year Tenure as United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food



On May 1, 2020, following a competitive worldwide selection process, Professor Michael Fakhri—faculty leader of the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center’s Food Sovereignty Project—began an official appointment as the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food.

Through this high-profile volunteer role—and through his related regular engagement with governments, non-governmental organizations, and international social movements—he not only served as the UN’s “eyes, ears, and good conscience” on all matters relevant to global hunger, malnutrition, and famine. He also redefined foundational international-legal concepts such as starvation, genocide, and the right to food itself.

Having concluded his tenure with the United Nations as of April 30, 2026, Professor Fakhri leaves behind him an enduring legacy of outspoken advocacy for corporate and government accountability, international human rights, and community-scale food sovereignty.

Trace Professor Fakhri’s experience as an international public servant through his reflections on six years as special rapporteur.

Professor Fakhri, you have just completed your six-year tenure with the United Nations. What did it mean to you to serve in this capacity?

As I have said many times, my role required me to be the UN’s eyes, ears, and good conscience on all matters relevant to global hunger, malnutrition, and famine, from a human rights perspective. From the outset, I knew I wanted to work to understand and promote food sovereignty—community-scale food systems governance free from corporate control and institutional oppression—and I knew I should start by building strong working relationships with food sovereignty movements and organizers around the world. As I took on the responsibility of engaging with these actors as well as diplomats, legislatures, heads of states, and industry leaders, I realized my role was really about active listening, ‘reporting out’ about urgent political and social developments, and advocating for the public interest in the face of food crises.

As special rapporteur, you were required to annually create and present two thematic reports with topics of your choosing. How did you go about selecting these themes?

This is where the active-listening component of my role was essential. Through robust engagement with diverse constituencies—including formal and

informal consultations with subject-matter experts, grassroots activists, and international decision-makers—I identified real-world questions and emerging issues impacting communities on the ground and worked to bring global attention to those urgent topics. Whether I was exploring the real-time starvation of Palestinians in Gaza or the unfolding effects of the coronavirus pandemic on food service workers and peasant farmers, I always contextualized and emphasized the need for institutional transformation to support the realization of food rights and justice.

The first thematic report you authored considers how international trade law and policy intersect with food systems and human rights. Why did you choose to start off with this topic, and what were your findings?

One of my goals as special rapporteur was to introduce new topics to the international agenda. I sought to increase global awareness of underanalyzed dynamics in food systems, underrepresented communities’ perspectives, and unchecked exercises of national and corporate power. Accordingly, my first report grapples with a topic that had (at the time of publishing) fallen off the UN’s radar: the impacts of international trade law and policy on human rights in the context of food systems. The report exposes the current global trade regime’s role in causing and exacerbating hunger and malnutrition,

providing recommendations for systemic transformation to advance sustainable food justice through existing international legal frameworks. Starting with this topic laid a foundation for my subsequent reports, which all variously address opportunities to leverage or reform existing institutions to secure sustainable developments across food systems.

Why did you decide to end your tenure with a thematic report focused on the relationship between land and human rights? What did you learn?

In my final report, it was important to me to echo the self-determined goals of community-based organizations and international social movements who were already working to put land—and land justice—on the UN’s agenda. The report reiterates the claim that ensuring equitable land access, use, and stewardship is a key precondition for the realization of any human right, including the right to food. It also advances a culturally grounded definition of “land,” including not just property, but also encapsulating ancestral territory; watersheds and waterways; and communities’ spatial relationships to their past, present, and future.

Was there a report that was particularly challenging to produce? What propelled you through the obstacles?

My report on starvation was the most difficult to research and publish. At the time of writing, in occupied Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem, Israel was restricting Palestinians’ access to food, water, and other materials essential for life. Meanwhile, the people of Sudan were undergoing the largest famine in modern history; and Azerbaijan was starving Armenians as part of an ethnic cleansing campaign. It was personally horrific to track, document, and report on starvation in real time, especially because, as my work with the UN up to that point had revealed, starvation always accompanies other atrocities such as genocide, war crimes, and torture. What propelled me through this work and the attendant emotional exhaustion was understanding the urgency of these crises and knowing the UN was nonetheless moving brutally slowly to address them. I knew I would

be remiss not to leverage my position to place the issues squarely in front of the General Assembly, Human Rights Council, Security Council, and the general public.

What about your work with students — how has your pedagogy and student-engaged research evolved through your work as special rapporteur?

My UN work underscored for me the essential role listening to and working with others plays in effective negotiation and advocacy. Now, in my teaching, I prioritize group discussion and collaboration more than ever before. The same is true beyond the classroom. As faculty leader of the ENR Center’s Food Sovereignty Project, I engage students as teammates in food-sovereignty-focused legal and policy research. We also pursue community partnerships beyond the law school and larger academy so students develop skills with not only legal research and writing, but also with building trust-based relationships, following through on commitments, and navigating diverse cultural contexts. To me, these collaborative skills are the makings of a powerful advocate.

Finally, how are you continuing the research and outreach you led as special rapporteur now that you have completed your tenure with the UN?

I am especially excited to continue researching and engaging with communities on topics relevant to Indigenous and local food sovereignty. The ENR Center’s Food Sovereignty Project is currently engaged in an interdisciplinary research partnership with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians’ food sovereignty program. Over the last two years, we have had regular site visits to Tel-tvm’, the Tribe’s community farm and garden, where we have not only collaborated on food justice research; we have also literally gotten our hands dirty, planting pollinators, First Foods, and other native species. One of the key teachings from my role as special rapporteur was the importance of pairing legal research with hands-on, land-based community engagement and service. Working with Tribal leadership and staff at Tel-tvm’ is a way of carrying this teaching forward.

Thematic Reports: Exploring Human Rights, Food Sovereignty, and Political Economies

Follow Professor Fakhri’s six-year tenure as UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food through his thematic reports, publicly presented to the UN General Assembly and Human Rights Council:

- “Land and the Right to Food” (2026)
- “Corporate Power and Human Rights in Food Systems” (2025)
- “Right to Food, Finance, and National Action Plans” (2025)
- “Starvation and the Right to Food, with an Emphasis on the Palestinian Peoples’ Food Sovereignty” (2024)
- “Fisheries and the Right to Food in the Context of Climate Change” (2024)
- “Right to Food for Food System Recovery and Transformation” (2023)
- “Conflict and the Right to Food” (2022)
- “Right to Food and the COVID-19 Pandemic” (2022)
- “Seeds, Right to Life, and Farmers’ Rights” (2021)
- “Food Systems and Human Rights” (2021)
- “Vision of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food — Critical Perspective on Food Systems, Food Crises, and the Future of the Right to Food” (2020)
- “Right to Food in the Context of International Trade Law and Policy” (2020)

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PROJECTS AND FELLOWS PROGRAM



Conservation Trust Project

Focusing on public trust theory and private property tools to achieve landscape conservation.

Faculty Leader: Professor Mary C. Wood



Energy Law and Policy Project

Exploring innovative law and policy to promote a sustainable energy future.

Faculty Leader: Professor Greg Dotson



Food Sovereignty Project

Working with Indigenous peoples and community-based organizations to pursue more equitable and just food systems.

Faculty Leader: Professor Michael Fakhri



Global Environmental Democracy Project

Preparing students to be advocates for global change.

Faculty Leader: Professor Mary C. Wood



Native Environmental Sovereignty Project

Examining traditional and emerging Tribal roles in managing lands and resources.

Faculty Leaders: Professors Howard Arnett and Mary C. Wood



Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project

Engaging the law to promote sustainability for ocean, coastal, and freshwater resources.

Faculty Leaders: Professors Sarah Adams and Adell Amos



Sustainable Land Use Project

Evaluating land use laws, theories, and practices to ensure sustainable community development.

Faculty Leaders: Professors Sarah Adams and Mary C. Wood

ENR Fellows

Each year, the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center stewards several research fellowships for law students. ENR Fellows build critical skills with legal research and writing, cultivate and share experiential knowledge through teamwork and community engagement, and ultimately bring their concentrated intellectual energy and hope to bear on the urgent socioecological challenges of our day.



2026-2027 ENR RESEARCH FELLOWS

Conservation Trust Project

Drew Anderson
Surya Barrow
Gretchen Brockway
Anna Hampton
Caitlin O’Kief
Maya Pickhardt
Jordan Warmke-Robitaille

Energy Law and Policy Project

Delaney Behning
Reese Bobitt
Lexi Hernandez
Rita Vaughan Frost

Food Sovereignty Project

Hugo Hollander
Kelly Keith
Hannah Pittman
Paige Schlegel
Edward Stoddard

Native Environmental Sovereignty Project

Maya Haubrich
Max McCool
Megan Shubert

Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project

Bryant Atanasio
Reed Bingham
Blakely Durham
Jay Everett
Cara Goldfarb
Sarah Sturge
Cecilia Timberg
Emily Wangen

Sustainable Land Use Project

Stephen Cornwall
Claire Sebree

LLM Scholars in Environmental Law

Oregon Law’s longstanding LLM in Environmental and Natural Resources Law is an immersive, highly customizable academic program geared toward preparing professionals for specialized advocacy and engagement around emerging environmental issues. The program emphasizes practice-readiness, deep substantive knowledge, and interdisciplinary thinking and collaboration.

Through the LLM Scholars in Environmental Law program, LLM students work closely with faculty experts and peer researchers in the nationally ranked ENR Center, tackling legal questions tied to climate change, sustainability, and resource governance.

Incoming LLM Scholars in Environmental Law

Surya Barrow, JD
Conservation Trust Project

Emily Wangen, JD, MA
Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project

2025-2026 ENR FELLOWS

Conservation Trust Project

Drew Anderson
Daniel Billick
Chloe Carothers-Liske

Energy Law and Policy Project

Chelsea Dobbin
Lexi Hernandez
Brenton Riddle

Food Sovereignty Project

Kelly Keith
Nicole Morshead

Global Environmental Democracy Project

Mara Abernethy
Liam Holt

Native Environmental Sovereignty Project

Noah Coon
Alexander Shadle

Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project

Abby Dompier
Blakely Durham
Jay Everett
Charles Gearing
Max McCool
James Meschia

Sustainable Land Use Project

Stephen Cornwall
Claire Sebree

CONSERVATION TRUST

Focusing on public trust theory and private property tools to achieve landscape conservation.





RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- Examining and illuminating practical applications of the Public Trust Doctrine as a tool for advancing environmental justice, holding polluters accountable for environmental harm, and protecting vital natural resources for future generations.
- Developing resources for understanding, practicing, and teaching environmental law in the context of climate change and deregulation.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Mary C. Wood, “Research Handbook on Climate Change Law and Loss and Damage,” *Edward Elgar* (forthcoming)
- Mary C. Wood, 2026 Supplement to *The Public Trust Doctrine in Environmental and Natural Resources Law* (4th Edition), with Michael C. Blumm and John Dernbach, *Carolina Academic Press* (2026).
- ENR Fellow Danny Billick, “The Public Trust Doctrine as a Tool for Environmental Justice,” advised by Mary C. Wood, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (2026).
- Mary C. Wood, *The Public Trust Doctrine in Environmental and Natural Resources Law* (4th Edition), with Michael C. Blumm and John Dernbach, *Carolina Academic Press* (2025).



SELECT PRESENTATIONS

- Mary C. Wood, Panelist, “The Public Trust Doctrine in a Time of Public Crisis,” with Scott Stern, Yume Hoshijima, and Keith Underkoffler, 44th Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 13, 2026).
- Mary C. Wood, Panelist, “Holding Polluters Accountable for Natural Resource Damages: PCB, MTBE, PFAS, and Climate Liability as Guidance for Atmospheric Recovery Litigation,” with Maddie Holmes, Allan Kanner, Victor Marcello, and Justin Massey, 44th Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 14, 2026).

IN THE NEWS

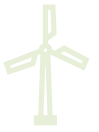
- Mary C. Wood, interviewed by Ed Dorsch, “A New Climate Blueprint: Building a Legal Framework for Atmospheric Recovery,” *This is Oregon* Podcast, S2E10 (April 15, 2026).



ENERGY LAW AND POLICY PROJECT

Exploring innovative law and policy to promote a sustainable energy future.





RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- Examining and clarifying longstanding checks and balances useful for protecting minority voices and the public interest amid political polarization.
- Cataloguing and assessing data center-related state policy developments.
- Evaluating data center energy needs, policy considerations for meeting load growth, and efforts to protect ratepayers in Oregon.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Greg Dotson, “Deregulation by the Judicial and Executive Branches: Can Congress Respond?,” *HARVARD ENVIRONMENTAL LAW REVIEW* (forthcoming, 2027).
- Greg Dotson, “Reconciliation, Rescissions, and Review: Climate Change and the 119th Congress,” 56 *ENVIRONMENTAL LAW REPORTER* 10478 (2026).
- Greg Dotson, Brief of *Amicus Curiae*: Greg Dotson in Support of Defendants’ Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment and in Opposition to Plaintiffs’ Motions for Summary Judgment, *Daimler Truck North America LLC v. California Air Resources Board*, Case No. 2:25-cv-02255-DC-AC (August 7, 2026).
- Greg Dotson, Brief of *Amicus Curiae*: Greg Dotson in Opposition to Defendants’ Motion to Dismiss, *State of California, et al., v. United States of America, et al.*, Case No. 4:25-cv-04966-HSG (January 29, 2026).
- Greg Dotson, “The Epstein Files and the Seven Member Rule,” *Just Security* (January 5, 2026).
- Greg Dotson, “Unbound by Statute: The U.S. Senate, California’s Emissions Waivers, and the Congressional Review Act,” *YALE JOURNAL ON REGULATION: NOTICE & COMMENT* (2025).

SELECT PRESENTATIONS

- Greg Dotson, Presenter, “Data Centers Deep Dive—Impacts & Opportunities for Oregon,” Making Energy Work Webinar, Sustainable Northwest, Virtual (June 23, 2026).
- Greg Dotson, Presenter, “Sustainability and the Growth of Oregon Data Centers,” Earth Day CLE, Oregon State Bar Sustainable Future Section, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, Portland, OR (April 23, 2026).
- Greg Dotson, Presenter, “Disruption vs. Stability: Impacts on People and Policy Under a New Republican Majority,” Defending Democracy Series, Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics, Virtual (February 25, 2026).
- Greg Dotson, Presenter, “Federal Landscape: Climate, Energy, and Environment,” Testimony before House Interim Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment, Oregon State Legislature, Salem, OR (September 29, 2025).
- Greg Dotson, Presenter, “Federal Landscape,” Multistate Collaboration to Support State Goals Conference, Conveners Network, Portland, OR (July 10, 2025).

IN THE NEWS

- Greg Dotson, interviewed by Dick VanderHart, Holly Bartholomew, and Courtney Sherwood, “The Sudden Backlash to Data Centers in Oregon,” *OPB Politics Now Podcast, Oregon Public Broadcasting* (August 6, 2026).
- Greg Dotson, featured by Mike Rogoway, “Oregon Gov. Tina Kotek Names Panel to Study Data Centers’ Impact: ‘We Must Have Frank Conversations,’” *The Oregonian* (January 20, 2026).
- Greg Dotson, featured by Alex Baumhardt, “Oregon Governor Forms New Committee to Advise on Massive Data Center Growth,” *Oregon Capital Chronicle* (January 20, 2026).
- Greg Dotson, quoted by Mateusz Perkowski, “Oregon Urged to Cut Emissions Despite Federal Climate Hostility,” *Capital Press* (October 8, 2025).
- Greg Dotson, quoted by Rich Blaustein, “ClimateBrief: Trump’s EPA Wants to Revoke the Legal Basis for Federal Emissions Rules. Experts Say California Will Step In to Fill the Void,” *DailyNews* (September 8, 2025).





FOOD SOVEREIGNTY PROJECT

Working with Indigenous peoples and community-based organizations to pursue more equitable and just food systems.



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- Evaluating implications of state water policy developments for community-scale food production in Oregon.
- Researching international frameworks for understanding and advancing land justice, food sovereignty, and sustainable development through community-led intergovernmental collaboration and social movements.
- Engaging with Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians' garden program to learn about regional Indigenous food sovereignty efforts, develop research interests, and practice place-based community building.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

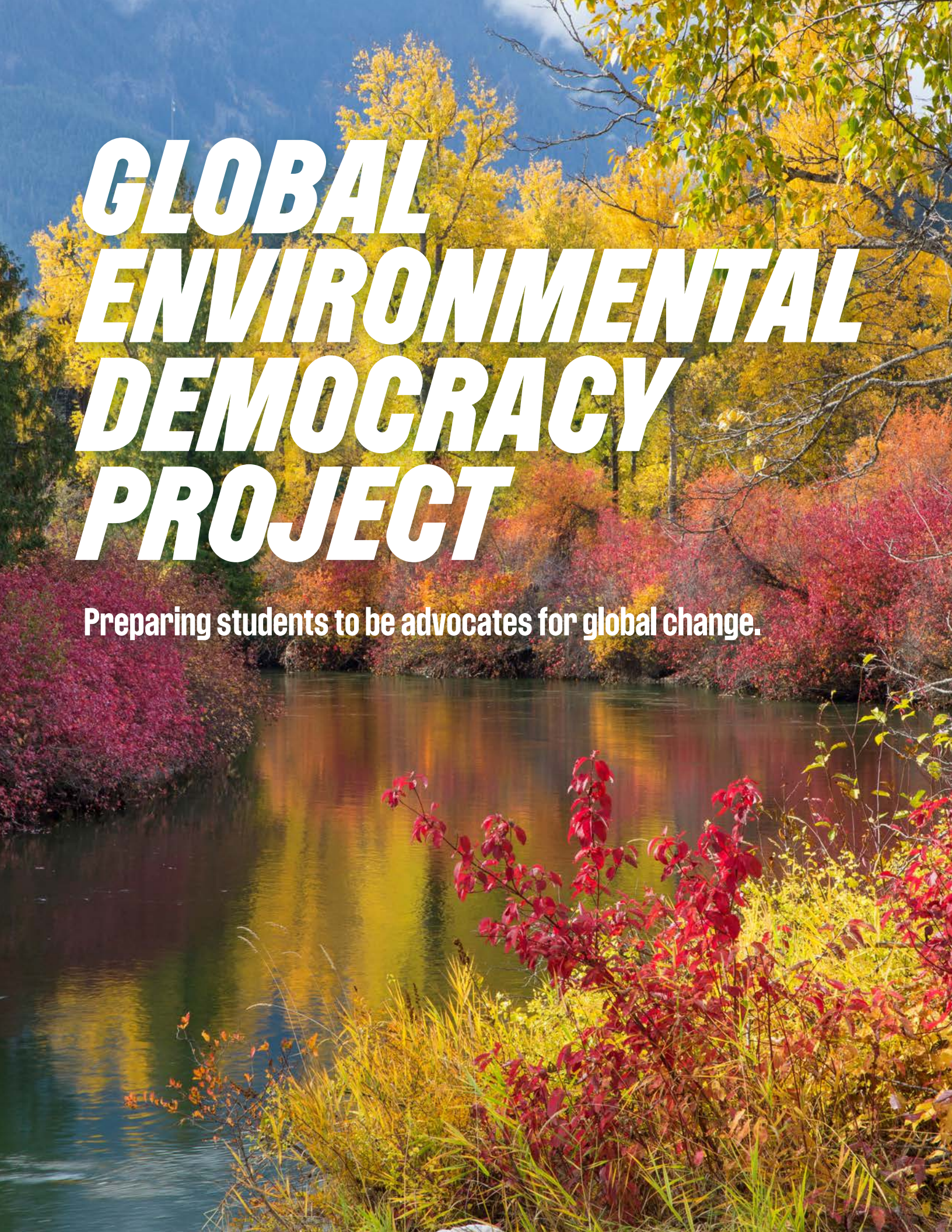
- Michael Fakhri, "Food Sovereignty," chapter in *Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL)*, edited with Antony Anghie, B.S. Chimni, Karin Mickelson, and Vasuki Nesiah, *Edward Elgar* (2026).
- Michael Fakhri, "Land and the Right to Food — Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food," UN General Assembly (A/HRC/61/51) (2026).
- Michael Fakhri, Michelle Smith, and ENR Fellows Blakely Durham, Kelly Keith, James Meschia, and Nicole Morshead, "What Does Oregon's New Groundwater Use Exemption Mean for Community-Scale Producers?," *Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center* (2026).

