

2025

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON SCHOOL OF LAW

Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center

UPPING OUR DEFENSES TO SAFEGUARD OUR FUTURE

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
School of Law

2025 THE YEAR IN REVIEW

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Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center

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Metolius Outreach 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**.

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WHO WE ARE

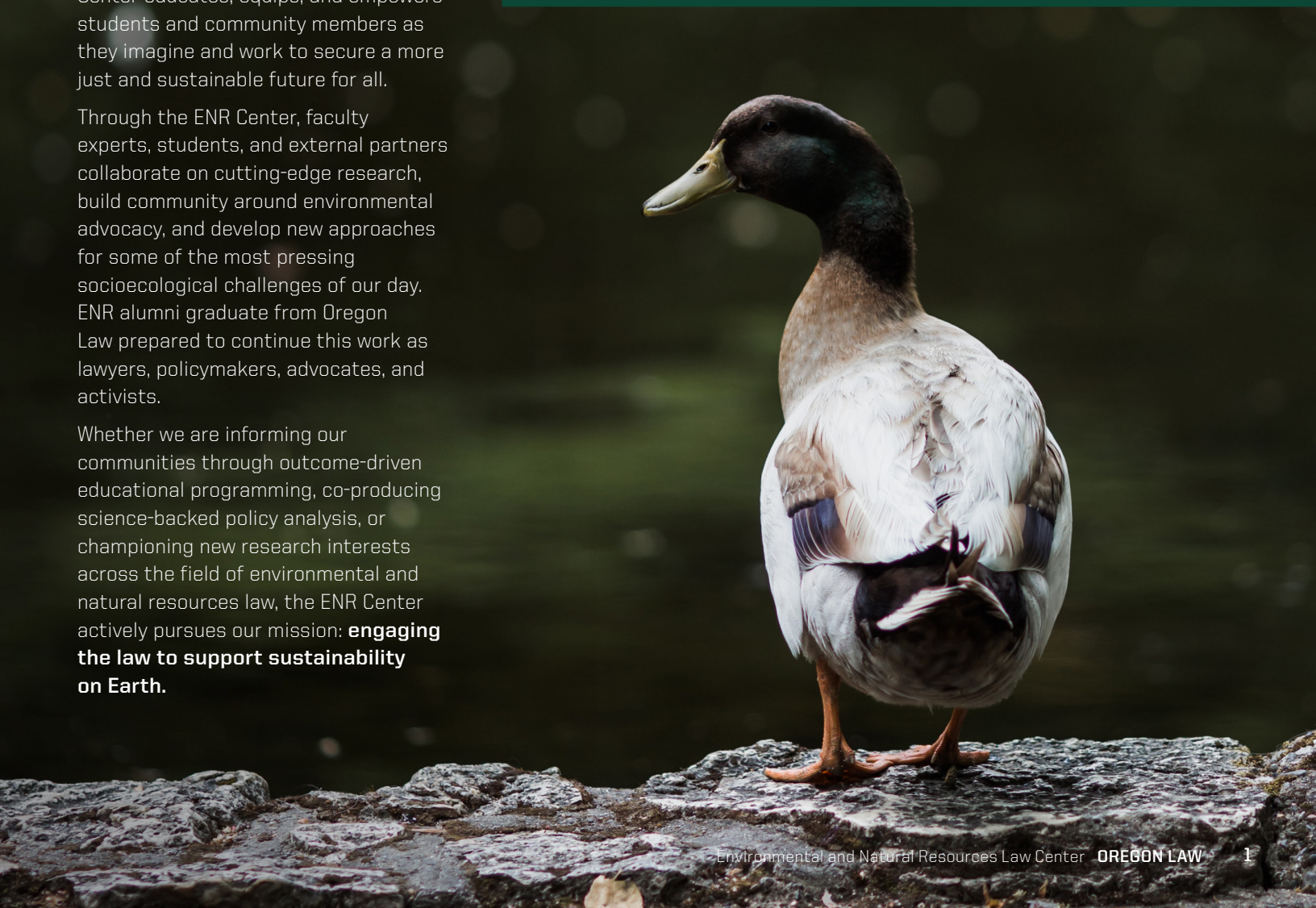
Since offering its first environmental and natural resources law courses in the 1960s, Oregon Law has been home to one of the top environmental law programs in the United States. A dynamic hub for environmental-legal research, education, and outreach, the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR)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

"Part of what distinguishes the Oregon Law community," says ENR'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 and community members as they imagine and work to secure a more just and sustainable future for all.

Through the ENR Center, faculty experts, students, and external partners collaborate on 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 pursues our mission: **engaging the law to support sustainability on Earth.**

> "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





A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP IN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

A+

PreLaw Magazine
(2025)

#7

in Environmental Law Programs
U.S. News & World Report
(2025)

#2

In PNW Environmental Law Programs
U.S. News & World Report
(2025)

At Oregon Law, we never take our eyes off the horizon. We continuously strive to educate, equip, and empower the environmental lawyers and leaders of today and tomorrow.

- Innovated courses in public interest environmental law
- First environmental law clinic in the United States
- Home of the oldest and largest Public Interest Environmental Law Conference on the planet
- Created Interdisciplinary Research Projects to tackle climate change

Message from the Executive Director



Amid these turbulent times, I am joined by everyone at Oregon Law in hoping this message finds you well. For many of us, the people, places, and principles we treasure are facing increasing threats and harm. In the face of these extraordinary challenges, the ENR Center remains energized by our community's aspirations, accomplishments, and shared commitment to sustainability and social justice.

This annual year-in-review newsletter highlights the impressive work of our faculty, students, and alumni. With a focus on advancing community-based solutions across their fields of expertise, our faculty members continue demonstrating excellence in scholarship, teaching, and public service. Through careers dedicated to protecting communities and the environment, our alumni continue amplifying the ENR Center's mission – engaging the law to support sustainability on Earth. And motivated, rather than deterred, by today's environmental and social justice challenges, our students continue pursuing the knowledge and skills they need to become tomorrow's leaders. This is a community of champions for the environment and the public interest, and I am incredibly thankful for their remarkable work.

As we enter the 2025-26 academic year, I look forward to all we plan to accomplish. We welcome Jennifer W. Reynolds as our new dean. Having served on Oregon Law's faculty since 2009, Dean Reynolds has a deep understanding of Oregon Law–its strengths, culture, and community–including the legacy of the ENR Center. We are also thrilled to welcome Chuck Sams as our inaugural Oregon Tribes Scholar-in-Residence and Senior Fellow with ENR's Native Environmental Sovereignty Project. His deep expertise and experience, most recently as the Director of the National Park Service during the Biden Administration, will make significant contributions to our teaching and research.

As you read this newsletter, you will see the vibrancy that makes the ENR Center special. Undoubtedly, you will see why I feel privileged to serve as the Center's director. I am continually buoyed and inspired by our community and its passion for advancing environmental law, policy, and justice–I hope you are too!

I welcome your thoughts and invite you to share any questions or ideas as we continue our work.

Heather A. Brinton, JD '96
Executive Director
Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center
University of Oregon School of Law
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UPPING OUR DEFENSES TO SAFEGUARD OUR FUTURE



BY: MADI PRUE, BA '22

2024 was the warmest year in recorded history. In May 2025, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) reported a high probability of hotter years to come. The WMO's report also forecasted a 70% chance that average global warming over the next five years will surpass 1.5° C, with acute heating in the Arctic region.

With rising global temperatures come increased risks and impacts for ecosystems and species, including our own. Worldwide, climate change continues to fuel the frequency and intensity of disasters—from heatwaves, wildfires, superstorms, and droughts to floods, famines, and infectious diseases.

Meanwhile, serious efforts to deny climate harm and dismantle climate protections are also heating up.

"In this planetary climate emergency, the level of our ambition must match the scale of the threat," says Philip H. Knight Professor of Law Mary Christina Wood, Faculty Director of Oregon Law's Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center.

Today's overlapping climate-and-justice challenges continue driving the ENR Center's work.

NAVIGATING HEADWINDS IN ENVIRONMENTAL & ENERGY POLICY

While the last several years saw the federal government's largest investments in renewable energy, the last several months have seen much of this progress slowed, blocked, or undone. Against headwinds, Associate Professor Greg Dotson's JD '95 research is helping develop the foundational legal basis for responsible environmental and energy policy.

His latest scholarship addresses pitfalls of the major questions doctrine, the potential usefulness of the Congressional appropriations process in understanding legislative intent, the history of U.S. electric vehicle policy, the Congressional Review Act, and various aspects of the Senate's rules. Meanwhile, he is serving

on two state advisory bodies to offer his views on energy and environmental policy, and he continues to submit public comment on pending energy and environmental matters.

This work is informed by Professor Dotson's extensive experience on Capitol Hill, including his time as Democratic Chief Counsel to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. In that role, he helped develop the historic Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 and Inflation Reduction Act of 2022.

"Congress has clearly demonstrated its support for the widespread adoption of electric vehicles in years to come," he writes in "Congress's Fifty Year Mission to Transition Motor Vehicles: A Brief History of Federal Electric Vehicle Policy in the United States" (33 NYU Environmental Law Journal 93). "However, [...] in the early weeks of President Trump's second term, it is clear that the new administration will attempt to stall or reverse this progress." In the ensuing months, the new administration has indeed modified and repealed various policies that promote zero emission transportation.

Still, Professor Dotson maintains that adherence to the rule of law and established procedural norms can protect some existing policies from elimination, perhaps even providing tailwinds that propel policy forward.

His recent opinion piece in *The Hill*, "The Budget Rule that Killed the Minimum Wage Hike Could Save Climate Policies," underscores this point. There, Professor Dotson examines the text of the recent budget reconciliation bill, which has been referred to as the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act."

"The Republican majority in the House of Representatives has proposed budget reconciliation language that would defund, repeal and rewrite the nation's energy, environment and climate policies," he writes. "Under a fair application of the Byrd rule, many of the provisions would have to be stripped out."

Each of the provisions Professor Dotson details in the opinion piece were indeed struck from the bill before final passage. In a bill that otherwise promises significant changes to the nation's healthcare, tax, immigration, and energy systems, this amounted to a small preservation of existing policies and democratic norms.

SEEDING TRANSFORMATION ACROSS FOOD SYSTEMS

The World Food Programme reports 319 million people across 67 countries are experiencing acute hunger; meanwhile, 1.9 million people in Gaza, Sudan, and parts of South Sudan, Haiti, and Mali are "in the grips of catastrophic hunger" – on the brink of famine or already starving.

Throughout his tenure as the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Professor Michael Fakhri has proffered numerous global policies to enable the recovery and transformation of the world's food systems and address the worldwide food crisis.

> "In this planetary climate emergency, the level of our ambition must match the scale of the threat."
>
> **– Mary Christina Wood, Philip H. Knight Professor of Law**

These recommendations span transitioning from industrial agriculture to agroecology, privileging territorial markets over global markets, supporting economic solidarity and social economies, and prioritizing food sovereignty as a foundation for multilateral food governance.

His latest UN report, "The Right to Food – Finance and National Action Plans," is directed toward national governments and provides guidance for analyzing and transforming domestic food systems. "The general trend over the past few decades has been cycles of crises with spikes in the rates of hunger, malnutrition and famine," he explains. "The repeated shocks are not anomalous but instead are symptomatic of structural issues."

Addressing this "crisis-induced food insecurity," Professor Fakhri argues, requires national governments to develop domestic strategies for preventing and managing food crises. Simultaneously, they must work to coordinate an international response to the global food crisis. None of this can be meaningfully accomplished, he stresses, without a firm grounding in human rights and equity.

In contrast to an economic framework that measures trends in the production, distribution, and consumption of food, a "right-to-food framework" rooted in human rights "starts with an outline of a State's obligations to ensure that all human beings live in dignity and measures State action against that standard."

"In turn, Governments are obliged to create the conditions for all people to be able to access good, nutritious, and affordable food with dignity, now and in the future."

Such a framework would require governments to safeguard current and future generations' access to adequate food, including through the sustainable management of resources like land and water. As Professor Fakhri explains, this would extend benefits beyond food systems, also helping mitigate biodiversity loss and climate change.

In the face of widespread and worsening hunger, malnutrition, and famine, he says the right to food emboldens people, not governments, with power within their food systems –"power over their own destiny." Upholding food rights *as human rights*, he argues, will enable a just transformation of the food systems upon which all people rely.

CONFRONTING THE CLIMATE RESILIENCE PARADOX

With the increasing destruction of vital ecosystems such as oceans, wetlands, and forests, disasters like cyclones, floods, and wildfires are becoming more frequent and severe. The impacts are tremendous—between 2022 and 2024, weather-related disasters in the U.S. caused at least 1,534 deaths and created direct economic costs of more than $461 billion.

As governments seek to respond to these impacts, many local-level policy decisions intended to promote resilience have the opposite effect, resulting in maladaptation that leaves communities more vulnerable to climate hazards.

Despite this—and despite the pervasive use, whether consciously or not, of local land use laws and procedures to reinforce wealth and power hierarchies that entrench existing vulnerabilities—there is broad agreement among U.S. legal scholars, lawmakers, courts, and commentators that local governments are uniquely equipped to address the climate preparedness emergency. There is also widespread consensus that local governments must retain the discretion to manage local land uses with minimal state or federal oversight.

This form of "land law localism," as Assistant Professor Sarah Adams describes it, remains the norm even as many local governments demonstrate an inability, if notably not always an unwillingness, to use their authority to meaningfully advance climate resilience at the community scale.

In two recent articles, "Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox" (36 Stanford Law & Policy Review 47) and "Federal Flood Policy & Maladaptation: A Story of Collective Forgetting" (34 Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal 1), Professor Adams confronts foundational assumptions about land use governance and climate resilience and explores legal reforms that grapple with entrenched land use problems, support community engagement and activism, and center justice.

"The urgency of a reckoning between the rhetoric and reality of land law localism has always existed for those on the receiving end of zoning's burden-shifting and boundary-making," Professor Adams writes. She advocates for a community-oriented, evidence-based approach to climate maladaptation—a "collaborative governance framework"—that both prioritizes local governance of local problems and addresses the reality that local governments are not equipped to effectively manage *all* maladaptation challenges themselves.

"Ultimately," Professor Adams concludes, "without sufficiently powerful incentives or accountability mechanisms, climate resilience lawmaking will continue to overtly or covertly support maladaptive development and other proprietary and exclusionary interests."

RALLYING FOR REFORM TO MEET WATER NEEDS

In 2024, the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) released a draft Integrated Water Resources Strategy that opens with a hard truth: "We are not currently meeting Oregon's water needs." Emphasizing statewide challenges related to declining stream flows, overstretched water supplies, and groundwater contamination, the report underscores Oregon is unprepared to sufficiently and sustainably manage its water resources.

Amid this crisis, Clayton R. Hess Professor of Law Adell Amos JD '98 is working to help transform Oregon's approach to water resources management. Alongside fellow water lawyers David Filippi, Janet Neuman, and Josh Newton, she was invited by Governor Tina Kotek's Natural Resources Office to provide guidance for modernizing the state's water laws. Following the resulting gubernatorial appeal, Governor Kotek has called on Oregon's lawmakers to reform the state's water policies.

"Summers in the Pacific Northwest are getting hotter, and droughts are increasing in frequency and severity," Professor Amos and her co-authors write in their appeal. "While snowpack, precipitation, and runoff patterns are changing, Oregon's laws and policies are not adapting to address those changes." But, the attorneys emphasize, the state's water challenges go far beyond scarcity.

The appeal names outdated laws, inflexible and underfunded administrative processes, absent or inconsistent data, misalignment with Indigenous Ecological Knowledge, and increasing conflict and controversy around water allocation as key issues the state must address to meet Oregonians' water needs. It also offers specific, substantive recommendations for state action.

Springing from over 100 years of combined experience working in water law, the attorneys' recommendations span earnestly enforcing Tribal water rights; integrating socioecological and economic analysis into water resources management strategies; reallocating water resources and decision-making power to ensure equitable outcomes for historically underserved water users; investing in infrastructural upgrades to enhance the reliability, quality, and distribution of water supplies; and improving the collection, quality, and use of water data.

Since receiving the appeal, Governor Kotek has not only called on legislators to help modernize the state's approach to water resources management; she has added a new natural resources advisor—a water attorney—to her cabinet. These changes seem responsive to a critical takeaway from the lawyers' appeal: "Continuation of the status quo is not an acceptable option."

Meanwhile, Professor Amos has continued rallying for reform. In addition to several other recent talks and panels on water law and administrative law, she presented "State Water Code Reform: Lessons for Oregon from Across the West" as the keynote speaker



> "The need to move to a new era of water management guided by a shared sense of purpose has never been more important."
>
> **– Adell Amos, Clayton R. Hess Professor of Law**

at the University of Montana School of Law's 2025 Frank & Elvira Jestrab Distinguished Lecture on Water. Her address focused on a swath of state-level strategies she believes Oregon could mimic or adopt to meet public water needs.

"The need to move to a new era of water management guided by a shared sense of purpose," she stressed, "has never been more important."

DEVISING REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR GLOBAL CHALLENGES

The world's top scientists emphasize that rapid decarbonization of the energy system is vital for achieving climate stability; however, the "other climate imperative," as climatologist Dr. James Hansen has put it, is drawdown: sequestering the existing atmospheric carbon that is driving climate disasters.

Building on years of ongoing work, Philip H. Knight Professor of Law Mary Christina Wood's recent article, "Sky Carbon Cleanup and Biodiversity Restoration: Devising Regional Frameworks" (25 Vermont Journal Of Environmental Law 209) proposes a strategy for organizing a global carbon drawdown effort.

Professor Wood calls this undertaking "sky cleanup"—analogous to a marine oil spill cleanup. "If this were an oil spill in the ocean," she explains, "there would be no delay in tackling cleanup. We must bring that same urgency and commitment to cleaning up the atmospheric carbon pollution that disrupts the essential life-support systems on Earth."

Her article, which was selected for the *Environmental Law and Policy Annual Review*'s list of the top 20 environmental law articles of 2024-25, proposes regional frameworks to help direct and connect carbon sequestration projects encompassing vast ecosystems. This large-scale approach, Professor Wood explains, aims to maximize co-benefits such as biodiversity recovery, climate resilience, disaster adaptation, and rural economic revival.

Zooming in from this broad vision, the article discusses the "Pacific Northwest Framework for Atmospheric Recovery" (PNW FAR) as a model for other regions. Through intensely collaborative work on the PNW FAR, Professor Wood has shaped interdisciplinary strategies to promote practical nature-based climate solutions across four regional ecosystems: forests, farmlands, grasslands and rangelands, and blue and teal carbon areas. As she puts it, these natural climate solutions are geared toward "turbocharging Nature's own engines of carbon sequestration" through ecosystem recovery.

"The goal is to enlarge and protect the natural carbon 'sinks' of the world in a way that supports biodiversity and human needs," she explains. While Professor Wood knows this work will not be easy, she resolutely emphasizes its necessity. Even if worldwide decarbonization were possible tomorrow, she points out, the "oil spill in the sky" would still propel climate disruption, driving the planet toward (or past) points of no return.

"Of course, any such effort inevitably confronts social inertia that can hinder progress," she writes. "But the tangible project of land and resource recovery may create its own irresistible social momentum, particularly when juxtaposed against the increasingly recognized prospect of runaway planetary heating and incalculable human loss and suffering."

WELCOMING NEW DEAN
JENNIFER W. REYNOLDS

Professor Jennifer W. Reynolds was selected as the University of Oregon School of Law's new Dean and Dave Frohnmayer Chair in Leadership and Law in March 2025.



"The Oregon Law community is bold and creative. I am inspired by the law school's commitment to academic excellence and rigorous legal education within our broader mission of public service to the state, the nation, and beyond," Dean Reynolds said. "It is my honor to serve in this role, and I will dedicate myself to working with all our partners, inside and outside the law school, as we train the next generation of lawyers and leaders."

Over her 16 years at Oregon Law, Dean Reynolds has served in several leadership roles, including Interim Dean, Interim University Ombudsperson, Associate Dean for Faculty Research and Programs, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and Faculty Director for Oregon's nationally ranked, award-winning Appropriate Dispute Resolution Center.

Dean Reynolds is a much-loved teacher and national expert in dispute resolution, civil procedure, and conflict of laws. She is the former National Chair of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Section of the Association of American Law Schools. She has authored or co-authored numerous articles, casebooks, essays, book chapters, and other publications and is the co-editor of the popular *Star Wars and Conflict Resolution* series. Most recently, she was invited to join Joseph Glannon, Andrew Perlman, and Peter Raven-Hansen on the fifth edition of *Civil Procedure: A Coursebook*, one of the most prominent civil procedure casebooks in the country.

Dean Reynolds graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School, where she served as a Researcher for Wright & Miller's *Federal Practice and Procedure*, held Research Fellow and Teaching Assistant positions with the Program on Negotiation, and was Editor of the *Harvard Law Review*. Prior to joining Oregon Law, she worked in information technology at the University of Texas at Austin, was an Associate Attorney at the Atlanta-based Dow Lohnes, PLLC, served as a Visiting Associate Professor at the University of Missouri School of Law, and returned to Harvard Law School as a Visiting Professor. She has a master's degree from the University of Texas at Austin and an AB from the University of Chicago.

IMPACT OF GIVING

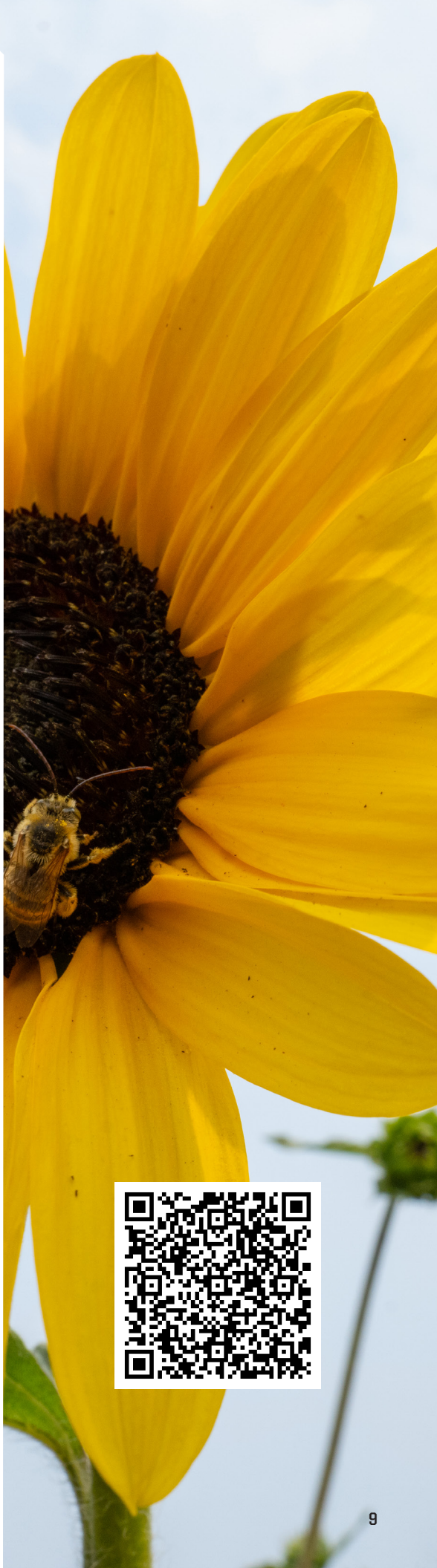
PROTECT & PRESERVE | TEACH & EMPOWER

Anyone working in the area of environmental and natural resources law knows that the word 'crisis' is a double-edged sword. When facing a crisis, people may become inspired and focused—or they may feel helpless and overwhelmed. The next generation of environmental lawyers must be equipped with the expertise and skills required to work within the complex and shifting intersections of science, politics, culture, and the law, while helping communities understand the implications of this work for their lives and the future of our planet.

For decades, Oregon Law's ENR Center has dedicated itself to producing groundbreaking research, shaping sound policy, and training new lawyers who are ready for the crises and challenges to come. With your support, our ENR Center can continue meeting the moment with courage and resolve.

Jennifer W. Reynolds
Dean
Dave Frohnmayer Chair in Leadership and Law

Each of us has a part to play in repairing and reshaping our world toward sustainability and justice. **If you have any questions about giving, please contact the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center at enr@uoregon.edu.**





History-Maker **Chuck Sams** Joins Oregon Law

The University of Oregon School of Law is honored to welcome Charles F. "Chuck" Sams III as the inaugural Oregon Tribes Scholar-in-Residence and Senior Fellow with the Native Environmental Sovereignty Project, one of seven interdisciplinary research projects housed within Oregon Law's Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center.

Sams grew up in Pendleton, Oregon. He is Cayuse and Walla Walla and an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. Sams has over three decades of experience in natural resource and conservation management and sustainable stewardship. He currently serves as Oregon Governor Tina Kotek's appointee to the Pacific Northwest Power and Conservation Council and as Co-Chair of the Oregon Environmental Restoration Fund.

During the Biden Administration, Sams made history when he became the first Indigenous person to direct the National Park Service. Throughout his tenure as Director, Sams provided transformative leadership, setting agency-wide priorities to address climate change, uphold Tribal sovereignty, and invest in the future of public lands across the United States.

Oregon Law Dean Jennifer W. Reynolds, who worked closely with the ENR Center and campus partners on Sams' appointment, said, "We are tremendously honored to have Chuck Sams join our community and advance our school's commitment to the Oregon Tribes."

As Scholar-in-Residence and Senior Fellow, Sams will share knowledge within and beyond the classroom, advise on research focused on emerging Tribal roles in co-managing lands and resources, mentor students across campus, and work to strengthen relationships with Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities in the Pacific Northwest.

"I am thrilled to have such a visionary thinker with such national stature to contribute to our innovative research," said Philip H. Knight Professor of Law Mary C. Wood, Faculty Director of the ENR Center.

FACULTY UPDATES



Sarah Adams

Assistant Professor of Law

Sarah J. Adams, "Public Health Overlay Zones," with Michelle Smith and ENR Fellows Claire Malone and Victoria Whalen, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (forthcoming).

Sarah J. Adams, "Federal Flood Policy & Maladaptation: A Story of Collective Forgetting," 34 Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal 1 (2025).

Sarah J. Adams, "Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox," 36 Stanford Law & Policy Review 47 (2025).

Sarah J. Adams, *Ocean and Coastal Law: Cases and Materials*, with Alison Rieser, Donna Christie, and Annie Brett, *West Academic Publishing* (6th Edition) (2024).

Sarah J. Adams, Presenter, "Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox," Environmental Law Professors' Online Colloquium, Virtual (February 27, 2025).

Sarah J. Adams, Presenter, "Climate Maladaptation, Land Law Localism and the Neo-Federalism Paradox," Environmental, Natural Resources & Energy Section Works-in-Progress Session, AALS Annual Meeting, Association of American Law Schools, San Francisco, CA (January 11, 2025).

Sarah J. Adams, Presenter, "Federal Flood Policy & Maladaptation," Environmental Law Professors' Online Colloquium, Virtual (September 23, 2024).



Adell Amos, JD '98

Clayton R. Hess Professor of Law
Faculty Director, UO Climate Solutions Center

Adell Amos, "Removing Obstacles to Dam Removal in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Regulation of Hydropower Projects," with Michelle Smith and ENR Fellows Samantha Blount, JD '22, Mariah Ellis, JD '22, Natalie Gillard, JD '24, and Kellie Warren, JD '23, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law (September 5, 2024).

Adell Amos, Keynote Speaker, "Living with Water: Sovereignty as a Framework for Public Rights and Interests," 8th Annual Sustainable Cities and Landscapes Conference, Association of Pacific Rim Universities, Simon Frasier University, Burnaby, Canada (June 19, 2025).

Adell Amos, Closing Speaker, "Building Our Power: Funding Climate Action and Energy Justice in Oregon," Coalition of Communities of Color, Oregon Department of Energy, UO Climate Solutions Center, and UO Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (May 29, 2025).

Adell Amos, Panelist, "Judicial and Presidential Dismantling of Administrative Capacity," Rule of Law in 2025 Webinar Series, Big Ten Law Schools, Virtual (May 28, 2025).

Adell Amos, Lecturer, "State Water Code Reform: Lessons for Oregon from Across the West," 2025 Frank and Elvira Jestrab Distinguished Lecture on Water, University of Montana School of Law, Missoula, MT (April 3, 2025).

Adell Amos, Panelist, "The Impact of the U.S. Supreme Court *Loper Bright* Decision on State Administrative Law Practice, Or, Is the Administrative Law Sky Actually Falling After *Loper Bright*?," with the Honorable Jack L. Landau, Winter CLE, Oregon State Bar Administrative Law Section, Virtual (February 21, 2025).

Adell Amos, Panelist, "The Future of Environmental Regulation—and Everything Else—After *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*," with Greg Dotson, 2024 O'Connell Conference, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (September 6, 2024).

Adell Amos, Recipient, Thomas F. Herman Faculty Achievement Award for Distinguished Teaching, University of Oregon (2025).

Adell Amos, Faculty Recipient, Pillar of the Community Award, Oregon Law Leadership Awards, University of Oregon School of Law (2025).



Howard Arnett, JD '77

Professor of Practice

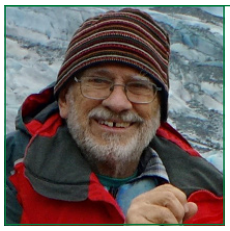
Howard Arnett, Presenter, "Treaties, Trust, and Tomorrow: Navigating the Legal Landscape of Native Lands," with Chuck Sams, *Oregon Law Perspectives Series*, University of Oregon School of Law, Virtual (August 8, 2025).

Howard Arnett, Moderator, "*Apache Stronghold v. U.S.A.*: Context, Contours, and Current Status," 43rd Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 1, 2025).

Howard Arnett, Opening Speaker, 15th Annual Indigenous Peoples Reception, 43rd Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (February 28, 2025).

Howard Arnett, Panelist, "Mapping 50 Years of United States v. Washington," with Maya Swanes, 37th Annual Indian Law Symposium, University of Washington School of Law, Seattle, WA (September 5, 2024).

FACULTY UPDATES continued



John Bonine

Bernard B. Kliks Professor of Law Emeritus

After 46 years of service, Professor Bonine retired from Oregon Law in 2024. In Summer 2025, as Chair of the Executive Board of Ukrainian public interest environmental law organization Environment-People-Law (EPL), he taught at the EPL Summer School in the Carpathian Mountains.

John Bonine, Keynote Speaker, "Creativity and Courage in Public Interest Environmental Law," 1st Annual Environmental Law Conference, University of Magdalena, Santa Marta, Colombia (April 11, 2025).



Greg Dotson, JD '95

Associate Professor of Law

Greg Dotson, "Congress's Fifty Year Mission to Transition Motor Vehicles: A Brief History of Federal Electric Vehicle Policy in the United States," 33 New York University Environmental Law Journal 93 (2025).

Greg Dotson, "Unbound by Statute: The U.S. Senate, California's Emissions Waivers, and the Congressional Review Act," Yale Journal On Regulation, Notice & Comment (June 29, 2025).

Greg Dotson, "The Budget Rule that Killed the Minimum Wage Hike Could Save Climate Policies," *The Hill* (June 18, 2025).

Greg Dotson, Comments to Bonneville Power Administration on Day-Ahead Market Draft Policy, DAM2025250140 (April 7, 2025).

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

Greg Dotson, Keynote Speaker, "Building Our Power: Funding Climate Action and Energy Justice in Oregon," Coalition of Communities of Color, Oregon Department of Energy, UO Climate Solutions Center, and UO Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (May 29, 2025).

Greg Dotson, Panelist, "EPA Deregulation Outlook," 3rd Annual Energy Policy Workshop, Walmart, Inc., Virtual (April 8, 2025).

Greg Dotson, Panelist, "Disruption vs. Stability: Impacts on People and Policy Under a New Republican Majority," Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics, University of Oregon, Virtual (February 25, 2025).

Greg Dotson, Panelist, "The Future of Environmental Regulation—and Everything Else—*After Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*," with Adell Amos, 2024 O'Connell Conference, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (September 6, 2024).



Michael Fakhri

Professor of Law

Michael Fakhri, "The Right to Food: Finance and National Action Plans – Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food," UN General Assembly (A/HRC/58/48) (2025).

Michael Fakhri, "Visit to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela – Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food," UN General Assembly (A/HRC/58/48) (2025).

Michael Fakhri, "If Aid Doesn't Enter Gaza Now, 14,000 Babies May Die. UN Peacekeepers Must Step In," *The Guardian* (May 22, 2025).

Michael Fakhri, "The Relationship Between the Right to Food and Science and Innovation," *Science, Technology, and Innovation* Blog, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (March 21, 2025).

Michael Fakhri, "The International Political Economy of the Right to Food, 1960-2019," in *Global Rights? Human Rights in Complex Governance*, Nehal Bhuta and Rodrigo Vallego (eds.), Oxford University Press (2024).

Michael Fakhri, "Israel is Weaponizing Hunger Against Palestinians. Here's How the U.S. Can Stop It," *Los Angeles Times* (October 31, 2024).

Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Palestinian Food Sovereignty and Starvation," American Constitutional Society, Portland, OR (May 14, 2025).

Michael Fakhri, Panelist, "Genocide=Ecocide," 43rd Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (February 28, 2025).

Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "The Question of Palestine," Annual Meeting, United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, New York, NY (February 5, 2025).

Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Corporate Power and Human Rights," 2025 CPILJ Symposium, Connecticut Public Interest Law Journal, University of Connecticut, Hartford, CT (January 31, 2025).

Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Palestinian Food Sovereignty and Starvation," Yale Law School, Virtual (January 30, 2025).

Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Food as a Weapon: Legal Perspectives on Palestine," Georgetown University-Qatar, Doha, Qatar (November 17, 2025).

Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Seeds of Sumoud: Palestinian Dignity and the Fight for Food Sovereignty," The New School, New York, NY (October 14, 2024).



Susan Gary

Professor Emerita

In Spring 2025, Professor Gary served as the Cheng Yu Tung Visiting Professor at the University of Hong Kong.

Susan Gary, "The Essential Investor Fiduciary Duties that Courts and Policymakers Often Miss," with Keith Johnson and Nick Zuiker, Columbia Law School *Blue Sky* Blog (June 27, 2025).