SELECT PRESENTATIONS

- Michael Fakhri, Keynote Speaker, "The Gaza Famine: International Law, Politics, and History," 7th Annual Human Rights & History Lecture, Towson University, Towson, MD (April 7, 2026).
- Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Who Decides About Our Land? Foreign Investment, International Arbitration, and Agrarian Reform," International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development +20, Cartagena, Colombia (February 24, 2026).
- Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Ensuring Sustainable Food Security in Times of Crisis," Social Affairs Committee Hearing, Council of Europe, Virtual (February 4, 2026).
- Michael Fakhri, Keynote Speaker, "The Right to Food and the Global Order," Annual Human Rights Lecture, Human Rights Law Centre, University of Nottingham, Virtual (January 27, 2026).
- Michael Fakhri, Keynote Speaker, "Are We Making America Hungry Again?," National Food Systems Conference, Institute for Social and Economic Development Solutions, Portland, OR (June 23, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, Keynote Speaker, "The Right to Food and Land," ILC Global Land Forum, International Land Coalition, Bogotá, Colombia (June 17, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, cited by Rhys Groen, "Genocide in Gaza 'Spills Into the West Bank' UN Experts Warn," *JURISTnews* (March 7, 2026).
- Michael Fakhri, featured, "IITC and Other Indigenous Peoples Reject Final Declaration of 2nd International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Development (ICARRD+20)," *IITC News*, International Indian Treaty Council (February 28, 2026).
- Michael Fakhri, cited by Mohammad Mansour, "Starvation by Design: How Israel Turned Food Into a Weapon of War in Gaza," *Al Jazeera* (February 5, 2026).
- Michael Fakhri, cited, "UN Experts Urge Binding Accountability for Agribusiness to Safeguard Peasants' Rights and Global Food Security," United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (October 16, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, featured, "UN Report Slams Global Corporate Capture of Food Systems," *Corporate Europe Observatory* (September 23, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, cited by Ephrem Kossaiy, "UN Experts Warn Gaza Reconstruction Will Fail if Israeli Occupation Continues," *Arab News Japan* (April 30, 2026).
- Michael Fakhri, cited by Jacqueline So, "IBA, United Nations Flag International Law Breaches in US-Iran-Israel Conflict," *Canadian Lawyer* (March 13, 2026).

IN THE NEWS



A scenic autumn landscape featuring a calm river reflecting the surrounding foliage. The trees and bushes are in various stages of fall, with vibrant yellows, oranges, and deep reds. The sky is a clear, bright blue with a few wispy clouds. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL DEMOCRACY PROJECT

Preparing students to be advocates for global change.



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- Continuing research and community engagement geared toward producing a regional framework for implementing natural climate solutions across Pacific Northwestern forests, farmlands, wetlands, watersheds, and other potential carbon sinks.
- Exploring opportunities to advance carbon sequestration and drawdown through Climate Superfund legislation.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Mary C. Wood, “Pacific Northwest Framework for Atmospheric Recovery,” with Tom Housel and Douglas Quirke, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (forthcoming).

SELECT PRESENTATIONS

- Mary C. Wood, “The Regional Atmospheric Recovery Institute,” Environmental Policy Lab, Stanford Law School, Virtual Engagement in Seminar (Spring 2026).

Liam Holt, JD '26

Liam Holt, JD '26, was born in Frankfurt, Germany, and grew up across Spain and New York before moving to the western U.S. for school. While in his undergraduate program at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Holt developed a deep appreciation for the beauty of nature, the wisdom of wildlife, and the need to ensure environmental protection.

Holt was drawn to attend Oregon Law by the diversity of offerings across Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR). As a second-year student, he served as a research assistant for Philip H. Knight Professor of Law Mary C. Wood, contributing to projects focused on advancing regional climate solutions. He continued this work as a 3L, when he began a fellowship with the ENR Center's Global Environmental Democracy Project (GEDP).

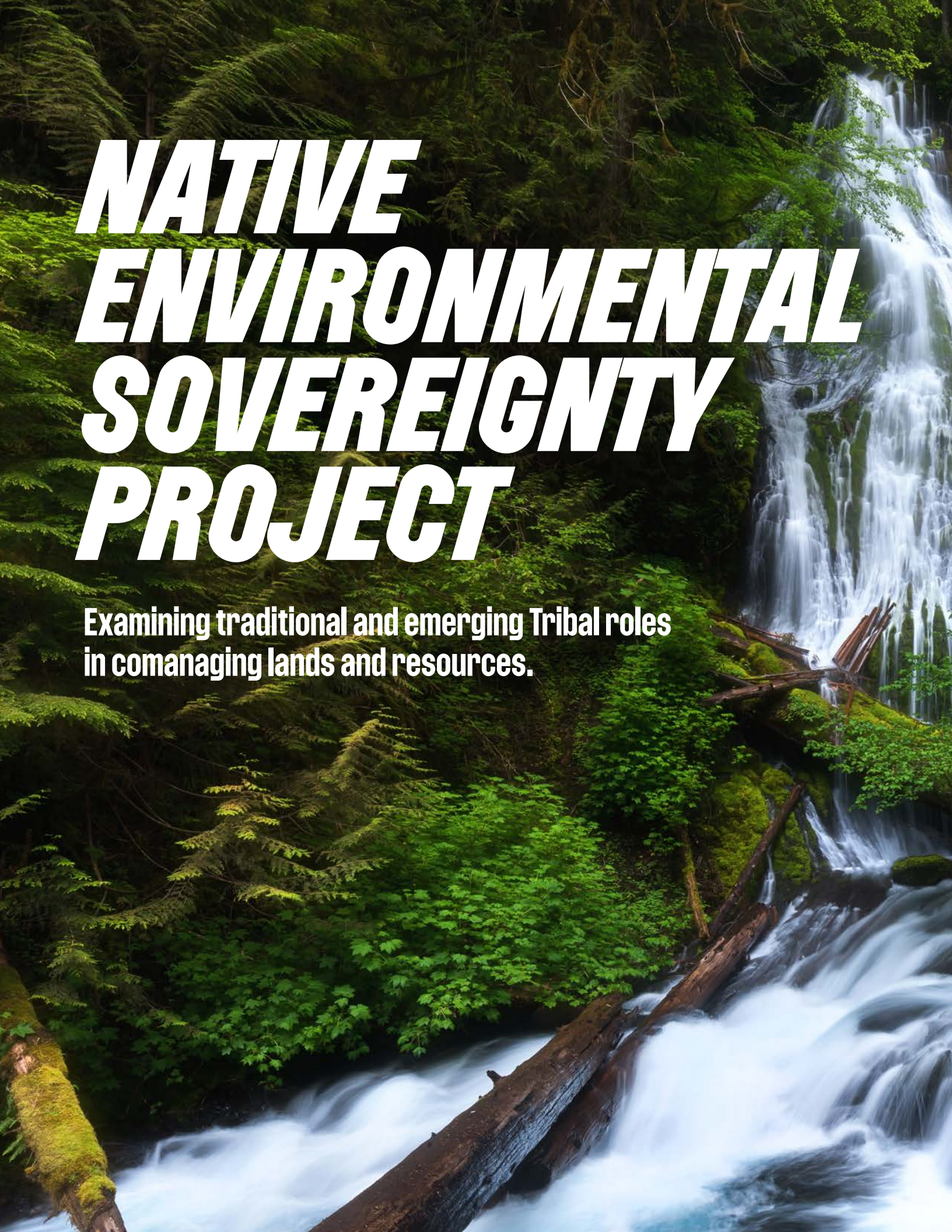
As a GEDP Fellow, Holt researched and wrote about the Pacific Northwest's vital forestlands, working alongside fellow researchers and community partners to help develop the “Pacific Northwest Framework for Atmospheric Recovery” (PNW FAR), the emerging culmination of Professor Wood's years-long endeavor to establish a template for implementing nature-based climate recovery strategies across key ecosystems.

“Working on the FAR alongside such brilliant and passionate individuals was an eye-opening experience,” Holt reflected. “It was a privilege to have the opportunity to contribute to regional carbon sequestration efforts through the ENR Center.”

Following his graduation from Oregon Law in spring 2026, Holt was selected to the prestigious Order of the Coif. He now ventures into practice at the Linn County District Attorney's Office in Albany, Oregon, where he hopes to sharpen his skills as a litigator while working toward his ultimate goal of helping others.



Fellow Feature

A vibrant, high-angle photograph of a forest scene. A waterfall cascades down mossy rocks on the right side of the frame. In the foreground, a large, dark, moss-covered log lies horizontally across the lower half of the image. The background is filled with dense, green foliage, including various types of ferns and trees. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

NATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL SOVEREIGNTY PROJECT

**Examining traditional and emerging Tribal roles
in comanaging lands and resources.**



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- **Launching the Indigenous Creation Law Initiative to examine and enforce stewardship principles embedded in Tribal creation stories.**
- **Evaluating Tribal co-stewardship and co-management frameworks as tools for advancing Indigenous environmental sovereignty.**

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Chuck Sams and Mary C. Wood, “The Indigenous Creation Law Initiative: A Prospectus to Advance Tribal Environmental Sovereignty Beyond Reservations,” *Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center* (2026).

SELECT PRESENTATIONS

- Howard Arnett and Chuck Sams, Co-Presenters, “The Federal-Tribal Relationship in Practice: Trust Responsibilities and Current Indian Law Developments,” *Oregon Law Perspectives Webinar Series*, University of Oregon School of Law, Virtual (August 5, 2026).
- Chuck Sams, Keynote Speaker, “Welcome to the Fight: Environmental Justice for All,” 44th Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 13, 2026).
- Chuck Sams, Keynote Speaker, “Moving Beyond Acknowledgment,” Summit for Northwest American Indian Law, UO Native American Law Students Association, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (February 7, 2026).
- Howard Arnett and Chuck Sams, Co-Presenters, “Treaties, Trust, and Tomorrow: Navigating the Legal Landscape of Native Lands,” *Oregon Law Perspectives Webinar Series*, University of Oregon School of Law, Virtual (August 8, 2025).