Susan Gary, "Fiduciary Investment of Charitable Assets," 59 ABA Real Property, Trust, And Estate Law Journal 269 (2024).

Susan Gary, Presenter, "Planning with Purpose: Purpose Trusts, Charitable Gifts, and Business Succession Planning," Trusts, Wealth Management, and Philanthropy Conference, University of Hong Kong, Pok Fu Lam, Hong Kong (July 4, 2025).

Susan Gary, Presenter, "Taking Care of Business – Why (and How) a Purpose Trust Might be the Answer to Your Client's Business Succession Challenges," with David Diamond and Ellen Harrison, ACTEC Annual Meeting, American College of Trust and Estate Counsel, Palm Springs, CA (March 20, 2025).

Susan Gary, Presenter, "Business Succession and Purpose Trusts – The Case of Patagonia," *Evolving Roles of Purpose Trusts: Comparative Perspectives and New Frontiers* Webinar, Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners Lugano Centre, Virtual (June 12, 2025).



Tom Lininger

Orlando John and Marian H. Hollis Professor of Law

Tom Lininger, Presenter, "The Ethical Case Against 'Virtual Captivity' for Wildlife," Animal Ethics Summer School, University of Oxford, Oxford, England (August 5, 2025).

Tom Lininger, Presenter, "Mobility and Resilience in Fire-Prone Areas of the Wildland-Urban Interface," Mobility and Resilience Conference, Columbia University, New York, NY (June 16, 2025).

Tom Lininger, Presenter, "Theorizing Wildlife Privacy," Animals and Equality Conference, Duke University School of Law, Durham, NC (October 19, 2024).



Roberta Mann

Professor Emerita

Roberta Mann, "The Long and Winding Road: The Inflation Reduction Act's Energy and Environmental Tax Credits," with Tracey Roberts, 78 National Tax Journal 223 (2025).

Roberta Mann, Presenter, "The Long and Winding Road," SELE Annual Meeting, Society for Environmental Law and Economics, European University Institute, Florence, Italy (May 29, 2025).

Roberta Mann, Panelist, "Teaching Environmental Tax," NTA Webinar, National Tax Association, Virtual (May 14, 2025).

Roberta Mann, Moderator, "Carbon Taxes and Other Pricing Proposals," Tax Law, the Environment, and Climate Change Symposium, Pace University, New York, NY (March 21, 2025).



Douglas Quirke, JD '95

ENR Research Associate

Douglas Quirke, "Pacific Northwest Framework for Atmospheric Recovery (PNW FAR)," with Mary C. Wood and Tom Housel, supported by PNW FAR Working Groups (forthcoming).



Dr. Alaí Reyes-Santos

Professor of Practice
Director, Oregon Water Equity Fund, UO Climate Solutions Center

Alaí Reyes-Santos, Facilitator and Moderator, "Building Our Power: Funding Climate Action and Energy Justice in Oregon," Coalition of Communities of Color, Oregon Department of Energy, UO Climate Solutions Center, and UO Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (May 29, 2025).

Alaí Reyes-Santos, Presenter, "Roots & Rhythms: Afrodescendencia, Indigenous Heritage, and Community Empowerment in Mexico and Puerto Rico," with Abigayle Mitchell, JD '25, CLLAS Symposium, Center for Latino/a & Latin American Studies, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (April 29, 2025).

Alaí Reyes-Santos, Keynote Speaker, "Fostering Collaboration in the Public Humanities," OSU Center for the Humanities, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK (November 20, 2024).

Alaí Reyes-Santos, Panelist, "Racial and Climate Justice," OSU Center for the Humanities, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK (November 19, 2024).

FACULTY UPDATES continued



Michelle Smith

ENR Research Associate

Michelle Smith, "Allocating In Situ Groundwater Rights in Oregon to Protect Groundwater-Dependent Ecosystems: Opportunities and Challenges," with ENR Fellows Andrew Archer, JD '25 and Max McCool, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law (forthcoming).

Michelle Smith, "An Assessment of Oregon's Drought Policies," chapter in *Oregon Drought Vulnerability Assessment*, with ENR Fellows Andrew Archer, JD '25, Natalie Gillard, JD '24, Kyle Knoll, Elizabeth Mayans, JD '24, and Caleb Todd, JD '24, Oregon Water Resources Department (forthcoming).

Michelle Smith, "Public Health Overlay Zones," with Sarah Adams and ENR Fellows Claire Malone and Victoria Whalen, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (forthcoming).

Michelle Smith, "Legal and Policy Interventions to Restore and Protect Lake Abert," with ENR Fellows Andrew Archer, JD '25, Natalie Gillard, JD '24, Kyle Knoll, Elizabeth Mayans, JD '24, and Caleb Todd, JD '24, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law (October 1, 2024).

Michelle Smith, "Removing Obstacles to Dam Removal in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Regulation of Hydropower Projects," with Adell Amos and ENR Fellows Samantha Blount, JD '22, Mariah Ellis, JD '22, Natalie Gillard, JD '24, and Kellie Warren, JD '23, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law (September 5, 2024).



Andy Winden

Assistant Professor of Law

Andrew Winden, "Regulation by Indexation?," 2024 Columbia Business Law Review 727 (2025).

Andrew Winden, Presenter, "Governance by Trust," National Business Law Scholars Conference, University of California, Los Angeles School of Law, Los Angeles, CA (June 25, 2025).

Andrew Winden, Opening Speaker, "Sustainable Transportation: Driving the Future of Green Business," Annual Green Business Symposium, UO Green Business Initiative, University of Oregon, Portland, OR (April 11, 2025).

Andrew Winden, Panelist, "Aligning Form & Governance for Climate Outcomes," Corporate + Climate Summit, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, CA (March 11, 2025).

Andrew Winden, Panelist, "Transactional and Comparative Corporate Climate Duties," The New Climate Fiduciaries Colloquium, Columbia University Law School, New York, NY (February 21, 2025).



Mary C. Wood

Philip H. Knight Professor of Law
Faculty Director, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center

Mary C. Wood, "Pacific Northwest Framework for Atmospheric Recovery (PNW FAR)," with Tom Housel and Douglas Quirke, supported by PNW FAR Working Groups (forthcoming).

Mary C. Wood, "The Children's Lawsuits: Building a Global Movement in Law and Society," Washington And Lee Law Review (forthcoming).

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* (August 2025).

Mary C. Wood, "Examining State Climate Superfund Legislation," with Rachel Rothschild, Jonathan Binder, Elena Mihaly, Justin Mankin, and Ben Lippard, 55 Environmental Law Reporter 10251 (June 2025).

Mary C. Wood, Presenter, "Atmospheric NRD Litigation," with ENR Fellows Daniel Billick and Corinne Gibson, JD '25, VLS Energy and Environmental Law Society Meeting, Vanderbilt University Law School, Virtual (April 8, 2025).

Mary C. Wood, Panelist, "Examining State Climate Superfund Bills," with Jonathan Binder, Elena Mihaly, Justin Mankin, and Ben Lippard, moderated by Rachel Rothschild, ELI Webinar, Environmental Law Institute, Virtual (March 19, 2025).

Mary C. Wood, Panelist, "Youth-Powered Litigation and Global Constitutionalism," Lara D. Gass Symposium on Women in the Law: Children and Constitutions in the Anthropocene Era, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA (March 7, 2025).

Mary C. Wood, Moderator, "Fulfilling a Covenant: Stewardship of America's Best Idea – The Intersection of Indigenous Knowledge and the 1916 Organic Act" by Chuck Sams, 18th Annual Rennard Strickland Lecture, Native Environmental Sovereignty Project, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law, Virtual (October 24, 2024).

Meeting the Moment: Dotson Joins State Advisory Bodies to Defend Oregon's Future



Associate Professor Greg Dotson, JD '95, is a national expert on climate and energy policy with two decades of experience working on Capitol Hill.

In December 2024, he was among 13 leaders in law, policy, and public service named by Oregon Attorney General Dan Rayfield to the Federal Oversight and Accountability Cabinet, a new advisory group assembled to defend Oregonians' rights and values. With Oregon House Speaker Julie Fahey, Professor Dotson participated in the first event in the Cabinet's statewide town hall series, *Safeguarding Oregon: Federal Oversight Forums*. "These forums will create an ongoing dialogue with Oregonians about federal accountability and how we're working to protect their rights," said Rayfield.

In Spring 2025, Professor Dotson expanded his service to the state and its residents with his acceptance of another critical appointment to the Oregon Climate Action Commission. As a Commissioner, he will support the Commission's work to track trends in greenhouse gas emissions, recommend ways to coordinate state and local efforts to reduce emissions, and help prepare communities for the effects of climate change.

"I'm proud of the work our state officials have done to tackle our environmental and energy challenges... there is always more to be done though, and I'm happy to help however I can."

– Greg Dotson, Associate Professor of Law

REWARDING WORK: AMOS AWARDED HIGHEST HONOR FOR EXCEPTIONAL TEACHING



Clayton R. Hess Professor of Law Adell Amos, JD '98, has been part of Oregon Law's faculty—teaching across water law and policy, federal administrative law, and environmental conflict resolution—for 20 years."

Her students call her "a superstar" and "unquestionably irreplaceable."

In Spring 2025, the University of Oregon recognized Professor Amos with its highest honor for educators, the Thomas F. Herman Faculty Achievement Award for Distinguished Teaching.

The Herman Award goes annually to a senior instructor or faculty member who has demonstrated longstanding excellence in teaching, including through their significant contributions to student learning outcomes.

Informed by her extensive experience in government practice, Professor Amos' pedagogy centers practical skill-building. Through courses like *Interviewing & Counseling*, she helps prepare students for real-world lawyering.

"The real honor is being an educator," Professor Amos said. "It is humbling to get to play a role in shaping the legal minds that will shape the legal landscape of tomorrow."

QUOTES OF NOTE



"Adaptation strategies that center justice and disrupt dominant paradigms that entrench inequity and maladaptation are more likely to increase the capacity of communities writ large to maintain their core structures and functions as the climate continues to destabilize."

– Sarah J. Adams, "Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox," 36 Stanford Law & Policy Review 47 (2025).



"My hope is that we can respond to the call for good government and engage the enterprise of State and Tribal governments to discharge what I would call the constitutional duty assigned to those sovereigns to enact, interpret, and enforce water law and policy to meet the current and future needs of all Oregonians."

– Adell Amos, "State Water Code Reform: Lessons for Oregon from Across the West," 2025 Frank and Elvira Jestrab Distinguished Lecture on Water, University of Montana School of Law, Missoula, MT (April 3, 2025).



"If Apache Stronghold–if the facts of the case: the destruction of this bona fide [...] sacred site, the only place in the world that the Apache religion could be practiced–doesn't constitute a constitutional claim or a RFRA (Religious Freedom and Restoration Act) claim, then nothing does."

– Howard Arnett, "Treaties, Trust, and Tomorrow: Navigating the Legal Landscape of Native Lands," with Chuck Sams, Oregon Law Perspectives Series, University of Oregon School of Law, Virtual (August 8, 2025).



"Nothing is impossible. There is no box to limit your imagination."

– John Bonine, "Creativity and Courage in Public Interest Environmental Law," 1st Annual Environmental Law Conference, University of Magdalena, Santa Marta, Colombia (April 11, 2025).



"In the wake of the Supreme Court cases *West Virginia v. EPA and Loper Bright Enterprises et al. v. Raimondo*–decisions that counsel a measure of skepticism about Executive agencies' authority–it is worth detailing Congress's continued engagement in EPA's regulations. Congress did not grant the agency broad authority and then sit idly by as EPA issued emissions standards encouraging electric vehicles. Rather, Congress maintains an important oversight role of the agency's regulatory actions..."

– Greg Dotson, "Congress's Fifty Year Mission to Transition Motor Vehicles: A Brief History of Federal Electric Vehicle Policy in the United States," 33 NEW YORK UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENTAL LAW JOURNAL 93 (2025).



"The challenge with transforming food systems is not a scarcity of food, but a resistance to reconfiguring power relations in food systems in the spirit of solidarity, care, and respect for all life."

– Michael Fakhri, "The Right to Food: Finance and National Action Plans – Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food," UN General Assembly (A/HRC/58/48) (2025).



"A business operated sustainably, with concern for its environmental impact, can continue to operate in a way that minimizes environmental harm, even if doing so reduces financial profit."

– Susan Gary, "Business Succession Planning Using a Purpose Trust, The FinReg Blog, Duke Financial Economics Center (December 13, 2023).



"Thoughtful policies also support voluntary action, which is essential to building a sustainable relationship with water resources."

– Michelle Smith, "Legal and Policy Interventions to Restore and Protect Lake Abert," with ENR Fellows Andrew Archer,JD '25, Natalie Gillard, JD '24, Kyle Knoll, Elizabeth Mayans, JD '24, and Caleb Todd, JD '24, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law (October 1, 2024).



"Shareholder primacy and shareholder wealth maximization are enforced under corporate law through two processes: lawsuits against directors for breach of fiduciary duties and elections of directors by shareholders. Benefit corporations address the first but not the second. Governance by trust, recently utilized by Patagonia and other firms, addresses both, giving corporations a clearer path to managing for purpose as well as profits."

– Andrew Winden, "Governance by Trust," National Business Law Scholars Conference, University of California, Los Angeles School of Law, Los Angeles, CA (June 25, 2025).



"It would take a century, but we can potentially go back to a world of climate stability that many of us grew up in – and took for granted."

– Mary C. Wood, "Trailblazing Legal Scholar Aims to Clean Up the Carbon Spill in the Sky," featured by Ed Dorsch, Oregon News (July 2, 2025).

AUTHOR IN QUESTION

Federal Flood Policy & Maladaptation: A Story of Collective Forgetting

with Assistant Professor Sarah Adams



Q: Why did you decide to focus on federal flood policy and climate adaptation?

Adams: Flood disasters devastate communities—they destroy homes, businesses, schools, cultural institutions, and critical infrastructure. Expected annual flood damages to homes with federally backed mortgages already exceed $10 billion, a daunting figure that accounts for a mere fraction of the annual economic burden of flooding in the United States. Recovering from this damage and loss can take communities years, or even generations.

The role anthropogenic climate change plays in this tragedy is widely recognized—albeit politically contentious. Every increment of global warming contributes to more frequent and severe weather disasters, pushing us closer to thresholds that threaten the core functioning of communities. The biggest driver of the sharply rising cost of flood disasters over the next 25 years, however, is continued development of flood-prone areas and the laws and policies encouraging it.

Your article includes a detailed history of federal flood policy. Why is that history relevant today?

Adams: Since its inception 175 years ago, federal flood policy has encouraged development that increases flood hazards and exposes more communities to those hazards—in other words, maladaptive development. An historical analysis reveals that the same features of federal flood policy that drove rising disaster costs in the 19th century are still at work today. This helps explain why the social, ecological, and economic toll of floods keeps growing despite massive investments in flood mitigation, providing essential context for recent flooding in Texas and other places across the country. The history also provides a critical lens for assessing whether proposed reforms are likely to increase communities' resilience to flood hazards.

You call the history of U.S. flood policy and maladaptation "a story of collective forgetting." What has been forgotten?

Adams: Two key features of flood policy history have been forgotten, so to speak. The first is that over the course of four presidential administrations, a bipartisan collaboration of federal agencies, legislators, state and local officials, and floodplain scientists came to realize that the federal policy's facilitation of floodplain development "was itself the problem."

The second is that the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (NFIA), which created the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), responded to this reckoning by attempting to shift the paradigm of federal flood policy away from development accommodation. To do this, Congress structured the NFIP as a federal benefits program that uses subsidized flood insurance as a powerful incentive for communities to use their land use lawmaking authority to strictly limit new development in flood hazard areas; gradually shift vulnerable development out of those areas; and protect the natural features of floodplains that help mitigate flood damage—three strategies for increasing flood resilience now referred to as hazard area avoidance, managed retreat, and the preservation of ecosystem services. Contrary to the prevailing understanding, Congress never intended the NFIP to be primarily an insurance program.

Did the NFIA successfully shift the paradigm away from development accommodation?

Adams: No. It did just the opposite. It enticed even more widespread maladaptive development, put more pressure on local governments to approve risky development, and increased the already untenable costs of flood disasters. Through the NFIA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) adopted eligibility criteria—or, "floodplain management standards"—so myopically focused on the structural resilience of buildings that they are often referred to as minimum building code standards. The standards allow development throughout the floodplain, even in coastal areas subject to high velocity wave action and in areas projected to be uninhabitable within 50 years.

You explain in your article that Congress warned about the moral hazard of partial implementation of the NFIP—would eliminating federal flood insurance address this hazard?

Adams: Many people think eliminating federal flood insurance or increasing premiums to accurately reflect risk, which FEMA's new Risk Rating 2.0 pricing methodology purports to do, is the only rational way forward. But eliminating federal flood insurance would remove an integral part of the program Congress designed to provide sufficiently powerful incentives for communities to amend their land use laws to guide development out of harm's way.

Such a blunt measure would also leave billions of dollars of assets in the floodplain uninsured, further destabilize housing markets, and upend the lives of the millions of low- and middle-income Americans who live in homes and own businesses they couldn't afford if required by their mortgage lenders to obtain market-rate flood insurance.

You suggest the failure to implement this attribute of the NFIA is largely responsible for the enormous social, economic, and ecological costs of flood disasters. Are you saying that communities won't be resilient until they stop developing the floodplain and require buildings and people in the floodplain to relocate?

Adams: Yes and no. The research leaves no doubt that significant limits on new development in hazardous areas and proactive relocation of some existing homes, businesses, and even communities are essential parts of the resilience puzzle. However, cookie-cutter strategies like complete development bans or forced relocation can perpetuate injustices and exacerbate existing vulnerabilities. For example, strict limits on development that aren't coupled with effective strategies for meeting local housing needs within existing city boundaries can push homeownership and rental costs higher; increase economic and racial disparities; and contribute to cities sprawling into unmapped flood hazard areas, forestlands, and other areas with heightened natural hazard risks, diminishing those areas' capacity to sequester carbon and provide essential habitat to diverse species.

What reforms do you recommend to increase climate resilience?

Adams: I conclude my article with a suggested framework for amending the floodplain management standards consistent with several objectives that can exist in tension but are nevertheless essential features of effective and equitable adaptive land use planning and regulation. These include the need for accountability measures and limits on local discretion; sufficient flexibility for communities to shape their land use regulations consistent with local knowledge, values, and needs; and assessment measures to identify and amend reform strategies that disparately allocate resilience benefits to the most privileged community members while disproportionately burdening historically marginalized communities.

What are some of the biggest obstacles to increasing communities' adaptation thresholds?

Adams: For nearly two centuries, flood policy at every level of government has been driven by powerful structural forces: state and local dependence on development-related revenue; the role of land speculation, ownership, and development as sources of wealth and power; and the persistence of sprawling, inequitable urban development patterns. These forces are reinforced and entrenched by the proprietary and exclusionary values embedded in American land law, which continue to obstruct effective reform.

In "Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox," a companion to this article, I propose a collaborative governance framework designed to strengthen communities' capacity to confront these structural and political barriers to adaptation. Nearly two centuries of injustice and maladaptation cast doubt on the optimism inherent in these reforms. Yet the upward trajectory of risk and inequity; the successes of some communities; and the dedication of law students, climate researchers, community activists, land use practitioners, public officials, and civil servants—including many current and former FEMA staff—make complacency untenable.





Trailblazing Legal Scholar Aims to Clean Up the Carbon Spill in the Sky

BY ED DORSCH



Philip H. Knight Professor of Law Mary Christina Wood is a fifth-generation Oregonian who grew up exploring the Northwest's natural wonders.

But in her teens, she witnessed the farms, forests, and wetlands she remembered from childhood decimated by urban sprawl.

That experience transformed her, bolstering a conviction that the present generation has a duty to conserve for future generations the natural inheritance that is key to human survival and well-being.

After graduating from Stanford Law School, Professor Wood served as a judicial clerk on the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, practiced environmental law, then joined the UO School of Law in 1991.

Her 2014 book *Nature's Trust: Environmental Law for a New Ecological Age* made the case for a duty to future generations based on the ancient legal principle of public trust. It also introduced a new legal approach called atmospheric trust litigation (ATL).

That legal strategy asserts that the atmosphere, like other resources required for human survival, is a public trust resource that the government must protect.

Professor Wood doesn't litigate cases. Instead, she breaks legal trail, creating strategies for lawyers to consider.

Her ATL strategy was put into practice in 2010 by petitions and court cases filed on behalf of youth across the U.S. by the Eugene-based nonprofit Our Children's Trust.

Juliana v. United States, the landmark climate lawsuit filed in 2015 through that nonprofit, challenged U.S. fossil fuel policies. In March 2025, the Supreme Court declined an appeal, ending that decade-long legal effort of 21 youth plaintiffs, most of whom are now adults.

But the *Juliana* case had widespread impact, shifting the climate conversation to focus on children's rights.

It inspired many other cases, including successful lawsuits in Montana and South Korea, and a groundbreaking settlement in Hawai'i.

Professor Wood is developing a new set of legal blueprints she hopes others will use to bring about climate recovery. Those would give plaintiffs and judges a way to apply liability law to pay for cleaning up what Professor Wood calls the "carbon spill in the sky."

Her recent article in the *Vermont Journal of Environmental Law*, titled "Sky Carbon Cleanup and Biodiversity Restoration: Devising Regional Frameworks," explains that new concept. The Environmental Law Institute named it among the top 20 environmental law articles published in 2024-25.

Professor Wood is the founding director of Oregon Law's Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center. She teaches property, natural resources, public trust, and federal Indian law.



> "It would take a century, but we can potentially go back to a world of climate stability that many of us grew up in – and took for granted."
>
> – Mary Christina Wood, Philip H. Knight Professor of Law

Climate Change Q&A with Professor Mary C. Wood

How bad is climate change, and how do you stay hopeful?

It would take a century, but we can potentially go back to a world of climate stability that many of us grew up in – and took for granted. A world without the record-smashing wildfires, floods, and hurricanes. However, the clock is ticking. An overwhelming majority of scientists say we need to reduce the current atmospheric carbon dioxide level of 420 parts per million to 350. Pre-industrial levels were approximately 280. If the planet heats up too much, nature's powerful feedback loops will start to take over. Think of it as approaching the climate cliff. We haven't fallen over just yet. The good news is that we have a feasible pathway to decarbonize in time. And over the past few years, society has started to head in the right direction, away from fossil fuels.

What's the status of your latest climate change legal strategy?

I'm working with four ENR Fellows to draft a framework for harnessing natural, land-based climate solutions throughout our region. It's called the "Pacific Northwest Framework for Atmospheric Recovery." We spent years researching and developing it, including working sessions involving scientists, rural communities, Tribal representatives, and others from Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Simultaneously, I'm talking to other law schools and encouraging them to create frameworks for their regions.

How is this different from reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

As we decrease the CO_2 we're releasing into the sky, we also need to remove CO_2 from our atmosphere. Think of it like an oil spill in the ocean. Of course, you fix the hole in the ship, tow it away, and maybe mandate stronger, safer oil tankers. But you also have to clean up the oil spill! We must remove the legacy carbon that's in the sky now, at least 150 gigatons. That legacy carbon, not the carbon of tomorrow, is causing climate havoc around the world right now.

So how do we get all that carbon out of the sky?

Better land management and conservation can advance the effort tremendously by using nature's own engines to pull carbon out of the air and store it in plants and soils. We have disrupted these natural processes by clearcutting forests; destroying estuaries, wetlands, and grasslands; and degrading soil through industrial agriculture. Natural Climate Solution projects, as they are called, essentially turbocharge nature's engines by restoring the ecotypes that are known to draw down carbon and store it. These are the most researched, cost-effective, and scalable of all our current options. For example, the Northwest's mature Douglas fir forests are known as the Amazon of North America because of their ability to store carbon. Some scientists estimate that these solutions, if maximized throughout the U.S., could sequester an amount approaching 21 percent of our country's net annual emissions.

How do you get people to act?

In our strategy, awards from litigation would fund "sky trusts" that would, in turn, compensate land managers for undertaking voluntary carbon sequestration projects. Ultimately, we hope the benefits, financial and otherwise, will inspire foresters, farmers, ranchers, Tribes, and communities to participate. These projects tend to offer benefits well beyond carbon sequestration. They can boost biodiversity, secure critical water supplies, promote water retention in farm fields, make communities more resilient against flooding, and more.

Read the full article at news.uoregon.edu/trailblazing-legal-scholar-aims-clean-carbon-sky



INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PROJECTS AND FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center's research arm is flexed around seven thematic Interdisciplinary Research Projects (IRPs), each targeting an area of critical socioecological importance. Grounded in faculty strengths, IRPs promote outcome-driven collaboration and impactful community engagement around today's most pressing climate-and-justice challenges.

Conservation Trust Project

Focusing on public trust theory and private property tools to achieve landscape conservation.
Faculty Leaders: Professor Mary C. Wood

Energy Law and Policy Project

Exploring innovative law and policy to promote a sustainable energy future.
Faculty Leaders: Professor Greg Dotson

Food Sovereignty Project

Working with Indigenous peoples and community-based organization to pursue more equitable and just food systems.
Faculty Leaders: Professors Michael Fakhri and Mary C. Wood

Global Environmental Democracy Project

Preparing students to become advocates for global change.
Faculty Leaders: Professor Mary C. Wood

Native Environmental Sovereignty Project

Examining traditional and emerging Tribal roles in comanaging 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 development in our communities.
Faculty Leaders: Professor Sarah Adams

ENR Fellows

Each year, the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center stewards several 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 socioecological challenges of our day.

WELCOME, 2025-2026 FELLOWS



Conservation Trust Project

Drew Anderson
Daniel Billick
Chloe Carothers-Liske

Energy Law and Policy Project

Chelsea Dobbin
Alexis Hernandez
Brenton Riddle

Food Resiliency 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
Maxwell McCool
James Meschia

Sustainable Land Use Project

Stephen Cornwall
Claire Sebree

THANK YOU, 2024-2025 FELLOWS



Conservation Trust Project

Daniel Billick
Elizabeth Wiggans

Energy Law and Policy Project

Chelsea Dobbin
Alexis Hernandez
Brenton Riddle
Tristan Tellier

Food Resiliency Project

Clark Barlowe

Global Environmental Democracy Project

Corinne Gibson
Dana McHenry

Native Environmental Sovereignty Project

Kiyava Deville
Oprah Jerome
Alexander Shadle

Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project

Andrew Archer
Maxwell McCool
James Meschia

Sustainable Land Use Project

Claire Malone

CONSERVATION TRUST

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



Research Highlights

- Employing public trust principles to promote the protection of forestlands
- Exploring efforts to hold polluters accountable through atmospheric trust litigation

Recent Publications

- Mary C. Wood, "The Children's Lawsuits: Building a Global Movement in Law and Society," Washington And Lee Law Review (forthcoming).
- 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* (August 2025).

Conferences and Events

- Mary C. Wood, Panelist, "Youth-Powered Litigation and Global Constitutionalism," Lara D. Gass Symposium on Women in the Law: Children and Constitutions in the Anthropocene Era, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA (March 7, 2025).

FELLOW FEATURE



Liz Wiggans, JD '25 was teaching middle school science on Hawai'i Island when she witnessed an environmental catastrophe—the Kapūkakī (Red Hill) fuel facility leak of 2021—that prompted a career change. As more than 19,000 gallons of jet fuel seeped into Oahu's aquifers, Wiggans recognized gaps in the law and policy were leaving communities like hers vulnerable. She decided to apply to law school.

"I was drawn to Oregon Law by its distinctive integration of public interest and environmental law," she said. The work of faculty experts within the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center was also a major draw.

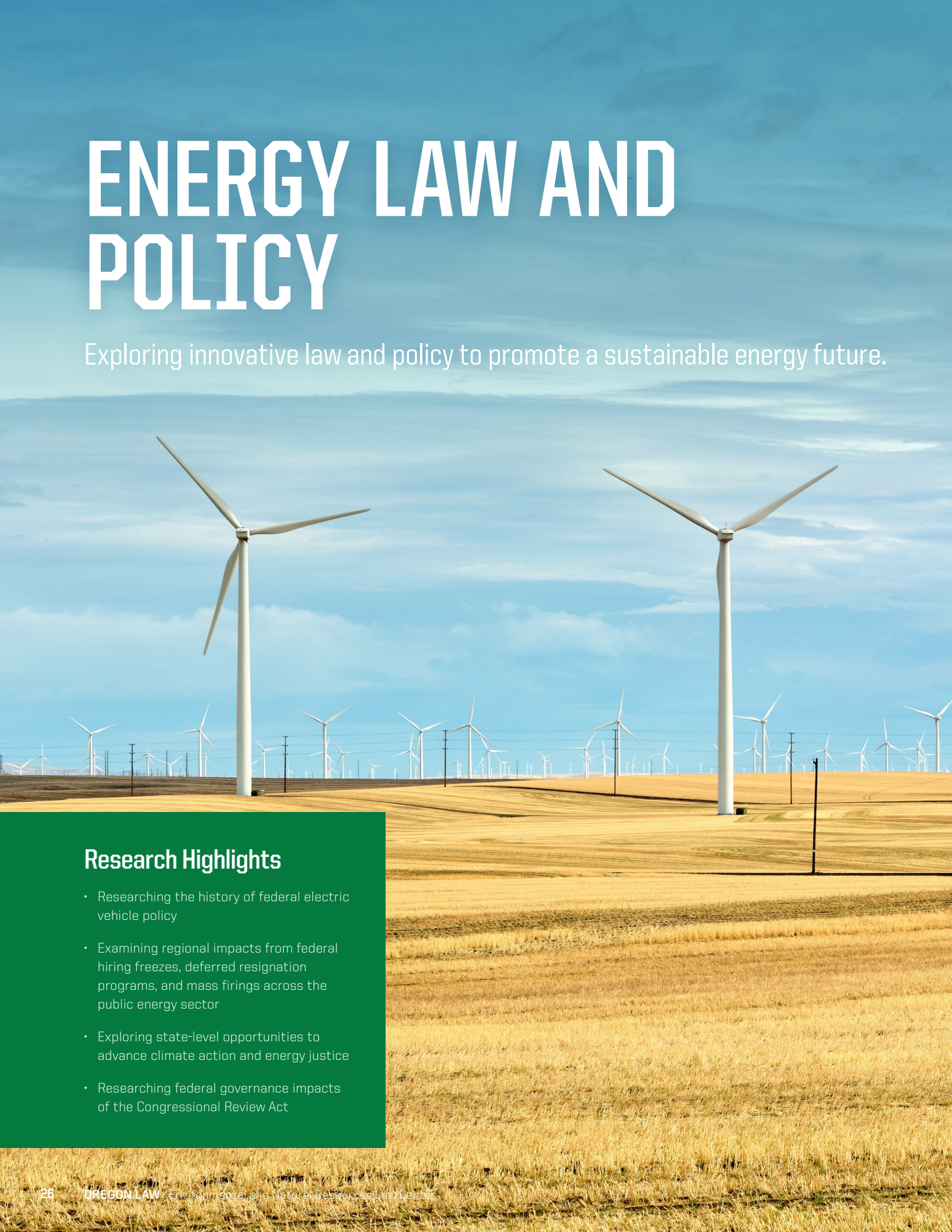
"Professor Adell Amos' scholarship on water law and governance offered a rigorous framework for understanding how legal systems manage—and sometimes fail to manage—essential resources," Wiggans said. "And Professor Greg Dotson's experience with the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works illustrated how legal training could translate into concrete environmental policy outcomes at the national level."

During law school, Wiggans focused on the constitutional dimensions of environmental protection, applying her knowledge of Hawai'i's Public Trust Doctrine. She worked with the Sierra Club, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, and the U.S. Senate. She also completed an ENR Fellowship with the Conservation Trust Project, where, with the leadership of Philip H. Knight Professor of Law Mary C. Wood, she contributed to the forthcoming "Pacific Northwest Framework for Atmospheric Recovery" and a public trust treatise.

Now entering the legal workforce as a JD, Wiggans carries forward an important lesson from her time at Oregon Law. "I've learned environmental law is not just about statutes and regulations," she said. "It's about securing a livable future. It's about our shared responsibility to sustain the world that sustains us all."

ENERGY LAW AND POLICY

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



Research Highlights

- Researching the history of federal electric vehicle policy
- Examining regional impacts from federal hiring freezes, deferred resignation programs, and mass firings across the public energy sector
- Exploring state-level opportunities to advance climate action and energy justice
- Researching federal governance impacts of the Congressional Review Act

Recent Publications

- Greg Dotson, "Congress' Fifty Year Mission to Transition Motor Vehicles: A Brief History of Federal Electric Vehicle Policy in the United States," 33 New York University Environmental Law Journal 93 (2025).
- Greg Dotson, "Unbound by Statute: The U.S. Senate, California's Emissions Waivers, and the Congressional Review Act," Yale Journal On Regulation, Notice & Comment (June 29, 2025).
- Greg Dotson, "The Budget Rule that Killed the Minimum Wage Hike Could Save Climate Policies," *The Hill* (June 18, 2025).
- Greg Dotson, Comments to Bonneville Power Administration on Day-Ahead Market Draft Policy, DAM2025250140 (April 7, 2025).

Conferences and Events

- Greg Dotson, Keynote Speaker, "Building Our Power: Funding Climate Action and Energy Justice in Oregon," Coalition of Communities of Color, Oregon Department of Energy, UO Climate Solutions Center, and UO Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (May 29, 2025).
- Greg Dotson, Panelist, "Disruption vs. Stability: Impacts on People and Policy Under a New Republican Majority," Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics, University of Oregon, Virtual (February 25, 2025).
- Greg Dotson, Panelist, "The Future of Environmental Regulation—and Everything Else—After *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*," with Adell Amos, 2024 O'Connell Conference, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (September 6, 2024).