19th Annual

Rennard Strickland Lecture

Established in 2006 by the Native Environmental Sovereignty Project, the Rennard Strickland Lecture series honors the legacy of late Oregon Law Dean Rennard Strickland (1940 – 2021), building upon his many contributions to the field of Indian Law, the practice of legal education, and the ENR and Indian Law programs and community at the University of Oregon School of Law. With a thematic focus on Indigenous environmental sovereignty, the series examines the intersections of environmental and natural resources law, Indian and Tribal Law, and Native self-determination.

Past lecturers include: Professor Mary C. Wood (2006), Professor William Rodgers (2007), Professor Rebecca Tsosie (2008), Former Assistant Secretary Larry Echo Hawk (2009), Former Solicitor Hilary Tompkins (2010), Former Deputy Solicitor Patrice Kunesh (2011), Professor Robert Anderson (2012), Former Assistant Secretary Kevin Washburn (2013), Professor Robert Williams, Jr. (2014), Professor Carole Goldberg (2015), Former Dean James Anaya (2016), Professor Gerald Torres (2017), Mary Kathryn Nagle (2018), Former President Fawn Sharp (2019), Professor Stacy Leeds (2021), Professor Matthew L.M. Fletcher (2022), Dean Elizabeth Kronk Warner (2023), and Former Director Charles F. “Chuck” Sams III (2024).

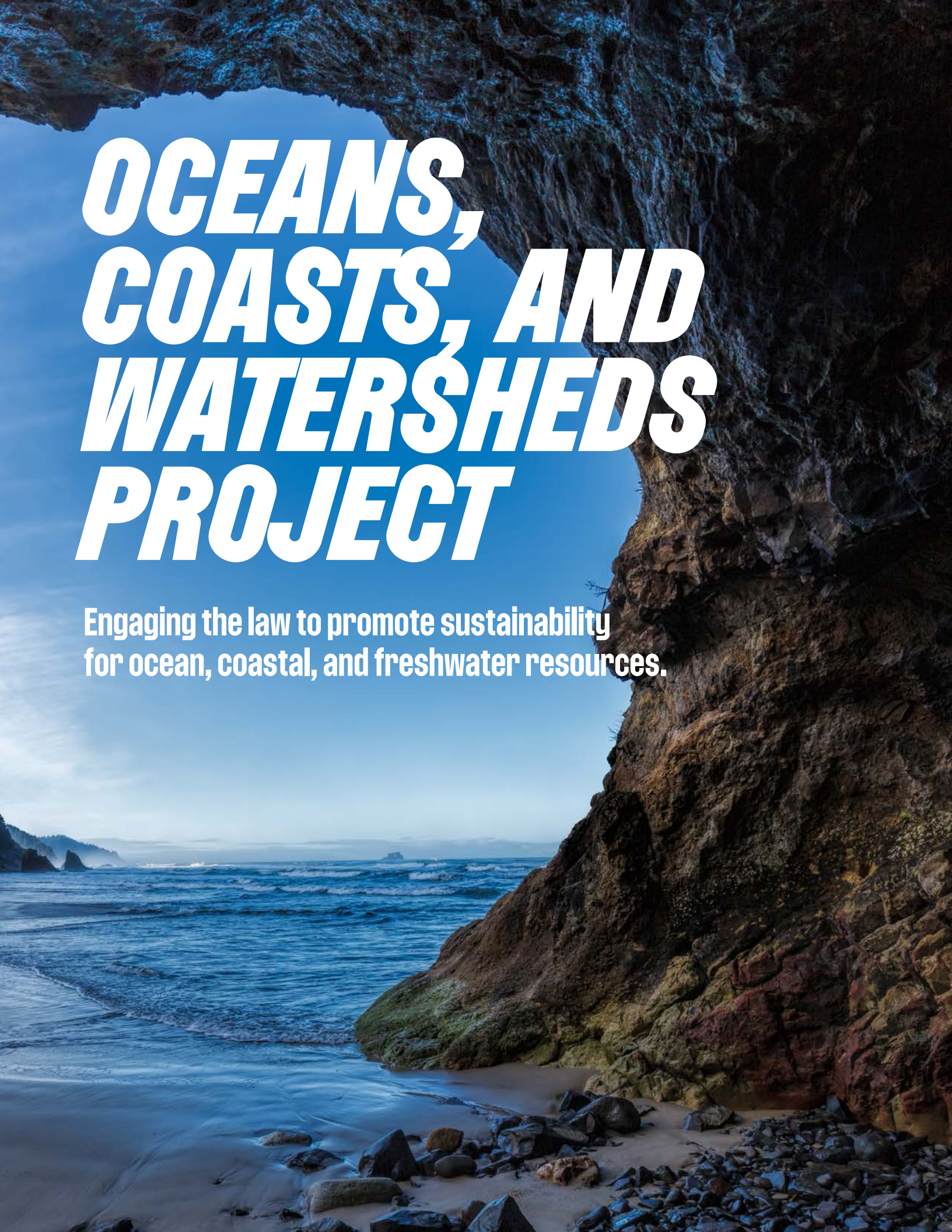
Amy Bowers Cordalis (Yurok) served as the nineteenth speaker in the Rennard Strickland Lecture series with her compelling address, “The Water Remembers... And So Does the Law,” on September 30, 2025.

Bowers Cordalis is a mother, fisherwoman, attorney, and member and former General Counsel of the Yurok Nation—the largest Indigenous Nation in the area now commonly known as California. She is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of Ridges to Riffles, a conservation nonprofit advancing Indigenous sovereignty through the protection of natural and cultural resources, including the undamming of the Klamath River.

A recipient of the United Nations’ highest environmental honor, Champion of the Earth Laureate, Bowers Cordalis has also been honored as a member of the second annual Time100 Climate List (2024), featuring the one hundred most influential leaders driving real climate action. Her widely praised manuscript, *The Water Remembers: My Indigenous Family’s Fight to Save a River and a Way of Life*, was published by Little, Brown/Hachette in October 2025.

To view the 2025 Rennard Strickland Lecture, visit:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGQAx9cZHUA



OCEANS, COASTS, AND WATERSHEDS PROJECT

Engaging the law to promote sustainability
for ocean, coastal, and freshwater resources.



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- Co-creating open-access educational and public policy resources to support inclusive water decision-making.
- Evaluating climate adaptation and drought resiliency strategies for communities and ecosystems experiencing water scarcity.
- Analyzing law and policy responses to interconnected crises facing coastal communities.
- Assessing state and local responses to the National Marine Fisheries Service's determination that implementation of the National Flood Insurance Program in Oregon has further jeopardized threatened and endangered species.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Adell Amos, "Testing Prior Appropriation as Drought and Climate Change Push States Toward Water Code Reform: Lessons From and For Oregon," 49 PUBLIC LAND & RESOURCES LAW REVIEW 49 (2026).
- Michelle Smith, "An Assessment of Oregon's Drought Policies," chapter in Oregon Drought Vulnerability Assessment, Oregon Water Resources Department (2026).
- Sarah J. Adams, "Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox," 36 STANFORD LAW & POLICY REVIEW 47 (2025), republished in *Zoning and Planning Law Handbook*, 2026 Edition, by Patricia E. Salkin, Thomson Reuters (2026).
- Adell Amos, *Water Law in a Nutshell* (7th Edition), with Sandra Zellmer and Melissa Scanlan, West Academic Publishing (2026).
- Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project, "Groundwater Management," led by Michelle Smith, Madi Prue, and ENR Fellows Andy Archer and Max McCool, *Oregon Water Matters* Video Series, supported by the Oregon Water Equity Fund and Oregon Water Futures Collaborative, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon (2026).
- Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project, "Rainwater Harvesting," led by Michelle Smith, Madi Prue, and ENR Fellows Andy Archer and Max McCool, *Oregon Water Matters* Video Series, supported by the Oregon Water Equity Fund and Oregon Water Futures Collaborative, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon (2026).

- Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project, "Renters' Rights," led by Michelle Smith, Madi Prue, and ENR Fellows Andy Archer and Max McCool, *Oregon Water Matters* Video Series, supported by the Oregon Water Equity Fund and Oregon Water Futures Collaborative, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon (2026).
- Michelle Smith and ENR Fellows Andy Archer and Max McCool, "Allocating In Situ Groundwater Rights in Oregon to Protect Groundwater-Dependent Ecosystems: Opportunities and Challenges," advised by Adell Amos, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (2025).

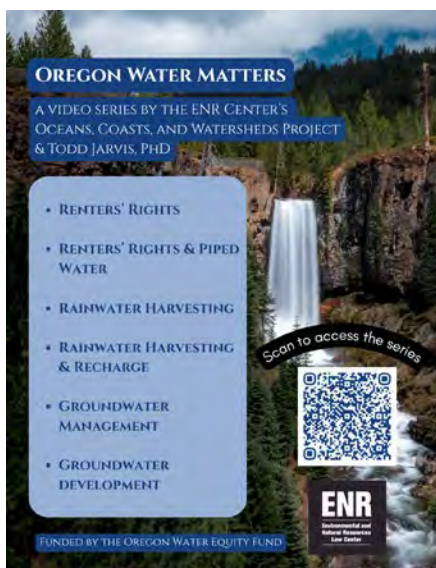


SELECT PRESENTATIONS

- Adell Amos, Panelist, “The Clean Water Act,” ELI Summer School Seminar Series, Environmental Law Institute, Virtual (June 24, 2026).
- Adell Amos, Panelist, “Saving the Great Salt Lake,” with Karrigan Bork, Reed Benson, Brigham Daniels, Beth Parker, and Avery Emery, 44th Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 14, 2026).
- Adell Amos, Panelist, “Sustainable Groundwater Management in Oregon Requires Rule Changes,” with William Jaeger and Lisa Brown, 44th Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 15, 2026).
- Adell Amos, Presenter, “Protecting Conservation Values in Water Law—How Citizens Can Engage with Federal and State Water Law,” Webinar on Western Water, Sierra Club, Virtual (November 8, 2025).

IN THE NEWS

- Adell Amos, featured by Tim Christie, “Adell Amos ‘Unlocking the Code’ for Her Law Students,” University of Oregon (May 6, 2026).
- Adell Amos, featured, “Two New Water Resources Commission Members Confirmed, New Chair Named by Gov. Tina Kotek,” OWRD Newsroom, Oregon Water Resources Department (April 24, 2026).



Diving Deep: Alumnus Teaches Water Law and Policy at University of Wyoming

Jason Robison, JD '06, serves as the Jerry H. Housel/Carl F. Arnold Distinguished Professor of Law, the Co-Director of the Gina Guy Center for Land and Water Law, and an Adjunct Professor at the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Wyoming. He regularly teaches Federal Courts, Public Lands and Natural Resources Law, and Water Law and Policy; leads a rotation of Colorado River, Indigenous Waters, and International Environmental Law seminars; and co-teaches field courses in Chile and the Grand Canyon.

Robison is the author of the treatise, *Law of Water Rights and Resources* (2026). He served as editor of the Colorado River Compact centennial volume, *Cornerstone at the Confluence: Navigating the Colorado River Compact's Next Century* (2022), and as lead editor of the 1869 Powell Expedition sesquicentennial volume, *Vision & Place: John Wesley Powell & Reimagining the Colorado River Basin* (2020). Focused on Tribal Nations and water, his recent articles include “Tripartite Water Cosovereignty” (135 YALE LAW JOURNAL 2886, 2026) “Relational River: *Arizona v. Navajo Nation* & the Colorado” (72 UCLA LAW REVIEW 116, 2025), and “Equity Along the Yellowstone” (96 COLORADO LAW REVIEW 599, 2025).

Beyond the classroom, Robison serves on the Water & Tribes Initiative’s leadership team and is a member of the Colorado River Research Group. He also serves on the Northern Arapaho Endowment Committee, helping administer undergraduate and graduate scholarships to enrolled members of the Northern Arapaho Tribe.

A prominent western water scholar and an outspoken advocate for Indigenous water justice, Robison’s passion for water law sparked while he was a student at Oregon Law.

“I’ll never forget Professor Adell Amos’ inspiring inaugural Water Law class in fall 2005, which—coupled with connected classes from Professor Mary Wood and the late Professor Svitlana Kravchenko—instilled knowledge, skills, and values that shaped my life forever,” Robison says.

Today, Robison’s former Oregon Law professors frequently encounter his work cited in student papers. Clayton R. Hess Professor of Law Adell Amos, who taught Robison Water Law more than 20 years ago, explains, “I remember well that first Water Law class and Jason, in particular. It was clear then that he had a passion for water law and the teaching profession.”

She continues, “I am so grateful that we in the water law profession and all Jason’s students get the benefit of his intellectual contributions and commitment to the public good.”



Alumni Feature



The background image is a full-page landscape photograph. It features a large, rugged mountain with patches of snow under a clear blue sky. In the foreground, a calm body of water reflects the scene, with a layer of mist or fog rising from the water's surface. A line of tall, dark evergreen trees stands on the right side of the image. The overall lighting is soft and warm, suggesting the 'golden hour' of early morning or late afternoon.

SUSTAINABLE LAND USE PROJECT

Evaluating land use laws, theories, and practices to ensure sustainable community development.



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- Developing legal reform strategies to address persistent residential segregation, housing insecurity, and climate maladaptation.
- Exploring opportunities to advance equitable climate resilience through state and local land use laws.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Sarah J. Adams, “Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox,” 36 *STANFORD LAW & POLICY REVIEW* 47 (2025), republished in *Zoning and Planning Law Handbook*, 2026 Edition, by Patricia E. Salkin, Thomson Reuters (2026).

SELECT PRESENTATIONS

- Sarah J. Adams, Panelist, “Climate Maladaptation, Land Law Localism, and the Climate Resilience Paradox,” Earth Day Conference Plenary Panel, University of Connecticut School of Law, Hartford, CT (April 17, 2026).

IN THE NEWS

- Sarah J. Adams, featured by Sara Bronin, “Exposing Zoning’s Failure to Address Climate Hazards,” Review of “Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox” (36 *STANFORD LAW & POLICY REVIEW* 47, 2025), *JOTWELL* (May 7, 2026).
- Sarah J. Adams, interviewed by Mira Shah, “Prof. Sarah Adams: Land Use Law, Flood Policy, and Governance,” *Signals of Change*, E60, Karbon Economics (December 19, 2025).
- Sarah J. Adams, quoted by Ivan Pereira, “How Texas’ Land Rules Allowed Camps to Operate in Flood-Prone Areas,” *ABC News* (July 11, 2025).

Jot Well Done: Professor Adams Featured in Property ‘Journal of Things We Like (Lots)’

Assistant Professor **Sarah Adams**, who serves as faculty co-leader of the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center’s Sustainable Land Use Project, published “Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox” in the *Stanford Law & Policy Review* in 2025.

Professor Adams’ article, which explores the implications of entrenched local authority over land use in the context of climate change, has since been featured by Sara Bronin in the *Journal of Things We Like (Lots)*. Also known as *JOTWELL*, the web-based academic journal is dedicated to identifying, celebrating, and discussing the best new legal scholarship.

In her review, Bronin—the Freda H. Alverson Professor of Law at George Washington University Law School and a national expert on property, land use, and zoning law—recommends Adams’ article as an example of “scholarship that highlights the far-reaching consequences of the failure of American land use law to address climate change.”

“‘Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox’ delivers a powerful rationale for rethinking the way we empower, require, or incentivize local governments to be part of a broader solution to our climate crisis,” Professor Bronin writes.

“Across her recent scholarship and in her prior work, Adams has articulated the mismatch, or maladaptation, between local laws and our long-term resilience, even survival. She argues that while making data-supported decisions now will be hard, it won’t be nearly as hard as the future we face without them,” continues Professor Bronin.

“We would do well to heed her call to action.”

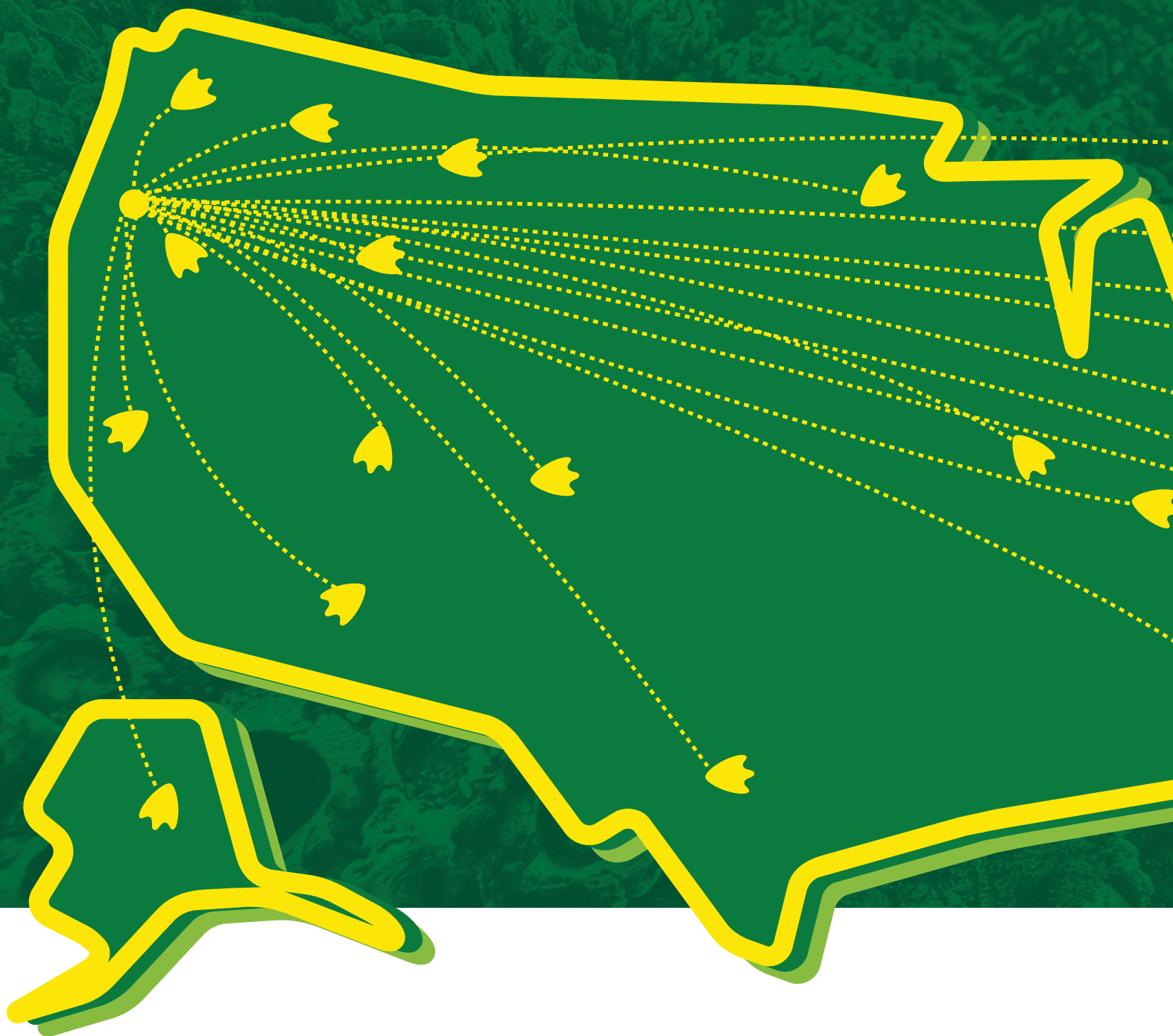
“Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox” has been selected for republication in the Thomson Reuters’ *Zoning and Planning Law Handbook*, 2026 Edition, edited by Patricia E. Salkin. The *Handbook* offers a cutting-edge perspective on the most critical land use, zoning law, and conservation issues of our day.



Faculty Feature

ADVOCACY ACROSS LANDSCAPES:

Where Have ENR Alumni Spread Their Wings?