In the News

- Greg Dotson, "The Republican Campaign to Stop the U.S. EPA from Protecting the Climate," quoted by Dana Nuccitelli, *Yale Climate Connections* (August 1, 2025).
- Greg Dotson, "How Republican E.V. Cuts Could Put U.S. Carmakers Behind China," quoted by Jack Ewing, *The New York Times* (July 2, 2025).
- Greg Dotson, "Republicans Propose a New Way to Scrap Fuel Economy Rules: No Fines," quoted by Jack Ewing and Brad Plumer, *The New York Times* (June 26, 2025).
- Greg Dotson, "Trump Seeks to Halt State, Local Climate Laws, Puts Oregon Mandates at Risk," quoted by Gosia Wozniacka, *The Oregonian* (April 9, 2025).
- Greg Dotson, "'Unleash American Blackouts': Experts Warn Bonneville Job Cuts Bring Immediate and Long-Term Risks to Pacific Northwest," quoted by Kyra Buckley, *Oregon Public Broadcasting* (February 20, 2025).
- Greg Dotson, "Oregon's Incoming Attorney General Announces 'Cabinet' to Strategize Trump Response," featured by Dirk VanderHart, *Oregon Public Broadcasting* (December 19, 2024).



ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT

Cora Sutherland, JD '23 has taken on a new role as a Staff Attorney with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

Previously, she served as the Interim Assistant Director of the Center for Water Policy within the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's School of Freshwater Sciences. In that position, she advanced the Center's research mission, fostered staff development, and managed financial planning and grant writing. Sutherland started at the Center for Water Policy as a Water Policy Specialist and Sea Grant Water Science-Policy Fellow, focusing her research primarily on Great Lakes offshore wind energy and coastal resilience.

Her passion for identifying legal and policy solutions to address environmental and energy challenges—which began with her undergraduate studies in Environmental Sciences, Policy, and Management at the University of Minnesota—is what brought her to Oregon Law.

As a law student, Sutherland was active with the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center as an ENR Fellow with the Energy Law and Policy Project (ELPP). Her work with the ELPP focused on the Clean Air Act amendments and Climate Pollution Reduction Grants provisions of the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act.

In addition to serving as a tutor in Oregon Law's first-rate Legal Research and Writing Program, Sutherland clerked for the Oregon Public Utility Commission and participated in the Environmental Law Clinic. She graduated with top honors and as a member of the prestigious Order of the Coif.

"Working on environmental law and policy issues in my ENR Fellowship was a source of motivation for me in law school," she said. "It helped me build the knowledge and skills I've relied on regularly since graduating."

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

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



Research Highlights

- Examining systemic political violence as the primary cause of global hunger and starvation
- Exploring opportunities to advance Indigenous food sovereignty in Kalapuya Ilihi
- Co-creating index of native plants growing at UO Many Nations Longhouse

Recent Publications

- Michael Fakhri, "The Right to Food: Finance and National Action Plans – Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food," UN General Assembly (A/HRC/58/48) (2025).
- Michael Fakhri, "Visit to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela – Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food," UN General Assembly (A/HRC/58/48) (2025).
- Michael Fakhri, "The Relationship Between the Right to Food and Science and Innovation," *Science, Technology, and Innovation* Blog, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (March 21, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, "The International Political Economy of the Right to Food, 1960-2019," in *Global Rights? Human Rights in Complex Governance*, Nehal Bhuta and Rodrigo Vallego (eds.), *Oxford University Press* (2024).

Conferences and Events

- Michael Fakhri, Presenter," Palestinian Food Sovereignty and Starvation," American Constitutional Society, Portland, OR (May 14, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, Panelist, "Genocide=Ecocide," 43rd Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (February 28, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "The Question of Palestine," Annual Meeting, United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, New York, NY (February 5, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Corporate Power and Human Rights," 2025 CPILJ Symposium, Connecticut Public Interest Law Journal, University of Connecticut, Hartford, CT (January 31, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Palestinian Food Sovereignty and Starvation," Yale Law School, Virtual (January 30, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Food as a Weapon: Legal Perspectives on Palestine," Georgetown University-Qatar, Doha, Qatar (November 17, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, Presenter, "Seeds of Sumoud: Palestinian Dignity and the Fight for Food Sovereignty," The New School, New York, NY (October 14, 2024).

In the News

- Michael Fakhri, "'No One Should Act Surprised,' Says UN Expert Who Warned of Starvation in Gaza Last Year," featured by Nina Lakhani, *The Guardian* (August 4, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, "UN Experts Welcome Recognition by International Court of Justice that All States Must Protect the Climate System," featured, UN Media Center, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner (July 28, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, "UN Experts Warn of Deliberate Starvation, Rising Attacks on Aid Workers in Conflict Zones," quoted by Beyza Binnur Donmez, *Anadolu Ajansı* (June 26, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, "Send In Armed UN Troops to Protect Aid Convoys or Risk 'Dystopia,' Says Expert," quoted by Mark Townsend, *The Guardian* (June 16, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, "UN Says Famine Stalks All in Gaza; Israel Shoots, Wounds Aid Seekers," quoted, *Al Jazeera* (May 30, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, "Thirteen Killed, Dozens Under Rubble as Israel Bombs Gaza Amid Food Crisis," quoted, *Al Jazeera* (April 26, 2025).
- Michael Fakhri, "As Gaza Faces Starvation, Food Rights Expert Tells Third Committee 'You Did Not Act' on Genocide Risk," quoted, *Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*, United Nations (October 18, 2024).



ENR Fellows Clark Barlowe, JD '25, and Oprah Jerome, JD '25, help plant a pollinator garden at Tel-tvm', the farm at the center of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians' food sovereignty work.

FELLOW FEATURE



Clark Barlowe, JD '25 holding wild-foraged mushrooms at his former restaurant, Heirloom.

Photo: Todd Sumlin, *The Charlotte Observer*, 2016.

Clark Barlowe, JD '25 began his journey to law school by advocating to legalize the sale of foraged foods in his home state of North Carolina. Engaging with the legislative process as an activist inspired him to leave a 17-year career in the restaurant industry—as a chef, Barlowe competed on the Food Network's *Beat Bobby Flay* and *Chopped* and ran a "farm-to-fork" restaurant called Heirloom—to pursue a legal education.

At Oregon Law, Barlowe maintained the teamwork and leadership skills, creativity, and competitive spirit that helped him succeed as a chef and restauranteur. He served as an Associate Justice on the Constitutional Court of the Associated Students of the University of Oregon; 1L Representative and then Secretary of the Native American Law Students Association (NALSA); and Competing Member—competing three times in the National NALSA Moot Court Competition—on Oregon Law's Moot Court Board. In 2024, he won *The Closer*, Baylor University School of Law's prestigious transactional law competition.

Barlowe also engaged variously with the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center, serving as an ENR Fellow with both the Native Environmental Sovereignty Project and the newly launched Food Sovereignty Project (formerly the Food Resiliency Project). Additionally, he participated in a new field placement program jointly sponsored by the ENR Center and the Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics, serving as a Law Fellow with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians in Summer 2024.

"Being a Fellow with the ENR Center was one of my most fulfilling experiences in law school," Barlowe said. "Working with Professor Fakhri, Professor Arnett, and Professor Wood taught me more than just how to be a lawyer; it taught me ways to truly change the world for the better."

Venturing forth with his law degree and an interest in environmental and natural resources law, Indian Law, and business law, Barlowe remains committed to improving communities' access to traditional and local foods. He gives cooking demonstrations at local farmers markets, shares produce from his own farm, and leads mushroom foraging workshops on the Oregon Coast.

"I am grateful for all the opportunities the ENR Center and staff provided me with and look forward to paying these experiences forward as I embark on my legal career."





GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL DEMOCRACY

Preparing students to be advocates for global change.

Research Highlights

- Devising a regional framework to advance natural climate solutions (NCS) across Pacific Northwest forestlands, farmlands, ranges and grasslands, and blue- and teal-carbon ecosystems
- Exploring opportunities to advance carbon sequestration and drawdown through Climate Superfund legislation

Recent Publications

- Mary C. Wood, "Pacific Northwest Framework for Atmospheric Recovery (PNW FAR)," with Tom Housel and Douglas Quirke, supported by PNW FAR Working Groups (forthcoming).
- Mary C. Wood, "Examining State Climate Superfund Legislation," with Rachel Rothschild, Jonathan Binder, Elena Mihaly, Justin Mankin, and Ben Lippard, 55 Environmental Law Reporter 10251 (June 2025).

Conferences and Events

- Mary C. Wood, Presenter, "Atmospheric NRD Litigation," with ENR Fellows Daniel Billick and Corinne Gibson, JD '25, VLS Energy and Environmental Law Society Meeting, Vanderbilt University Law School, Virtual (April 8, 2025).
- Mary C. Wood, Panelist, "Examining State Climate Superfund Bills," with Jonathan Binder, Elena Mihaly, Justin Mankin, and Ben Lippard, moderated by Rachel Rothschild, ELI Webinar, Environmental Law Institute, Virtual (March 19, 2025).

In the News

- Mary C. Wood, "Trailblazing Legal Scholar Aims to Clean Up the Carbon Spill in the Sky," featured by Ed Dorsch, *Oregon News* (July 2, 2025).
- Mary C. Wood, "Top 20 Articles for ELPAR 2024-2025," featured for "Sky Carbon Cleanup and Biodiversity Restoration: Devising Regional Frameworks" [25 Vermont Journal Of Environmental Law 209], *Environmental Law and Policy Annual Review*, Environmental Law Reporter, Environmental Law Institute and Vanderbilt University Law School (January 8, 2025).





NATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL SOVEREIGNTY

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

Research Highlights

- Exploring context and potential consequences of federal and corporate efforts to develop a ruinous copper mine on Chi'chil Bildagoteel (Oak Flat), a site of unique cultural, spiritual, and ceremonial significance to Apache peoples
- Researching intersections of Tribal sovereignty and treaty rights, fundamental religious freedoms, and sacred place protection
- Cultivating community around Indigenous environmental sovereignty

Conferences and Events

- Howard Arnett and Chuck Sams, Presenters, "Treaties, Trust, and Tomorrow: Navigating the Legal Landscape of Native Lands," *Oregon Law Perspectives* Series, University of Oregon School of Law, Virtual (August 8, 2025).
- Howard Arnett, Moderator, "*Apache Stronghold v. U.S.A.:* Context, Contours, and Current Status," 43rd Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (March 1, 2025).
- Howard Arnett, Opening Speaker, 15th Annual Indigenous Peoples Reception, 43rd Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, Land Air Water, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR (February 28, 2025).
- Howard Arnett, Panelist, "Mapping 50 Years of United States v. Washington," with Maya Swanes, 37th Annual Indian Law Symposium, University of Washington School of Law, Seattle, WA (September 5, 2024).

OREGON LAW PERSPECTIVES

Treaties, Trust, and Tomorrow: Navigating the Legal Landscape of Native Lands

What will the future hold for Indigenous rights and religious freedoms with the Supreme Court's decision not to hear an appeal of *Apache Stronghold v. United States*—a case with tremendous implications for the future of Indian Country? What obligations does the federal government have to fulfill responsibilities of trusts with Native American Tribes?

Professor of Practice Howard Arnett, JD '77, and Oregon Tribes Scholar-in-Residence Chuck Sams examined these questions in a joint presentation, "Treaties, Trust, and Tomorrow: Navigating the Legal Landscape of Native Lands," as part of the popular *Oregon Law Perspectives* webinar series in August 2025.

Professor Arnett's segment, "The Future of Oak Flat and Native Sacred Sites," emphasized efforts to protect Indigenous religious freedoms and cultural rights in the aftermath of the Supreme Court's denial of certiorari in *Apache Stronghold*.

In his segment, "Advocating for Tribal Rights, Fulfilling Federal Obligations," Scholar-in-Residence Sams shared lessons learned from his storied background advocating for Tribal rights in the nonprofit sector; working in Tribal governments; and most recently serving as head of a federal bureau responsible for meeting federal trust obligations, the National Park Service.

Access the recording:
law.uoregon.edu/about/events/oregon-law-perspectives

18TH ANNUAL RENNARD STRICKLAND LECTURE

Established in 2006 by the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center's (ENR) Native Environmental Sovereignty Project, the Rennard Strickland Lecture Series honors the legacy of late Oregon Law Dean Rennard Strickland (1940 – 2021). The goal of the series is to build upon Dean Strickland's many substantive contributions to the field of Indian Law, the practice of legal education, and to the University of Oregon's ENR and Indian Law programs by exploring Indigenous environmental-legal leadership and Tribal sovereignty in the twenty-first century.

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



"In the original law that I was given, there is an understanding that we must be good stewards… And we don't just do this for ourselves; we do it for the generations yet unborn—the next seven generations to come."

– Charles F. "Chuck" Sams III, Oregon Tribes Scholar in Residence and Senior Fellow

Mr. Charles F. "Chuck" Sams III (Cayuse and Walla Walla) served as the eighteenth speaker in the Rennard Strickland Lecture Series with his compelling address, "Fulfilling a Covenant: Stewardship of America's Best Idea – The Intersection of Indigenous Knowledge and the 1916 Organic Act."

An enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Sams made history under the Biden Administration when he became the first Indigenous person to direct the National Park Service (NPS). He served as the NPS Director from 2021, when he was ceremonially sworn in by then-Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo), to 2025, when Donald Trump began his second presidential term.

Sams began his address by sharing *Coyote & The Monster* and *Coyote & Human*, creation stories he grew up hearing on the Umatilla Reservation. A key teaching from these stories, he explained, is that humans are forever bound by sacred covenant to steward the Earth, as it stewards us.

"In the original law that I was given, there is an understanding that we must be good stewards of these resources, of the flora and fauna and the protection of our culture. And we don't just do this for ourselves; we do it for the generations yet unborn – the next seven generations to come."

He then drew connections between this essential Indigenous Knowledge and the promise of stewardship that undergirds "America's Best Idea," the NPS. Both, he argued, prioritize stewardship over ownership and recognize a responsibility to more-than-human relatives as well as future generations.

Keenly aware of the historic rarity of ideological alignment between U.S. policy and Indigenous Knowledge—his talk mentioned hundreds of genocidal federal policies enacted to destroy Indigenous Knowledge—Sams said he saw directing the NPS as an opportunity to honor his own cultural ethos of stewardship.

He continued by outlining his directorial priorities—developing and empowering a diverse workforce, using science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge to confront the climate crisis, advancing equity and accessibility across public lands, strengthening nation-to-nation relationships with Tribes, upholding trust responsibilities to current and future generations, and several others.

He also noted several accomplishments—working with Tribal Nations to protect traditional foods, medicines, and cultural resources; launching new policies around native plant gathering; increasing Tribal co-stewardship agreements by more than 1000 percent; beginning thematic studies on the experiences of women and Indigenous people on parklands; partnering with Tribal Nations to reintroduce cultural burning practices to traditionally fire-dependent landscapes; and dozens more.

Sams concluded his lecture by discussing *Pueblo of Jemez v. United States*, et al. (2024) wherein the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit upheld the Jemez Pueblo Tribe's right to occupy and use Banco Bonito, a large area of the Valles Caldera National Preserve, for traditional cultural and religious purposes.

To view the 18th Annual Rennard Strickland Lecture, visit:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2VQOsgT600





OCEANS, COASTS, AND WATERSHEDS

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

Research Highlights

- Assessing applications of instream water rights framework to ensure flows for groundwater-dependent ecosystems
- Launching *Oregon Water Matters* video series to provide public education on topics relevant to equitable water access
- Supporting development of state water law curriculum for judges by summarizing water codes in Oregon, Washington, and Montana
- Evaluating the role of federal, state, and local flood, erosion, and landslide policies in shaping coastal development patterns and coastal communities' vulnerability to natural hazards
- Assessing interdependence of and tensions between coastal resilience, housing justice, and biodiversity protection
- Supporting development of federal, state, and local land use regulatory strategies to protect freshwater resources, critical habitats, and climate resilience

Recent Publications

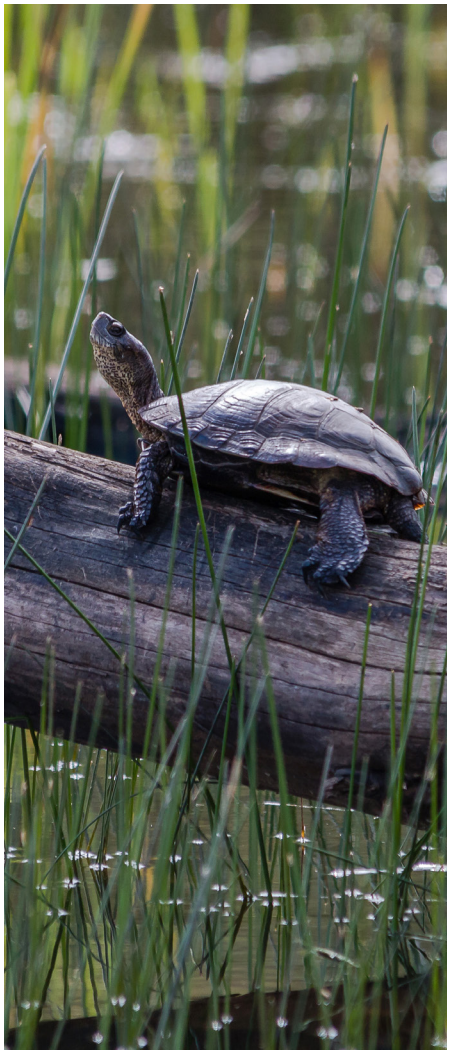
- Michelle Smith, "Allocating In Situ Groundwater Rights in Oregon to Protect Groundwater-Dependent Ecosystems: Opportunities and Challenges," with ENR Fellows Andrew Archer, JD '25 and Max McCool, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law (forthcoming).
- Michelle Smith, "An Assessment of Oregon's Drought Policies," chapter in Oregon Drought Vulnerability Assessment, with ENR Fellows Andrew Archer, JD '25, Natalie Gillard, JD '24, Kyle Knoll, Elizabeth Mayans, JD '24, and Caleb Todd, JD '24, Oregon Water Resources Department (forthcoming).
- Sarah J. Adams, "Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox," 36 Stanford Law & Policy Review 47 (2025).
- Sarah J. Adams, "Federal Flood Policy & Maladaptation: A Story of Collective Forgetting," 34 Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal 1 (2025).
- Sarah J. Adams, *Ocean and Coastal Law: Cases and Materials*, with Alison Rieser, Donna Christie, and Annie Brett, West Academic Publishing (6th Edition) (2024).
- Michelle Smith and ENR Fellows Andrew Archer, JD '25, Natalie Gillard, JD '24, Kyle Knoll, Elizabeth Mayans, JD '24, and Caleb Todd, JD '24, "Legal and Policy Interventions to Restore and Protect Lake Abert," Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law (October 1, 2024).
- Adell Amos, Michelle Smith, and ENR Fellows Samantha Blount, JD '22, Mariah Ellis, JD '22, Natalie Gillard, JD '24, and Kellie Warren, JD '23, "Removing Obstacles to Dam Removal in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Regulation of Hydropower Projects," Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law (September 5, 2024).

Conferences and Events

- Adell Amos, Keynote Speaker, "Living with Water: Sovereignty as a Framework for Public Rights and Interests," 8th Annual Sustainable Cities and Landscapes Conference, Association of Pacific Rim Universities, Simon Frasier University, Burnaby, Canada (June 19, 2025).
- Adell Amos, Closing Speaker, "Building Our Power: Funding Climate Action and Energy Justice in Oregon," Coalition of Communities of Color, Oregon Department of Energy, UO Climate Solutions Center, and UO Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (May 29, 2025).
- Adell Amos, Panelist, "Judicial and Presidential Dismantling of Administrative Capacity," Rule of Law in 2025 Webinar Series, Big Ten Law Schools, Virtual (May 28, 2025).
- Adell Amos, Lecturer, "State Water Code Reform: Lessons for Oregon from Across the West," 2025 Frank and Elvira Jestrab Distinguished Lecture on Water, University of Montana School of Law, Missoula, MT (April 3, 2025).
- Adell Amos, Panelist, "The Impact of the U.S. Supreme Court *Loper Bright* Decision on State Administrative Law Practice, Or, Is the Administrative Law Sky Actually Falling After *Loper Bright*?," with the Honorable Jack L. Landau, Winter CLE, Oregon State Bar Administrative Law Section, Virtual (February 21, 2025).
- Adell Amos, Panelist, "The Future of Environmental Regulation—and Everything Else—After *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*," with Greg Dotson, 2024 O'Connell Conference, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR (September 6, 2024).
- Sarah J. Adams, Presenter, "Federal Flood Policy & Maladaptation," Environmental Law Professors' Online Colloquium, Virtual (September 23, 2024).

In the News

- Sarah J. Adams, "How Texas' Land Rules Allowed Camps to Operate in Flood-Prone Areas," quoted by Ivan Pereira, *ABC News* (July 11, 2025).
- Adell Amos, "For Decades the Columbia River Has Benefitted Both the U.S. and Canada with Little Worry. Then Trump Took Office," featured by Katie Hawkinson, *The Independent* (March 22, 2025).
- Adell Amos, "Trump Eyes Canada's Water to Fight Shortages in the US," quoted by Eliott Dumoulin, *Le Monde* (March 18, 2025).



FELLOW FEATURE

Andy Archer, JD '25 spent his formative years falling in love with Oregon's wild rivers, towering peaks, and old-growth forests. Eager to help protect these critical ecosystems, he studied environmental science at the University of Oregon, focusing primarily on river restoration. Upon graduating, he returned to the rivers he grew up rafting and fly fishing and was devastated by what he saw.

"I witnessed first-hand how a rapidly shifting global climate and, relatedly, drought, jeopardized wild spaces and threatened communities," he said. This led him to pursue a career in environmental law.

At Oregon Law, Archer made the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center his second home.

He served as an ENR Fellow with the Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project (OCWP), co-authoring two published policy reports—"Legal and Policy Interventions to Restore and Protect Lake Abert" and "Western State Strategies to Improve Efficiency in Water Allocation Decision Making." Through the ENR externship program, he spent a semester working with the Oregon Water Resources Department to evaluate water rights protests.

Archer's commitment to helping hone more just and sustainable approaches to freshwater resources management shone through his work beyond the ENR Center.

In addition to serving year-round as Vice President of "The Redsides," a local chapter of environmental nonprofit Trout Unlimited, he dedicated his summers to conservation advocacy with Cascadia Wildlands. In Summer 2024, through the IHE Delft Institute for Water Education, he also completed a specialized study on international approaches to groundwater and drought management, engaging in collaborative research in the Netherlands and Spain.

As Oregon Law's 2025 Hans Linde Fellow, Archer authored and presented a paper entitled "Exhausting Our Future: An Assessment of Legal Mechanisms to Curtail Groundwater Use in Oregon." This work was supervised by another champion for sustainable water resources management, Clayton R. Hess Professor of Law Adell Amos, JD '98.

Equipped with a concentration in Environmental and Natural Resources Law, an award for Excellence in Written Advocacy from Oregon Law's first-rate Legal Research and Writing Program, and a well of new experiences in water law, Archer graduated Order of the Coif in May 2025.





2024-25 FELLOW ANDY ARCHER, JD '25, (LEFT) AND CLAYTON R. HESS PROFESSOR OF LAW ADELL AMOS, JD '98, (RIGHT) AT ANNUAL HANS LINDE PRESENTATION IN APRIL 2025.

"I will always be grateful for my decision to attend law school at the University of Oregon," he said. "It was the ideal place to pursue my interest in environmental law and enabled me to maintain a strong connection to nature and the outdoors throughout my studies."

"Serving as an ENR Fellow in both my second and third years was an immensely rich experience — one that equipped me with practical skills, deepened my understanding of the field, and strengthened my confidence as I begin my legal career."

ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT

Elizabeth "Libby" Pettit, JD '17 began working on climate issues during an undergraduate summer internship with the University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group, where she researched the impacts of climate change on Seattle's transportation and commercial seafood industries. Today, after five years as an Attorney-Advisor at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), she serves as Assistant General Counsel in the Office of General Counsel's Air and Radiation Law Office (ARLO), playing a vital role in developing and defending environmental regulations on a national scale.

Before joining ARLO, Pettit was a Presidential Management Fellow (PMF), starting at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, where one of her projects was amending the 2018 Farm Bill. For her six-month rotation in the PMF program, she worked with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate. In this capacity, she focused on emerging planetary protection policies and future human exploration projects and reviewed plans for the next lunar-orbit space station. Pettit concluded the PMF program with EPA's Office of Water, in the Regional Water Quality Standards Branch, where she was a liaison to EPA Region 10 and helped navigate water standards issues specific to the Pacific Northwest.

As a student at Oregon Law, Pettit focused on Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR). She was a Bowerman Fellow with the ENR Center's Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project and was a member of Land Air Water (LAW), the law school's oldest environmental student society. During LAW's annual one-of-a-kind Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, she presented on international ocean acidification and organized a panel on a then-emerging legal issue—the drinking water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

"My time as a law student and since graduating has shown me the importance of striving to protect human health and the environment even, and perhaps especially, during times of uncertainty," Pettit said. She credits the professors at Oregon Law, particularly Clayton R. Hess Professor of Law Adell Amos, for encouraging her to pursue her dream of working at the EPA.

In her current role, she advises the EPA on Clean Air Act issues and coordinates with the U.S. Department of Justice to represent the agency in litigation. She also recently represented ARLO in a workgroup developing EPA's path forward in light of the Supreme Court's decision in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*.

Outside of work, Pettit spends as much time outdoors as she can. An avid scuba diver, she most recently traveled to Australia to dive the Great Barrier Reef, where she saw dwarf minke whales and the great cuttlefish migration.



LIBBY PETTIT, JD '18 SCUBA DIVES ANCIENT UNDERWATER SINKHOLES, CALLED "CENOTES," IN MEXICO.



SUSTAINABLE LAND USE

Evaluating land use laws, theories, and practices to ensure sustainable development in our communities.

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
- Evaluating implications of National Flood Insurance Program–Endangered Species Act integration in Oregon, considering the interdependent biodiversity, climate, and housing crises

Recent Publications

- Sarah J. Adams, Michelle Smith, and ENR Fellows Claire Malone and Victoria Whalen, "Public Health Overlay Zones," Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center (forthcoming).
- Sarah J. Adams, "Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox," 36 Stanford Law & Policy Review 47 (2025).
- Sarah J. Adams, "Federal Flood Policy & Maladaptation: A Story of Collective Forgetting," 34 Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal 1 (2025).

Conferences and Events

- Sarah J. Adams, Presenter, "Land Law Localism and the Climate Resilience Paradox," Environmental Law Professors' Online Colloquium, Virtual (February 27, 2025).
- Sarah J. Adams, Presenter, "Climate Maladaptation, Land Law Localism and the Neo-Federalism Paradox," Environmental, Natural Resources & Energy Section Works-in-Progress Session, AALS Annual Meeting, Association of American Law Schools, San Francisco, CA (January 11, 2025).

In the News

- Sarah J. Adams, "How Texas' Land Rules Allowed Camps to Operate in Flood-Prone Areas," quoted by Ivan Pereira, *ABC News* (July 11, 2025).

FELLOW FEATURE

Claire Malone, JD '25



grew up in Columbus, Indiana, but her family's close connection to East St. Louis ignited her passion and drive for environmental justice.

She completed an honors thesis on the prevalence of environmental racism in her home state while studying sustainability, intersectional environmentalism, and environmental justice at Indiana University. After graduating with degrees in Informatics and Environmental & Sustainability Studies, a certificate in Applied Research & Inquiry, and dreams of pursuing a career in environmental law, she enrolled at Oregon Law.

Malone quickly immersed herself in the law school's academic community. She served as Vice President, then President, of the Black Law Students Association and joined Oregon Law's historic environmental student society, Land Air Water, as Website Director. As Managing Editor for the *Journal of Environmental Law and Litigation*, her work was recognized with the 2025 Chapin Clark Award for Editorial Excellence.

Her strength as a researcher, writer, editor, and student leader served her throughout her two years of fellowship with the Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center's Sustainable Land Use Project.

As an ENR Fellow, Malone collaborated with Assistant Professor Sarah Adams on justice-based coastal land use and climate resilience research and scholarship. In addition to working on several other projects, she co-authored a policy paper on "Public Health Overlay Zones" (forthcoming) and co-led a plenary workshop, "Confronting the Oregon Land Use System's Continuing Legacy of Land Use Racism & Environmental (In) Justice for Ourselves, Our Ancestors, and Future Generations," at the Oregon American Planning Association's 50th Annual Conference in Eugene, Oregon.

"I moved across the country to attend Oregon Law because of the Environmental and Natural Resources Law program," Malone said. "My experiences with the ENR Center have greatly expanded my understanding of the legal tools that can be employed to achieve environmental justice, drive persuasive environmental research and communication, promote stewardship, and balance burdens."

Malone's trajectory now takes her to Portland, Oregon, where she will begin her legal career with Schwabe, Wiliamson & Wyatt, PC.

"The ENR program prepared me to analyze complex environmental dilemmas through both legal and community-oriented perspectives. I will take all that I have learned and experienced with me as I start my career."



ALUMNUS SPOTLIGHT



JONATHAN EVANS, JD '06 is fighting to safeguard imperiled wildlife from the dangers of environmental contamination, focusing on reducing the toxic threats of pesticides, heavy metals, and chemical pollution across ecosystems.

As a Senior Attorney and the Environmental Health Legal Director at the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), he oversees a team of attorneys and staff working within the Environmental Health Program to develop and implement strategies for reducing environmental contamination through legislation and regulation. This work includes strategizing and leading litigation in federal and state courts.

Evans first joined CBD as a Staff Attorney in 2006, shortly after graduating from Oregon Law with a concentration in Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR). As a student, he completed a fellowship with the ENR Center's Sustainable Land Use Project and worked with the Western Environmental Law Center, the home of Oregon Law's first-of-its-kind environmental law clinic.

Evans has an undergraduate degree in Conservation and Resource Studies from the University of California, Berkeley, and has worked in the environmental field for almost 30 years. He says he has never experienced the level of threats to the environmental movement now posed by the federal government and courts.

He maintains hope by focusing on opportunities for local action. Recently, he has been helping create an organic farm at his daughter's school and volunteering at a native plant restoration project near his home.

"I want people to remember that, in these trying times, there are still ways we can advance the public interest and protect our environment. The world feels dark right now. Doing what we can locally to make positive change in our communities will help us shine a light in the darkness."

JONATHAN EVANS, JD '06

ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT

Renee Seacor, JD '20 has dedicated her career to environmental advocacy, with a particular focus on protecting North America's wild carnivores. Her work—spanning litigation, policy, and public education—is grounded in a commitment to fostering coexistence between people and wildlife and helping create healthier, more resilient ecosystems.

As the Northeast Rewilding Director at Mighty Earth, Seacor leads efforts to restore extirpated wildlife to the region, including initiatives exploring the feasibility of returning cougars to forests across the Northeastern U.S.

Prior to joining Mighty Earth, she served as Carnivore Conservation Director for Project Coyote, leading nationwide campaigns to advance ethical, science-based policies aimed at protecting wild carnivores across the continent.

In her capacity as Carnivore Conservation Director, Seacor championed initiatives to ban wildlife killing contests in multiple states and reform regressive carnivore management practices. In February 2025, she presented on the future of wolf recovery in the Northeast at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts' Green Living Seminar.

At Oregon Law, Seacor witnessed the power of legislative advocacy first-hand. As a student in Associate Professor Greg Dotson's Environmental Policy Practicum, she had the opportunity to present a report she co-authored to the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis. The report, entitled "State and Local Legal Mechanisms for Increasing Urban Forest Growth in Communities Across the U.S.," later informed the Committee's Climate Crisis Action Plan.

Seacor completed an academic concentration in Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR). Beyond the classroom, she served as an ENR Fellow with the Sustainable Land Use Project; acted as Conference Co-Director for the 37th annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, the world's longest running and largest such conference; and interned with environmental nonprofits Cascadia Wildlands and Riverkeeper.

"Oregon Law and the ENR Center gave me the tools, mentorship, and practical experience to turn a passion for wildlife conservation into a career grounded in science, policy, and advocacy," she said. "The opportunities I had—both in the classroom and in the field—continue to guide my work today as I collaborate to restore and protect wild carnivores and help create healthier, more resilient ecosystems."





OREGON WATER MATTERS:
SUPPORTING WATER JUSTICE STATEWIDE

Oregon is facing a water crisis. As extreme drought persists, water supplies dwindle, and competition for (not to mention overallocation of) available resources intensifies, those who are hit the hardest—people of color, Tribal people(s), and low-income, migrant, and rural communities—are also those least empowered in decision-making.

In November 2022, the Oregon Water Futures Collaborative—an interdisciplinary team of storytellers, capacity-builders, policy advocates, and community leaders that includes Oregon Law's Environmental and Natural Resources Law (ENR) Center—launched the *Oregon Water Justice Framework*, an in-depth guidebook for addressing this inequity and advancing water justice across Oregon.

In addition to offering fundamental water justice principles to inform equitable water policymaking, the *Framework* provides an action agenda that highlights six water-justice priorities "requiring our attention now." At a glance, these priorities include (1) Indigenous Water Justice Leadership, (2) Renter's Rights, (3) Water Access & Affordability, (4) Natural & Built Infrastructure for Clean Water, (5) Emergency Preparedness, and (6) Community Empowerment.

Today, largely through the advocacy of environmental justice organizations and communities, the *Framework* and its action agenda are helping shape water decision-making across Oregon.



OREGON WATER EQUITY FUND

In 2024, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 5506, allocating $500,000 to the University of Oregon's Just Futures Institute (JFI) to enable research "to understand and address water needs of environmental justice communities." This funding created the Oregon Water Equity Fund (OWEF), a water justice hub now situated within UO's Climate Solutions Center.

As Director of OWEF, co-author of the *Oregon Water Justice Framework*, and a lifelong advocate for water justice, Dr. Alaí Reyes-Santos is working to advance a more equitable water future for communities across Oregon.

A Professor of Practice and faculty member with the ENR Center, Dr. Reyes-Santos teaches *Human Rights and the Environment* and *Environmental Justice* and frequently supervises students in environmental justice research. With her leadership, OWEF has supported a diversity of community-based water justice projects, including initiatives that engage youth as leaders in climate action.



"To serve in this role has been one of the biggest honors of my life," she remarked. "I have witnessed and learned how communities across regional, urban-rural,



> "I have witnessed and learned how communities across regional, urban-rural, ethnic, racial, and class differences care for water and for one another throughout the state. It reminds us that we can all make a difference."
>
> **- Dr. Alaí Reyes-Santos, Professor of Practice and Oregon Water Equity Fund Director**

ethnic, racial, and class differences care for water and for one another throughout the state."

"It reminds us that we all can make a difference."