Anchorage, AK

Jason Hartz, JD '06

Assistant Regional Solicitor, Office of the Regional Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior

Sacramento, CA

Mari Galloway, JD '20

California Program Director, Wildlands Network

Dallas, TX

Reza Sadeghzadeh, JD '22

Attorney, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Boise, ID

Andrew J. Waldera, JD '02

Principal and Partner, Water, Land Use & Environmental Law, Sawtooth Law Offices, PLLC

Denver, CO

KC McFerson, JD '14

Planning Director, Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Toppenish, WA

Nicholas Kahmann, JD '22

Staff Attorney, Yakama Nation Office of Legal Counsel

Stonington, CT

Erin Sito, JD '20

U.S. Public Policy Director, Wildlands Network

Portland, OR

Ariel Stavitsky, JD '17

Partner, Energy and Environmental Practice Group, Stoel Rives LLP

Phoenix, AZ

Autumn Johnson, JD '10

Executive Director and General Counsel, Arizona Solar Energy Industries Association

Salt Lake City, UT

Katie Davis, JD '13

Executive Director, Wildlands Network

Columbus, OH

Benjamin Harder, JD '22

Planner, Crossroads Community Planning

Columbus, GA

Jessie Gardner Graves, JD '24

Associate Attorney, Business and Environmental Law, The Finley Firm, PC

New York, NY

Peter Blair, JD '18

Policy & Advocacy Director, Just Zero

Missoula, MT

Mathew Bain, JD '22

Associate Attorney, Environmental and Natural Resources, Parsons Behle & Latimer

Detroit, MI

Brenden Catt, JD '22

Associate Attorney, Resources, Energy, and Environment Practice Group, Warner Norcross + Judd LLP

Portland, ME

Brendan Keenan, Jr., JD '18

Associate Attorney, Tribal Nations Practice Group, Drummond Woodsum

Washington, DC

Elizabeth Berg, JD '14

Attorney, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Chicago, IL

Rebecca Stanfield, JD '94

Senior Regional Director, Energy Foundation

Lexington, KY

Ashley Dye Wilmes, JD '02

Executive Director, Kentucky Resources Council

Alexandria, VA

Greg Giunta, JD '24

Government Affairs Analyst, Hanwha Energy USA

St. Paul, MN

Cora Sutherland, JD '23

Associate General Counsel, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Philadelphia, PA

Roses Laughlin, JD '23

Assistant City Solicitor, Water Division, City of Philadelphia

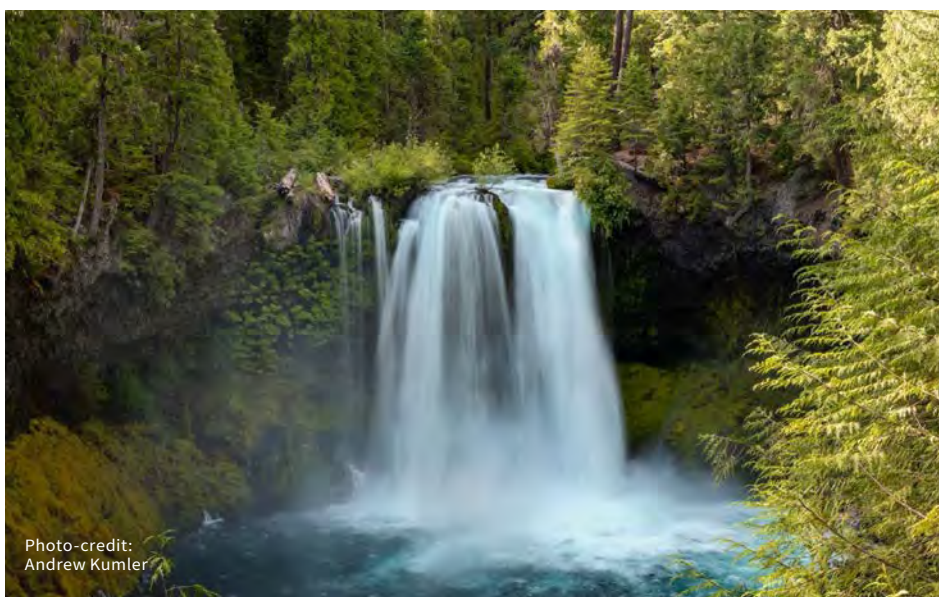
KEEPING IT WILD:

ENR Alumni Defend Forests, Rivers, and Wildlife at Cascadia Wildlands

Founded in 1998, Cascadia Wildlands (CW) is an environmental nonprofit dedicated to protecting the Cascadia bioregion—defined by the organization as the watersheds, forests, and coastlines stretching from northern California to south-central Alaska—through grassroots organizing, education, policy advocacy, and litigation.

With programs focused on climate, wildlife, and forests and watersheds, CW's work ranges from opposing timber sales and logging projects that target some of the last remaining mature and old-growth forests in the region to engaging in legislative advocacy to safeguard habitat for imperiled wildlife. The organization aims to encourage sustainable forest policies and practices to ensure that current and future generations have access to intact, thriving ecosystems.

Today, three Oregon Law alumni with deep ties to the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center are helping “keep it wild” at CW, practicing environmental advocacy just miles from the place where they learned how to be excellent at it.



NICK CADY, JD '11, LEGAL DIRECTOR

As Cascadia Wildlands' Legal Director, Nick Cady, JD '11, manages the organization's advocacy and litigation arm, shaping and implementing regional legal and policy strategies for safeguarding biodiversity and bolstering climate resilience across Cascadia. He has held this position since graduating from Oregon Law in 2011.

Cady develops and routinely litigates natural resources and endangered species cases arising in state and federal court. Under his guidance, CW has emerged as a regional leader in environmental litigation—a recent national report finds CW responsible for over 30% of federal environmental litigation pertaining to timber sales since 2013, and the vast majority of these cases were victories preventing illegal degradation of public lands.



Photo-credit:
Cascadia Wildlands



Photo-credit:
Cascadia Wildlands



Photo-credit: James Johnston

While pursuing his JD at Oregon Law, Cady was actively engaged with the ENR Center, earning academic concentrations in Environmental and Natural Resources Law and Ocean and Coastal Law. Cady also served as Co-Director of Land Air Water (LAW), Oregon Law's historic environmental student society.

Prior to starting at Oregon Law, Cady clerked with the Great Rivers Environmental Law Center in St. Louis, Missouri, where he developed cases to protect local waterways. In his second and third years of law school, he clerked with CW. He also worked with a local private-public interest law firm, where he assisted with the legal aftermath of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion and subsequent oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Since graduating, in addition to his work at CW, Cady has taught law

classes at both Oregon Law and Willamette University School of Law.

Cady's experience working on environmental issues as a law student led him to formalize a legal internship and externship program at CW that provides real-world environmental law opportunities for ENR students at Oregon Law. Through this program, the organization hires at least four law clerks each year, offering compensation commensurate with private firms.

"My years interning for Cascadia Wildlands while in law school were invaluable, and our goal is to continue to provide that opportunity for current and future students passionate about environmental issues," Cady says. "It is encouraging to see so many former interns now working in the field."

GRACE BRAHLER NEWSOME, JD '20, WILDLANDS DIRECTOR

As CW's Wildlands Director, Grace Brahler Newsome, JD '20, is responsible for the organization's public lands program advocacy. Prior to joining CW, she was the Oregon Climate Action Plan and Policy Manager for Beyond Toxics, an environmental justice nonprofit also based in Eugene, Oregon.

Day-to-day, Brahler Newsome monitors land management and policy proposals and engages in the public comment process to influence planning outcomes and build legal records that help protect biodiversity in Cascadia. She spends part of her time in the field ground truthing proposed timber sales and coordinating with agency staff, stakeholders, community members, and scientists to better understand and shape what is being proposed. She also weighs in on proposed changes to laws and policies affecting the forests, communities, and critters that call Cascadia home.

and supports public engagement with legislative and administrative decision-makers.

At Oregon Law, Brahler Newsome was uniquely embedded in the public interest environmental law community. She served as an ENR Fellow with the Center's Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project; participated in the ENR Clinic at the Western Environmental Law Center; and earned an academic concentration in ENR. An active member of LAW, she served as Conference Co-Director for the group's 39th annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference (PIELC).

Today, Brahler Newsome volunteers with Friends of Land Air Water, supporting LAW with putting on PIELC, which she attends every year.

"Having been involved in PIELC in some fashion since my first visit to Oregon Law during the conference in 2016, it has been gratifying to see the conference's real-world impact as a legal professional," she explains. "The phenomenal faculty and staff of Oregon Law, welcoming community, and broader network of advocates that come together at PIELC each year to share successes and lessons from their own corners of the world make Eugene such a meaningful hub for public interest environmental law."



Photo-credit:
Northwest Ecosystem Survey Team



Photo-credit:
Cascadia Wildlands

PETER JENSEN, JD '22, STAFF ATTORNEY

Cascadia Wildlands' sole staff attorney, Peter Jensen, JD '22, executes the organization's litigation strategy, advocating for imperiled wildlife, protecting forests and water resources, and prosecuting violations of bedrock environmental laws.

Jensen works as an in-house litigator at CW, where he identifies, evaluates, and develops legal claims and supports litigation at every stage of the case—from pre-complaint claim development work to summary judgment and beyond. Jensen works with Cady and Brahler Newsome, as well as public interest attorneys across the region, to drive high-impact environmental and natural resource case outcomes and expand the legal advocacy and litigation capacity of forest defenders and wildlife advocates in the Pacific Northwest.

Jensen began using the law to promote regional forest conservation while studying at Oregon Law, where he participated in the ENR Clinic at the Western Environmental Law Center; served as an ENR Fellow with the Center's Conservation Trust Project (CTP); and completed an ENR externship as an Environmental Justice Law and Policy Extern with Beyond Toxics.



Photo-credit:
Cascadia Wildlands

As part of his work as an ENR Fellow, Jensen supported Philip H. Knight Professor of Law Mary C. Wood's research for "The Oregon Forest Trust: An Ecological Endowment for Posterity," an *Oregon Law Review* article that provides a framework for holding governments accountable for the protection of Oregon's invaluable forestlands.

Beyond the classroom, clinic, and Center, Jensen joined the Native American Law Students Association and LAW, serving as Conference Co-Director for the 42nd annual PIELC.

"Many people, including me, chose and choose Oregon Law because of the top-tier environmental programming," Jensen says. "The faculty, staff, alumni network, and experiential opportunities provide students with a strong footing in the environmental movement, as well as the experience and framework necessary to build some seriously awesome careers!"

"I am grateful for my time at Oregon Law and the incredible people I met there, so many of whom I work with today."



Photo-credit:
Cascadia Wildlands

TOMORROW'S ATTORNEYS AND ADVOCATES:

Students Meet the Moment at Oregon Law



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

DANNY BILICK, JD '26



Danny Billick, JD '26, found and fostered a deep love for nature on the lakeshores and in the forests of northern Wisconsin, where he grew up. After spending a semester with the National Outdoor Leadership School and backpacking through the Himalayas in northern India, he studied environmental science, environmental economics, and Spanish at Western Washington University. These experiences sharpened his interest in environmental law, policy, and justice, which led him to enroll at Oregon Law.