ADVANCING COMMUNITY-BASED WORK

In 2024, OWEF's Community Water Justice Awards provided funding to 11 projects spanning focus areas from advancing traditional Indigenous floodplain management practices to training youth and elders as Water Justice Ambassadors to installing "naturescapes" in urban neighborhoods. One project involved collaboratively developing a climate vulnerability assessment to inform restoration plans for an Oregon tributary. Another launched a partnership to diversify conservation efforts on the state's northern coast.

Additionally, OWEF has provided support to the ENR Center's Oceans, Coasts, and Watersheds Project (OCWP) for its efforts to co-produce a series of open-access videos focused on Oregon water law, policy, and infrastructure. With guidance from water justice organizations and communities, ENR Research Associate Michelle Smith, OCWP Fellows, and UO Pro Tem Instructor Todd Jarvis are developing the *Oregon Water Matters* series for future public release.

This work to advance water justice across Oregon is ongoing. In Summer 2025, OWEF launched two new funding opportunities: the Tribal Water Research Award Program and the Oregon Tribal Water Empowerment Grant. The former is supporting UO faculty and students' research on Tribal water issues and solutions. Meanwhile, the latter, a partnership with Portland State University's Institute for Tribal Government, is helping fund water infrastructure improvements, watershed restoration efforts, hydrological education projects, and more vital work focused on Tribal communities.

A DEEP WELL OF INSPIRATION

As many sources of funding to support water work dry up, Dr. Reyes-Santos continues to draw inspiration from the spirit and accomplishments of Oregon's water justice communities. Without their advocacy, including through the *Oregon Water Justice Framework*, she knows OWEF would not be possible.

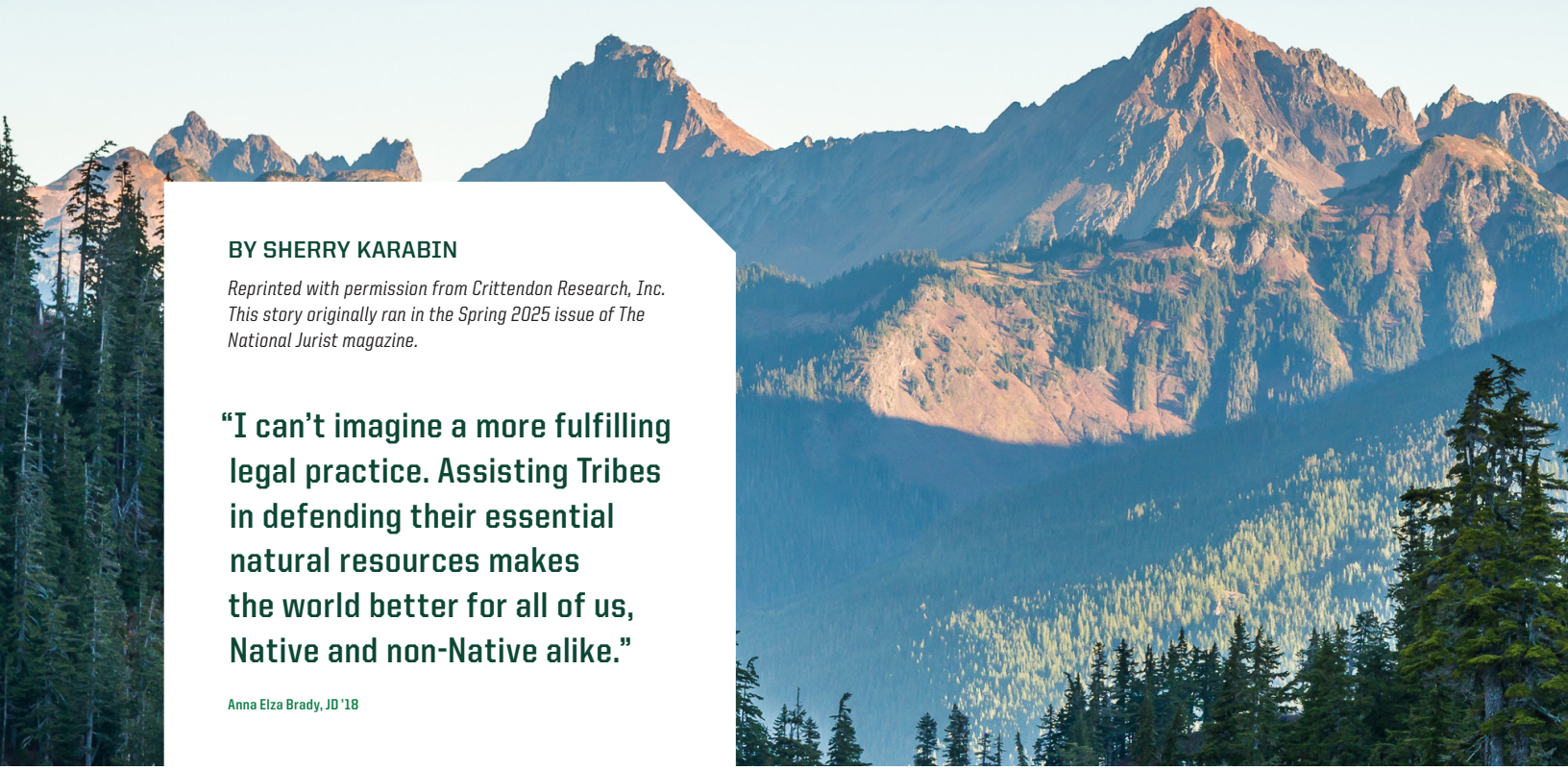
"The first descent of the Klamath River after dam removal just completed by Tribal youth leaders teaches an important lesson," she said. "While the journey can be long, the destination may be right around the corner."

"I am excited to see what other victories might come in our lifetime."



In Defense of Natural Resources:

Alumna Blends Environmental and Indian Law in Practice



BY SHERRY KARABIN

Reprinted with permission from Crittendon Research, Inc. This story originally ran in the Spring 2025 issue of The National Jurist magazine.

"I can't imagine a more fulfilling legal practice. Assisting Tribes in defending their essential natural resources makes the world better for all of us, Native and non-Native alike."

Anna Elza Brady, JD '18



Anna Elza Brady, JD '18, received the Outstanding Recent Alumni Award presented by Dean Jennifer Reynolds at the Oregon Law Alumni & Friends Fall Celebration in September 2024.

Growing up on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington state surrounded by a diverse environment, Anna Elza Brady developed an interest in the relationship between human beings and nature.

"As a young adult, I began exploring ways that our species might better co-exist with the broader biotic community," Brady said. "I became involved in actionable work and saw I could use my skills in a positive way through the law."

And that's exactly what she's been doing for more than five years as an associate with the Seattle law firm Ziontz Chestnut.

While she occasionally deals with conservation issues for local governments and non-governmental organizations, Brady primarily represents Native American Tribes on natural resources matters.

"Much of what I do lies at the intersection of environmental law and social justice," she said. "It's gratifying work. Indian law is a distinct area of the law, and I consider it an incredible privilege to use my skills as a lawyer to amplify and elevate the voices of historically underrepresented communities and sovereign nations."

"Tribes are distinct, but one thing they have in common is a profound relationship to the land, waters, plants and animals that have sustained their cultures, economies and spiritual traditions for millennia."

DEVELOPING HER SKILLS

Brady brings of wealth of training and experience to the job.

As an undergraduate at University of Montana in Missoula, she worked for the Environmental Defense Fund as a grassroots organizer lobbying for federal climate change legislation. After completing a master's degree in environmental humanities at University of Utah, she served as the policy and communications strategist for a nonprofit called Utah Diné Bikéyah, which means "people's sacred lands" in Navajo. This group spearheaded a Tribally led effort to designate Bears Ears National Monument.

Her work on that initiative extended into her time at University of Oregon School of Law and helped Bears Ears become the first Native American national monument in 2016.

While at Oregon Law, Brady was a Native Environmental Sovereignty Fellow with the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center, a Wayne Morse Center Legal Fellow and co-director of the Native American Law Students Association.

Brady honed her interest in Indian law by taking courses with Howard Arnett, a professor of practice at Oregon Law.

"When I first met Anna, she was primarily interested in pursuing environmental law," Arnett said. "But through her experience working on Bears Ears and after taking my courses, she decided to focus on Indian law."

After graduating Order of the Coif in 2018 with a certificate in environmental and natural resources law, she clerked for Washington State Supreme Court Justice Susan Owens.

Licensed in Washington and Montana, Brady joined Ziontz Chestnut in 2019. The firm has a long history of representing Tribes across the country.

"To be the very first lawyer in my family and work for a firm that practices in the two legal fields I find most compelling, I feel lucky to have landed where I am," she said.

A DIVERSE PRACTICE AREA

At the law firm, Brady has played a key role in helping secure wins for several Tribes, including a $200 million agreement with the federal government in 2023 that provides for the reintroduction of salmon into the Upper Columbia Basin above the Grand Coulee Dam.

Brady said it was a historic settlement involving several government agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The agencies agreed to support and fund the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and two ally Tribes as they study the feasibility of reestablishing salmon in waters they inhabited for thousands of years prior to construction of the dam.

"The Grand Coulee Dam completely blocked salmon migration into the upper Columbia River," Brady said. "The settlement agreement involves the U.S. government fully funding and supporting salmon reintroduction, without removing or interfering with the operations of the dams."

"Salmon not only comprised a vast proportion of the nutrients these Tribes historically consumed but also fundamentally inform who they are as peoples."

In addition, Brady has worked closely with other members of the firm to restore the Makah Tribe's ability to exercise its right to hunt gray whales under the 1855 Treaty of Neah Bay.

The bay is located at the northwestern tip of Washington state. The treaty not only secured the Tribe's whaling rights but also gave the Tribe authority to catch fish and hunt other marine mammals and land animals in the area.

"The Tribe gave up vast areas of territory in order to maintain these rights, which remain crucial to their culture and identity," Brady said. "But after commercial whaling decimated the gray whale population, the Makah voluntarily ceased the practice for decades. Once gray whales made a strong recovery, the Tribe began seeking a pathway to return to its traditional practice under its treaty rights."

A successful Makah whale hunt took place in 1999, but the Tribe's ability to continue the practice was subsequently curtailed by a federal court ruling.

In 2005, the Tribe began a long process to obtain a waiver to resume whaling. The waiver was issued in 2024 after a protracted administrative and judicial process.

"We are now working on behalf of the Tribe to obtain the first hunt permit under the waiver," Brady said. "The hunt, which is conducted from a traditional canoe and relies on Tribal customs, will hopefully resume in the near future."

In addition to working on Indian law issues, Brady and her colleagues litigated Conservation Northwest v. Hilary Franz, who was the state commissioner of public lands. It resulted in a unanimous landmark Washington State Supreme Court decision recognizing the duty of the state's Department of Natural Resources to manage public lands in a manner that considers evolving environmental, economic and social needs.

MOVING FORWARD

Brady says she expects that Trump administration policies will broadly affect environmental law.

"In addition to possible overhauls of longstanding regulatory processes, a major concern is the recent 'reductions in force' and how those layoffs may affect attention given to environmental issues and Tribal matters," she said.

"There could be some limited upshots of a Republican administration, such as the potential to reform the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which has inadvertently led to ecological imbalance in marine systems in the Pacific Northwest."

Brady said the environmental community and Tribes are bracing for a few tough years.

"I expect we will see attempts to substantially roll back policies protecting public lands, natural systems and environmental justice," she said. "As during the first Trump administration, there is going to be a lot of need and work for environmental lawyers."

Brady said she's found her stride working at the nexus of Indian law and environmental law and has no plans to change course.

"I can't imagine a more fulfilling legal practice," she said. "Assisting Tribes in defending their essential natural resources makes the world better for all of us, Native and non-Native alike."

TOMORROW'S LEADERS:
STUDENTS ENGAGING FOR CHANGE



ENR Clinic at WELC

Oregon Law's Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center is the birthplace of the first environmental law clinic in the U.S. Now stewarded by the Western Environmental Law Center (WELC), a public interest environmental law firm with offices in New Mexico, Montana, and Oregon, the Clinic provides the next generation of legal advocates with real-world experience.

Through the Clinic, law students assist WELC attorneys with case development and strategy, conduct legal research, engage in settlement discussions, and hone their writing skills by drafting pleadings and memoranda. Students fully engage in litigation and legal work, receiving direct supervision and mentorship from WELC attorneys. This practical experience confers valuable training that prepares students for careers in the law.

Clinic students' professional-level efforts culminate in capstone projects—work product useful to WELC's clients in legal proceedings long after a semester ends. In 2024 and 2025, second- and third-year students completed a diversity of Clinic capstones.

One project included writing memoranda analyzing how a Biological Opinion prepared under the Endangered Species Act must evaluate the effects of climate change on the listed species. This research informed legal briefs challenging a 50-year permit issued to Sierra Pacific Industries to log over 1.5 million acres of spotted owl habitat in California. Another effort involved helping with a Washington State appeal of a permit for a pump storage hydroelectric project along the Columbia River on lands sacred to the Yakama Nation.

Another capstone focused on Rule 24 intervention to defend the Public Lands Rule in federal court. This included reporting on anti-degradation under the Clean Water Act to assist with a brief challenging an oil refinery discharge permit in Montana.

While one project involved researching a U.S. Forest Service determination that its logging in the Kettle Range would have "no effect" on Canada lynx, another supported efforts to force federal wildlife managers to meaningfully promote the recovery and resilience of Arizona's imperiled Mexican wolves.

Combined with students' access to professional mentorship, the real-world experience they gain through the Clinic is critically important for both the future of law and the places, communities, and species that need advocates in a changing world. As they work with students in the Clinic, WELC attorneys hope to inspire a passion for justice beyond the classroom.

ENR Clinic Students

2024-2025

Dara Evans

Marisa Fahnestock

Gabriella "Allie" Frazier

Charles Gearing

Corinne Gibson, JD '25

Andrew Linden

James Meschia

Lily Miller

Nicole Morshead

Josephine Nordhoff-Beard, JD '25

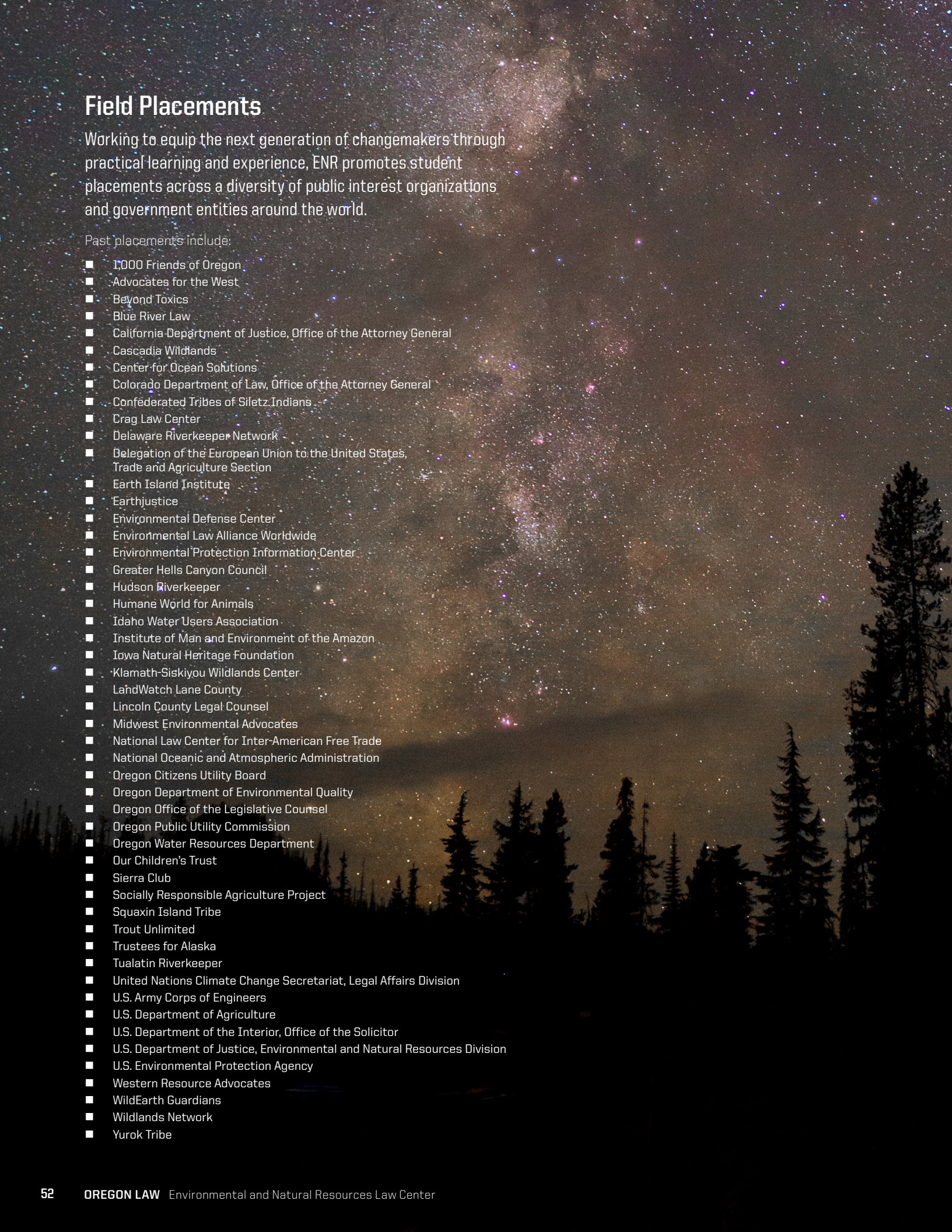
William Stephens, JD '25

Dolores "Dorie" Sullivan, JD '25

Katelyn Tender



Thank you to our students—past, present, and future.



Field Placements

Working to equip the next generation of changemakers through practical learning and experience, ENR promotes student placements across a diversity of public interest organizations and government entities around the world.

Past placements include:

- 1000 Friends of Oregon
- Advocates for the West
- Beyond Toxics
- Blue River Law
- California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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

Journal of Environmental Law and Litigation – Volume 40

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 law, while empowering students to become exceptional writers, editors, and scholars.

Hiroshi Kobayashi, "Carbon Pricing for GX and Renewable Energy: The Case of Japan and Comparisons to the United States," 40 Journal Of Environmental Law And Litigation 1 (2025).

Bepi Pezzulli, "ESG: From Hype to Scrutiny – Legal Challenges to Fiduciary Duties and Shareholder Value," 40 Journal Of Environmental Law And Litigation 43 (2025).

Markus Puder, "Convivencia of the Third Kind: The Rise of Rights of Nature and Life Balance Under the Cupola Called Earth," 40 Journal Of Environmental Law And Litigation 85 (2024).

Mizuki Hashiguchi, "Action-Based Climate Change Governance Through Technology and Intellectual Property," 40 Journal Of Environmental Law And Litigation 125 (2025).

Charlotte Wicke, "Relicensing of Oroville Facilities: California Supreme Court Creates Additional Opportunity to Consider Modern Hydrological Findings at the Cost of a Coherent Preemption Doctrine," 40 Journal Of Environmental Law And Litigation 145 (2025).

David S. Caudill, "Climatologist Mann's Defamation Suit Victory: Can It Help Resolve the Crisis of Expertise?," 40 Journal Of Environmental Law And Litigation 159 (2025).

Cooper Mittelhauser, "Show Me Groundwater: The Case for Proactive Groundwater Law Reform in Missouri," 40 Journal Of Environmental Law And Litigation 197 (2025).

Danielle Griffin, "Ecodesign Policies Compared: The United States and the European Union," 40 Journal Of Environmental Law And Litigation 231 (2025).

2025 GREEN BUSINESS SYMPOSIUM

Sustainable Transportation: Driving the Future of Green Business



The University of Oregon's Green Business Initiative (GBI) is one of the oldest student organizations of its kind. Bridging UO's School of Law and Lundquist College of Business, the group strives to promote sustainable business practices and the legal frameworks that support them.

Toward this mission, GBI annually hosts a Green Business Symposium to explore ways to achieve more sustainable economic systems. The 2025 Green Business Symposium took place in April at UO's new campus in Portland, Oregon.

The Symposium explored this year's student-selected theme, *Sustainable Transportation: Driving the Future of Green Business*, through two expert-led panels—"The Road Ahead: The Status of Sustainable Transportation in Oregon" and "Shifting Gears: Navigating Federal Regulatory Changes in State Sustainable Transportation"—with Caroline Cilek (Davis Wright Tremaine), Sam Diaz (1000 Friends of Oregon), Representative Susan McLain (Oregon Legislature), Amanda Pietz (Oregon Department of Transportation), and Amy Schlusser (Oregon Department of Energy).

PUBLIC INTEREST ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CONFERENCE

Rising to the Challenge at PIELC

The first weekend in March 2025 marked the 43rd 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.

Every year, members of Land Air Water (LAW), the University of Oregon School of Law's oldest environmental student society, dedicate their time, energy, and creativity to put on PIELC, the longest-running and largest public interest environmental law conference on the planet. Second-year law students Lily Miller, Nicole Morshead, and Kate Tender led these efforts as the Conference Co-Directors (CCDs) for PIELC 2025.

The CCDs selected the theme *Rising to the Challenge: Justice on the Horizon* to "highlight the challenges the world faces in addressing environmental injustices, to provide a platform to diverse voices within the environmental justice movement, and to celebrate the important work happening within the field of public interest environmental law and beyond."



From left, PIELC Co-Directors Kate Tender, Lily Miller, and Nicole Morshead pose in front of the Knight Law Center.

PIELC 2025 Recap

BY: CONFERENCE CO-DIRECTORS LILY MILLER, NICOLE MORSHEAD, AND KATE TENDER

FRIDAY

Each day of PIELC 2025 began with the tradition of breaking bread—this year, pastries were provided by local bakery Sweet Life Patisserie—and tabling in the law school's Wayne Morse Commons. Nearly 60 public interest organizations and advocacy groups tabled throughout the conference to connect with the community, showcase their work, and share resources.

Friday's program included more than two dozen expert-led panels and workshops spanning topics from "Oregon's Drinking Water Crisis," "AI in Memphis: A Case Study on AI Data Centers & Environmental Justice Issues," and "Working Remotely: Lessons Learned in the Fight Against the Donlin Mine in Alaska," to "A State Tipping Strategy for Recognition of Fundamental Climate Rights," "Protecting the Environment through Law in Europe," and "Electrifying Our Communities: The Power of Youth Leaders in Climate Action." Friday also kicked off the PIELC Film Festival, which throughout the conference featured documentaries such as *Albatross, Here We Stand and Where I Belong, and The Return of Nóouháh-Toka'na* (Swift Fox).

The first keynoter of the conference was Tara Houska (Couchiching First Nation) with her talk, "Resistance is Love." A Tribal attorney, land defender, and climate activist, Houska focused on responsibilities to future generations as she spoke to the urgent need for legal innovation and collaboration to address the climate crisis.

Energized by the address, many conference-goers flocked to the annual PIELC Party at the Webfoot, while others joined the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center's 15th annual Indigenous Peoples Reception in the Many Nations Longhouse.

"Friday was a fantastic kickoff to PIELC with engaging panels, tabling, and an inspiring keynote that set the tone for a weekend of powerful learning and connecting," said CCD Lily.

SATURDAY

With PIELC in full-swing, Saturday kicked off with another robust round of nearly 40 panels and workshops. There were sessions on "Pacific Western Wolves in the Crosshairs: Politics, Poaching, and (Poor) Protections," "Indigenous-Led Resistance to False Climate Solutions: Resisting Green Colonialism for Real Solutions to Climate Crisis," and "PB&J: Pinyon Pine, Biodiversity, and Juniper Conservation." Panels such as "Slaying the Waste Giants: Tackling Incinerators and Landfills," "The Toll of Urban Freeways on Vulnerable Communities," and "Taking Factory Farm Pollution to Court" were followed by discussions on "Navigating the Backlash Against DEI: What it Means for the Environmental Movement," "Reimagining Equity in a Post-*Chevron* Era," and "Environmental Justice Litigation Without Environmental Justice Legislation." Meanwhile, the Film Festival continued with *Follow the Water, Monsters and the Essentials*, and more.

Introduced by Assistant Professor Sarah Adams, Saturday's keynote was a special co-presentation by two speakers, Dr. Rosemary Ahtuangaruak (Iñupiaq) and Enei Begaye (Diné and Tohono O'odham). Their talk focused on the intersection of Indigenous rights and environmental protection, underscoring the importance of community-led advocacy. The former mayor of Nuiqsut, Alaska, Ahtuangaruak is a community health aide and Indigenous rights activist. Begaye, who serves as Executive Director of Native Movement, is likewise a long-time activist and advocate for Indigenous rights and the environment.

"On Saturday, we had a unique opportunity to hold a more conversational keynote, which allowed for such effective engagement among PIELC attendees," said CCD Nicole. "It was truly an honor to hear from such incredible activists and discuss the importance of advocacy for improving our relationship with the environment."

The second day of PIELC wrapped with the ENR Center's annual Alumni Reception, where students, faculty, and alumni reveled in Oregon Law's public interest environmental law community. During the event, Associate Professor Greg Dotson, Land Air Water's faculty advisor, honored the CCDs with gratitude and gifts from the ENR Center.

SUNDAY

Throughout the final day of PIELC, public interest organizations and advocacy groups continued sharing information and resources in the Wayne Morse Commons. The Film Festival concluded with a screening of *Valve Turners* and an engaging post-film discussion. Meanwhile, panels covered topics from "Rural Communities Deserve Clean Water Too: The Safe Drinking Water Act and Agricultural Pollution" and "Ignoring Science, Policy, and NEPA: BLM's Push to Log Western Oregon's Last Best Forests" to "Protecting Sacred Places on Public Land, Air, & Water," and "Beaver Believers."

Sunday marked the second annual John Bonine Keynote. After an introduction by Professor Dotson, power-builder and political strategist Maria Nuñez-Lopez took the stage to present her keynote speech centered around environmental justice advocacy. A 2021 appointee to then-President Joe Biden's White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council, Nuñez-Lopez emphasized the urgent need to prioritize environmental justice in addressing climate change and spoke to the power of frontline activism.

"Maria's keynote on Sunday was very energizing and passionate!" said CCD Kate. "She allowed people to feel comfortable sharing their opinions, even if they weren't the same as hers, which sparked a lot of important conversations."

PIELC 2025 concluded with the presentation of three annual awards: the David Brower Lifetime Achievement Award, the Kerry Rydberg-Jack Tuholske Award for Excellence in Public Interest Environmental Lawyering, and the Svitlana Kravchenko Environmental Rights Award.



PIELC organizers—all volunteer law students—jump for joy beneath the iconic conference banner.

Pielc
Fight Back:
Voices for Good

BE A VOICE FOR GOOD AT PIELC 2026

March 12 - 15, 2026

Save the date for the 44th Annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference! PIELC 2026 will take place over four days at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon.

The conference co-directors, all volunteer law students, have selected *Fight Back: Voices for Good* 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 ADVOCATES AT PIELC 2025



David Brower Lifetime Achievement Award

2025 Recipient: Bern Johnson

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 twentieth 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. The "grandfather" of the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference at Oregon Law, 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.

Bern Johnson led the Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (ELAW) as its first Executive Director for more than three decades before retiring in 2025. Under his leadership, ELAW collaborated with lawyers in more than 80 countries to pursue initiatives to protect the environment through law and science. Before joining ELAW as the organization's first Staff Attorney in 1991, Johnson practiced law in Seattle, Washington. He was President of the Environmental Law Society at Harvard Law School. Before attending law school, he worked on environmental issues as a Legislative Assistant to U.S. Representative James Weaver. The *Harvard Law Bulletin, Stanford Social Innovation Review, Grist, Christian Science Monitor,* and *E Magazine* reported on his work with ELAW. Harvard Law School awarded him a Wasserstein Public Interest Fellowship in recognition of his outstanding contribution and dedication to public interest law. At the heart of Johnson's lifelong commitment to environmental advocacy is his love for wild rivers, big mountains, ancient forests, vibrant communities, and his family.



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

2025 Recipient: Claire Tonry

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 practices 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 distinguished Rydberg-Tuholske Award are selected for their demonstrated courage, commitment, and talent as grassroots-level advocates for citizens and communities facing environmental challenges.

Claire Tonry, BA, '06, is a Partner with Smith & Lowney, PLLC. Her practice uses a wide range of legal tools to restore the environment, protect voters and consumers, and advance progressive policies. She has worked on notable cases such as *Puget Soundkeeper Alliance v. Port of Tacoma* (2024), *Childress v. JP Morgan Chase* (2020), and *Don't Expand UW Primate Testing v. UW Board of Regents* (2015). *Super Lawyers* named her a "Rising Star" in environmental law in 2019. She earned her law degree and certificate in Environmental and Natural Resources Law with a focus in Animal Law from Lewis & Clark Law School in 2009. Tonry holds a bachelor's degree with honors in Environmental Studies and Economics from the University of Oregon.





Svitlana Kravchenko Environmental Rights Award

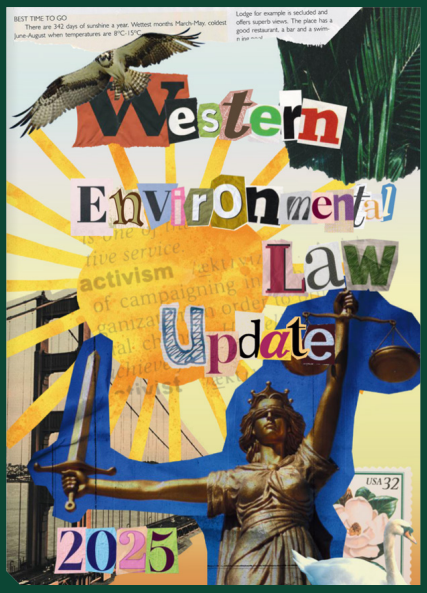
2025 Recipient: Pete Frost

The Kravchenko Award was created in 2012 to honor those who emulate the universal kindness, academic excellence, and spirited activism of late Oregon Law Professor Svitlana Kravchenko. Kravchenko is remembered as an international force in environmental law who was deeply committed to social and environmental justice. In the early 1990s, she helped establish the first public interest environmental law firm in Ukraine, advancing democracy through environmental advocacy. Each year, PIELC's student organizers present the Kravchenko Award to a recipient whose work refuses to divide environmental rights from fundamental human rights.

Pete Frost, JD '90 is a Staff Attorney with the Western Environmental Law Center (WELC), where, in addition to instructing students in the University of Oregon School of Law's historic Environmental Law Clinic, he leads efforts to protect and restore wild salmon and other species. Frost was raised in Oregon and graduated from Stanford University before attending Oregon Law, where he was a Staff Editor of the *Oregon Law Review*. For more than two decades, he has represented anglers, guides, conservation groups, and Tribes to restore wild fish runs. From 1992 to 1999, Frost was an attorney for and directed the Western Regional Office of the National Wildlife Federation. In 2000, he received the David Brower Lifetime Achievement Award at the 18th annual PIELC.



WESTERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW UPDATE



The *Western Environmental Law Update* (WELU) is a publication sponsored by Land Air Water, Oregon Law's oldest environmental student society, and distributed annually during 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, drawings, political collages, short stories, and poems.

Access the 2025 WELU: **https://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.

A Winning Community:
CELEBRATING OUR PEOPLE (AND PETS)

Standing Together: ENR Faculty and Staff Named "Pillars" of the Oregon Law Community



Lovingly nicknamed the "Duckies" by our students, the Oregon Law Leadership Awards annually celebrate the Oregon Law community and the leaders who contribute to its success.

The 2025 Duckies saw Clayton R. Hess Professor of Law Adell Amos, JD '98, and Madi Prue, the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center's Program Assistant, recognized as "Pillars of the Community."

"Professor Amos is a champion for students committed to environmental law," remarked one of her many student nominators. "We are so fortunate to have her presence and energy at our law school, especially at this moment in our history."

A student who nominated Prue explained, "She is a problem-solver; a fierce advocate for justice; and a connector—always finding ways to link students with faculty, research, and opportunities that elevate them."

Prue nabbed two Duckies, also receiving the Native American Law Students Association's (NALSA) "Unsung Hero Award" in honor of her contributions to the organization's mission.

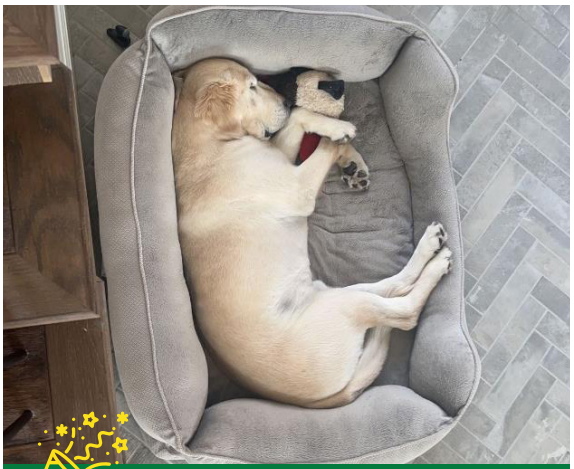
"It is wonderful seeing two members of our ENR community being recognized as pillars," said ENR Executive Director Heather Brinton, JD '96. "Both Professor Amos and Madi Prue make incredible contributions to the law school every day."

RUFF COMPETITION: SALDF'S ANNUAL CUTEST PET CONTEST

Student Chapters of the Animal Legal Defense Fund share the organization's mission to use the law to protect the lives and advance the interests of animals. The Student Animal Legal Defense Fund (SALDF) at Oregon Law strives toward this mission by engaging law students in animal advocacy, spreading awareness of emerging topics in animal law, and fostering stronger connections with more-than-human relations.

SALDF also hosts fundraising events to benefit animal welfare organizations such as Greenhill Humane Society and the Many Miles 2 Home Rescue. This includes an annual Cutest Pet Contest, wherein Oregon Law's students, faculty, and staff submit photos of their animal companions and pay to cast their vote(s)—$1 = 1 vote—for the cutest pet.

This year's Cutest Pet Contest saw dozens of adorable submissions.



2025 WINNER: Alfie



Alfie may have won the "Cutest Pet" title, but the real victory was raising funds to support animals impacted by extreme weather events.





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ENGAGING THE LAW TO SUPPORT **SUSTAINABILITY** ON EARTH

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