During his 1L summer, Billick externed for the Honorable Adrienne Nelson in the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon. As a 2L, he began a fellowship with the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center's Conservation Trust Project, joining a cohort of student and faculty researchers honing legal tools to promote natural climate solutions and landscape conservation.

That summer, he interned with Cascadia Wildlands, a local nonprofit dedicated to protecting the Cascadia bioregion.

"I feel very lucky to have been part of such an important mission," Billick says. "So many of the already-depleted natural resources of the Pacific Northwest are facing immediate and irreparable harm. Organizations like Cascadia Wildlands are at the forefront of the fight over our ecosystems."

"My externship gave me opportunities to draft complaints, work on motions, attend legislative committee hearings, conduct meaningful and interesting research, help prepare for oral arguments, and much more," Billick continues. "All the while, there was time to go out and play in the woods!"

Billick externed with Cascadia Wildlands through the fall semester of his 3L year. He also continued as an ENR Fellow with the Conservation Trust Project, authoring a whitepaper examining the intersections between the ancient foundations of the Public Trust Doctrine and emerging environmental justice principles.

In spring 2026, through his ENR fellowship, Billick organized a panel at the annual Public

Interest Environmental Law Conference, convening top litigators working to hold corporate polluters accountable for environmental harms. Outside his fellowship, he served as an Executive Editor for the *Journal of Environmental Law and Litigation* and as a tutor in the Legal Research and Writing Program.

Billick graduated from Oregon Law in spring 2026. Now clerking for the Honorable D. Andrew Gaona at the Arizona Court of Appeals in Phoenix, he hopes to continue building toward a career in environmental advocacy.

"The ENR Center was a major reason that I chose to attend Oregon Law," Billick reflects. "It provided some of the most fun and impactful times of my law school experience. I am grateful for the things I learned, the experiences I had, and, above all, the people I met."



Journal of Environmental Law and Litigation

Since 1985, Oregon Law's *Journal of Environmental Law and Litigation* (JELL) has provided an international forum for new ideas and theories in environmental and natural resources law. JELL publishes groundbreaking scholarship on evolving subjects such as renewable energy, environmental justice, and international environmental governance, while empowering students to become exceptional writers, editors, and scholars.

JELL Volume 41

Thomas O. McGarity, "The Resilience Wave of Climate Litigation and the Demand for Corrective Justice," 41 JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND LITIGATION 1 (2026).

Tawia Ansah, "Materiality Beyond Metrics: Corporations, Climate Litigation, and Accountability for Distributed Harm," 41 JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND LITIGATION 53 (2026).

Edward C. Kisiel, "Optimizing Strategic Competition in the Climate Change Era: Energy Resiliency and Sustainable Procurement," 41 JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND LITIGATION 107 (2026).

Gregory S. Alexander, "Land Violence," 41 JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND LITIGATION 131 (2026).

Michael Faure, "The Price of Meat in International Climate Change Law," 41 JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND LITIGATION 179 (2026).

Tonya Saren, "Bridging Efficiency and Legitimacy: The Role of Community Benefits Agreements in NEPA's Offshore Wind Review," 41 JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND LITIGATION 239 (2026).

Elaina R. Erola, "Wild and Untamed: The Problem of Wild Horses on Federal and Indian Lands," 41 JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND LITIGATION 273 (2026).

Tristan Tellier, "Flood Risk Management: The Burden on Local Governments to Combat Sea Level Rise," 41 JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND LITIGATION 313 (2026).

Charles Gruber, "SEC Authority: Climate Disclosure Rules for Unicorn Companies," 41 JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND LITIGATION 379 (2026).

Earth Week 2026: ENR Celebrates Earth Day with Cake, Community, and CLE Collaboration

Continuing an annual tradition of community-building and educational programming around Earth Day, the ENR Center hosted Earth Week 2026 to honor and celebrate the community's shared commitment to environmental protection.

Following an Environmental Law Study Hall co-hosted with Oregon Law's Green Business Initiative; an Earth Day Expo featuring tabling by environmental student organizations and the traditional Earth Day cake; and a Go Paperless Plant Giveaway, the ENR Center co-sponsored a three-panel Earth Day CLE hosted by the Oregon State Bar's Sustainable Future Section (SFS).

ENR Research Associate Doug Quirke, JD '95, and Pro Tem Instructor Heather Merfeld, JD '01, serve as Co-Chairs of the SFS.

The Earth Day CLE, entitled "Sustainability and the Law," took place at the University of Oregon's Portland campus. Associate Professor Greg Dotson, JD '95, who serves on the Oregon Data Center Advisory Committee, participated as a panelist on "Sustainability and the Growth of Oregon Data Centers." Other panels focused on "Changes to SEC Rules on Environmental and Social Governance and Sustainability" and "The One Big Beautiful Bill Act and Its Impact on Clean Energy."

In the Field: Hands-On Opportunities in Environmental Law, Policy, and Justice

Working to equip the next generation of changemakers through skill-building and experiential learning, the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center supports student placements across a diversity of public entities and community-based organizations around the world.

Past placements include:

- 1,000 Friends of Oregon
- Advocates for the West
- Beyond Toxics
- Blue River Law
- California Air Resources Board
- California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General
- California State Water Resources Control Board
- Cascadia Wildlands
- Center for Ocean Solutions
- Colorado Department of Law, Office of the Attorney General
- Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
- Crag Law Center
- Delaware Riverkeeper Network
- Delegation of the European Union to the United States, Trade and Agriculture Section
- Earth Island Institute
- Earthjustice
- Environmental Defense Center
- Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide
- Environmental Protection Information Center
- Food & Water Watch
- Greater Hells Canyon Council
- Hudson Riverkeeper
- Humane World for Animals
- Idaho Water Users Association
- Institute of Man and Environment of the Amazon
- Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
- Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center
- LandWatch Lane County
- Lincoln County Legal Counsel
- Midwest Environmental Advocates
- Monterey Waterkeeper
- National Law Center for Inter-American Free Trade
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Oregon Citizens Utility Board
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
- Oregon Office of the Legislative Counsel
- Oregon Public Utility Commission
- Oregon Water Resources Department
- Oregon Wild
- Our Children's Trust
- Sierra Club
- Socially Responsible Agriculture Project
- Squaxin Island Tribe
- Trout Unlimited
- Trustees for Alaska
- Tualatin Riverkeeper
- United Nations Climate Change Secretariat, Legal Affairs Division
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Solicitor
- U.S. Department of Justice, Environmental and Natural Resources Division
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Western Resource Advocates
- WildEarth Guardians
- Wildlands Network
- Yurok Tribe

Raising Voices for Good at the 44th Annual PIELC

March 12th through March 15th, 2026, marked the 44th annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference (PIELC) at the University of Oregon. Students and educators, attorneys and activists, scientists and policymakers, youth and elders, and hundreds more gathered from across the country and around the world to discuss, strategize around, and collaborate on important environmental-legal issues.

Each year, members of Land Air Water (LAW), the University of Oregon School of Law's historic environmental student society, dedicate their time, energy, and creativity to put on the longest-running and largest public interest environmental law conference on the planet. Third-year law student Abby Dompier and second-year law students Molly Cochran, Jay Everett, and Anna Hampton led these efforts as the Conference Co-Directors (CCDs) for PIELC 2026.

The CCDs selected the theme, *Fight Back: Voices for Good*, to “focus on the importance of coming together to oppose the recent and ongoing efforts to dismantle environmental protections and social justice.” Through this theme, the CCDs hoped that PIELC 2026 would allow attendees to share ideas, celebrate successes, and “leave feeling empowered to continue the fight.”



From left: Jay Everett, Abby Dompier, Anna Hampton, and Molly Cochran

PIELC 2026 Recap

BY: CONFERENCE CO-DIRECTORS MOLLY COCHRAN, ABBY DOMPIER, JAY EVERETT, AND ANNA HAMPTON

THURSDAY (BY ABBY)

PIELC 2026 began on a Thursday in the Erb Memorial Union at the heart of campus. The conference kicked off that afternoon with a short opening ceremony where the CCDs spoke about the history of PIELC and the selection of this year's theme, *Fight Back: Voices for Good*.

Following the ceremony, the first round of panels began with sessions such as “Oregon Land Use in Practice: Early-Career Perspectives,” “Creative Strategies for Supporting Communities,” “Take the Fight to the State: Legislation and Rulemaking for Wildlife Policy Modernization,” and “The Joy in the Fight: Building Grassroots Power through Community and Courage.” Hosted by representatives from an array of community-

based organizations, government entities, and the private public-interest bar, Thursday's programming offered a variety of practical tips for engaging with emerging environmental issues.

FRIDAY (BY MOLLY)

With PIELC in swing, Friday's activities began with a diversity of panels spanning topics from “Public Land Health Standards: Promises, Pitfalls, and Possibilities” and “Using All the Options: Courts, Congress, and Communications” to “Making Choices for Good: Navigating What's ‘Right’ to Achieve the Clean Energy Transition in a Time of Crisis” and “Not in Our Name, You Don't! Wildland Firefighters Critique Logging-for-Firefighting in Executive Orders and Legislation.”

Friday continued with more than a dozen informative and visionary panels, such as “Environmental Enforcement at DEQ,” “Fighting Old Growth Logging Sales Post-Seven County,” “Ratepayer, Community, and Environmental Protections in a Time of Data Center-Driven Large Load Growth in the Electric Sector,” “NEPA's Perfect Storm: Regulatory Retreat, Environmental Risk, and the Path Forward,” and “Building a Water Justice Alliance.” That afternoon, Oregon Law Clinical Professor Rebekah Hanley led an ethics workshop entitled “Fight Like a Lawyer: Ethics and Public Interest Advocacy.”

The day culminated in a much-anticipated keynote address by Oregon Tribes Scholar-in-Residence and Senior Fellow Chuck Sams, the former Director of the National Park Service

and the first Indigenous person to serve in that capacity. Drawing from his experience leading the Park Service toward more sustainable and equitable stewardship of natural and cultural resources, Sams' address was entitled "Welcome to the Fight: Environmental Justice for All."

Energized by the keynote, many conference-goers ended the night at the annual PIELC Party at the Webfoot near campus. Meanwhile, other attendees joined the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center's 16th annual Indigenous Peoples Reception, concluding the evening with a community dinner in the Many Nations Longhouse.

SATURDAY (BY ANNA)

With university classes out for the weekend, Saturday is PIELC at full volume. The building woke up at sunrise—chatter coffee lines forming early; conversation echoing throughout the hallways; and conference-goers eagerly awaiting panels on forest defense, water justice, climate litigation, and community organizing. Through urgent yet grounded discussions, participants traded practical tools for supporting community-led science; protecting land defenders; and leveraging local, state, and international frameworks to protect natural resources and promote human rights where federal systems fall short.

Energy remained high into midday with attendees moving quickly between panels, pausing to catch former colleagues, and stopping to chat with organizations tabling in the Wayne Morse Commons. Amid the hustle and bustle of PIELC, conference-goers find community, form new strategies for approaching new problems, and gather the strength to "continue the fight" for justice and sustainability.

Throughout the afternoon, panels on climate migration, labor and environmental justice, and corporate accountability seemed to grapple with the same questions: Who holds the power? Who bears the risks? And how can law be used to protect communities and ecosystems rather than entrenched private interests? Meanwhile, the Environmental Justice Film Festival featured screenings and discussions of *Last Stand: Saving the Elwha River's Legacy Forests*, *No Man's Land*, *Troubled Water*, and *A Beast Touch the*

Mountains: Valley Pipeline and the Fight for Appalachia.

The centerpiece of the day was John Leshy's keynote address, "On Shaky Ground: The Second Trump Administration and the Future of America's Public Lands." A Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Hastings College of Law and former Solicitor of the U.S. Department of the Interior, Leshy's speech emphasized the need to reclaim and defend hard-won legal protections rather than assume their self-sufficiency.

Oregon Law students and alumni carried their energy from Leshy's keynote into the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center's annual Alumni Reception, where they swapped stories, reconnected with former mentors and old friends, and traded professional advice for public interest environmental career-building. In a room full of people who have shaped (and hope to continue shaping) environmental law and policy in the Pacific Northwest and beyond, conversations often circled back to the same point: It matters that we keep showing up, and fighting back, together.

SUNDAY (BY JAY)

The final day of PIELC 2026 included two groups of panels that highlighted Oregon-specific and local issues. Panels focused on topics such as "Oregon's Bedrock Environmental Law Under Threat: Protecting Our Statewide Land Use Planning Program," "From the Capitol to the Courthouse: Coalition Building, Legislation, and Litigation on Animal Factories in Oregon," and "Sustainable Groundwater Management in Oregon Requires Rule Changes."

Meanwhile, the Environmental Justice Film Festival concluded with a screening of *The Snake and the Whale*—an investigative documentary focused on the U.S. military's role in causing and covering up pollution—and *Pine Groves: More than a School*, which follows efforts to preserve a historic Black schoolhouse threatened by a landfill.

Motivated by all the voices for good who came together at the conference, PIELC-goers left with renewed hope to fight back against environmental harm and injustice.



FOREST FOR THE TREES: NOTHING GROWS ALONE

March 11 – 14, 2027

Save the date for the 45th annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference! PIELC 2027 will take place over four days at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon.

The conference co-directors, all volunteer law students, have selected *Forest for the Trees: Nothing Grows Alone* as the conference theme.

For more information about PIELC, visit

www.pielc.org

or reach out to the organizers at

askpielc@gmail.com

AWARD-WINNING PUBLIC INTEREST ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATES

David Brower Lifetime Achievement Award

2026 Recipient: Kristen Boyles

The Brower Award is a 26-year-old honor presented to activists and attorneys who exemplify David Brower's spirit and accomplishments. Often credited as one of the most important environmentalists of the 20th Century, Brower was the first Executive Director of the globally impactful Sierra Club. His leadership helped the organization establish its political voice and activate its policy advocacy arm. In 1969, Brower founded Friends of Earth and, in 1992, he started the Earth Island Institute. A "grandfather" of the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference at the University of Oregon, Brower maintained that PIELC was the most important conference anywhere. Each year during PIELC, student organizers are honored to present the Brower Award to a deserving changemaker.

Kristen Boyles is the managing attorney of Earthjustice's Northwest Regional Office in Seattle, Washington. For over 25 years, her work has focused on conservation issues including Pacific Northwest forestry, Columbia and Klamath River salmon protection, impacts of pesticides on people and the environment, water quality concerns, the national Roadless Rule, and national monuments. She has fought for the protection and recovery of threatened and endangered species—Pacific salmon, marbled murrelets, gray wolves, and others. She continues to fight fossil fuel infrastructure expansion and for a clean energy future in Washington, Oregon, and British Columbia. Boyles is a graduate of Stanford University and Cornell Law School. She clerked for federal judges at the U.S. District Court of Rhode Island and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. She also worked as a staff attorney for Pacific Rivers.

Kerry Rydberg-Jack Tuholske Award for Excellence in Public Interest Environmental Lawyering

2026 Recipients: Paul Kampmeier and Brian Knutsen

Established in 1990, the Rydberg-Tuholske Award was originally named to honor Kerry Rydberg, a private public-interest lawyer who earned his law degree at the University of Oregon. Before tragically passing at an early age, Rydberg represented grassroots groups for little-to-no pay, challenging actions such as destructive old-growth logging. The award in his honor was renamed in 2020 to also recognize the lifelong advocacy of private public-interest attorney Jack Tuholske, a Montanan who passed that year. Tuholske's legacy touches not only environmental law, where his successes as an attorney included ensuring the protection of more than 19,000 miles of streams and rivers in the Pacific Northwest; it also remains impactful in the field of environmental-legal education, where Tuholske inspired innovation as a law professor at the University of Montana and at Vermont Law School. Recipients of the Rydberg-Tuholske Award are selected for their demonstrated courage, commitment, and talent as grassroots-level advocates for citizens and communities facing environmental issues.

Paul Kampmeier and **Brian Knutsen** are the founding attorneys and co-owners of Kampmeier & Knutsen, PLLC, a law firm that provides representation to environmental organizations, activists, and landowners working toward conservation. With offices based in Portland, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington, the partners have nearly 50 combined years of experience practicing environmental litigation across the Pacific Northwest. Kampmeier holds a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Michigan and a JD from the University of Washington School of Law. Following law school, he worked as an attorney at Smith & Lowney, PLLC, before transitioning to a role with the Washington Forest Law Center. Over the years, he has focused his practice on increasing protections for threatened species, reducing water pollution, and increasing government accountability. Knutsen holds a bachelor's degree in environmental sciences and geology from St. Louis University and a JD from Lewis & Clark Law School. He has successfully litigated cases related to hydroelectricity, hatcheries, aquaculture, fisheries, and other issues relevant to protecting natural resources and wildlife. Much of Knutsen's practice has revolved around safeguarding Pacific Northwest salmonids and the ecosystems in which they have evolved.



WESTERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW UPDATE



The *Western Environmental Law Update* (WELU) is a student-generated publication sponsored by Land Air Water—Oregon Law’s historic environmental law student society—and distributed annually at the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference. In recent years, the WELU has evolved from a collection of academic writings to a multi-formal ‘zine’ that blends justice-based, environmental-legal research with creative works such as landscape photography, digital artwork, short stories, and poems.

Access the 2026 WELU at www.pielc.org/welu

Questions about the WELU, including inquiries about how to submit an entry for the next edition, can be directed to the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center at enr@uoregon.edu.

SNAIL-ED IT: LAW STUDENTS LAUNCH INAUGURAL SUMMIT FOR NORTHWEST AMERICAN INDIAN LAW



Part of the National Native American Law Students Association, Oregon Law’s NALSA chapter endeavors to support and encourage the study of Federal Indian Law, Tribal Law, traditional forms of governance, and contemporary legal issues impacting Indigenous communities. Through educational programming and community engagement, NALSA strives to promote both deeper understandings of and deeper connections around the importance of Tribal advocacy.



In 2026, NALSA expanded its public programming with its launch of the annual Summit for Northwest American Indian Law (SNAIL). The inaugural SNAIL—with Moving Beyond Acknowledgment as the organizing theme—took place at the William W. Knight Law Center on February 7.

Following two panels packed with professional advice and guidance for representing Tribal Nations, Indigenous people(s), and sovereign interests across the public and private sector, the SNAIL culminated in a keynote address by Chuck Sams—the first Tribal member to serve as Director of the National Park Service. Now serving as Oregon Tribes Scholar-in-Residence and Senior Fellow with the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center’s Native Environmental Sovereignty Project, Sams’ address focused on real-world ways of honoring Tribal self-determination over natural and cultural resources.

OPENING REMARKS

Jason Younker — Immediate Past Chief, Coquille Indian Nation | Assistant Vice President and Advisor to the President on Sovereignty and Government-to-Government Relations, University of Oregon

PANEL 1: “PERSPECTIVES FROM THE PRIVATE PRACTICE”

Elaine Albrich, JD ’05 — Co-Chair of Energy, Natural Resources, and Environmental Practice, Davis Wright Tremaine, LLP

Caleb Norris, JD ’20 — Associate Attorney, Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker, LLP

Dawn Winalski, JD ’09 — Founder, Winalski Consulting LLC

PANEL 2: “REPRESENTING TRIBAL PEOPLE(S) AND INTERESTS”

Vanessa Jackson, JD ’22 — Former General Counsel, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians (now Associate Attorney, Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker, LLP)

Tim Simmons — Assistant United States Attorney, U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Oregon | Pro Tem Instructor, University of Oregon School of Law

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: “MOVING BEYOND ACKNOWLEDGMENT”

Chuck Sams — Immediate Past Director, U.S. National Park Service | Oregon Tribes Scholar-in-Residence and Senior Fellow with the Native Environmental Sovereignty Project, University of Oregon School of Law

Environmental and Natural Resources Law LLM

Masters of Law (LLM) Degree

Eligibility	Applicants must have a JD degree or foreign equivalent.
Time to Complete	Most students complete their LLM in one academic year (two semesters).
Application Info	Apply this fall to join next year's cohort. No fee to apply.



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#8

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