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NRULPC Newsletter Vol. 7, No. 4

December 19, 2024

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Co-Directors' Message

Holiday Greetings,

In this issue of the newsletter Colin McKenzie provides a summary of the Mining Law Summit held in November, which focused on the intersection of mining and water resources. Also included is a link to Anne Gondor's latest Regulatory Round-up which focuses on Regulatory Tracking Highlights, PERC Virtual Fence Policy Framework and Fire Management Monitoring. Lastly is a proud announcement of NRULPC's successful completion of the UA Review and Reauthorization process with the Center being reauthorized for another seven years.

May your holiday's be filled with love, joy and a bit of relaxation!



Annual Mining Law Summit: Mining and Water at the Forefront

Colin McKenzie

The Global Mining Law Center at the University of Arizona's James E. Rogers College of Law hosted its 9th Annual Mining Law Summit, now available to view on [YouTube](#). The summit explored the intersection of mining and water resources, focusing on voluntary agreements like *Good Neighbor* and *Impact-Benefit Agreements* (IBAs) between companies and communities. Organized in collaboration with the School of Mining and Mineral Resources, Cooperative Extension, and the NRULPC, the event underscored the importance of interdisciplinary solutions to complex mining and water challenges.



NRULPC Director **Ethan Orr** moderated a session featuring **Ty Ferré**, Distinguished Professor in Hydrology and Atmospheric Sciences, and **Tomas Goode**, Principal Hydrogeologist for South32's Hermosa Project. NRULPC Co-Director **John Lacy**, founding director of the Global Mining Law Center, led a conversation on the historical evolution of water rights in mining, with insights from **Carlos Ronstadt**, NRULPC Advisory Board member, and **Eric Nystrom**, author and history professor at the University of Nevada-Reno. And NRULPC Fellow Colin McKenzie facilitated a session with Canadian experts **Dr. Ginger Gibson** and **Kyle Vermette**, LLB (Métis) from the Firelight Group, discussing the role of IBAs in achieving fair benefits for Indigenous communities while fostering cooperation and avoiding litigation.

Key themes included the historical and ongoing challenges of water use in mining, particularly in arid regions like the western U.S., and the role of hydrological modeling in mitigating impacts on water resources. A panel on the Superior, Arizona case study highlighted collaborative efforts between **Resolution Copper**, the **Town of Superior**, and Tucson-based water consultancy **Montgomery & Associates** to restore Queen Creek and ensure a sustainable water supply for the Town.

The summit emphasized the importance of collaboration among mining companies, communities, and regulatory bodies, alongside the need for sustainable practices. Experts underscored how agreements, such as IBAs, elevate standards beyond regulatory requirements, addressing both technical and social dimensions of mining operations. Discussions highlighted the role of early, transparent communication and university research in supporting responsible, community-inclusive mining projects.

With topics ranging from water rights history to contemporary community engagement, the summit builds on themes of “social license to operate,” complementing the **School of Mining and Mineral Resources’** inaugural Social License Summit earlier this year (a brief synthesis report of which can be found [here](#)). These discussions serve to educate both communities and companies on navigating the challenges and opportunities of modern mining.

[Regulatory Round-up Issue 13](#)

Regulatory Tracking Highlights, PERC Virtual Fence Policy Framework and Fire Management Monitoring

NRULPC Reauthorized for Another Seven Years

The Natural Resource Users Law and Policy Center (NRULPC or Center) is a partnership between the University of Arizona’s Division of Agriculture, Life, and Veterinary Sciences and Cooperative Extension (ALVSCE) and the James E. Rogers College of Law (CoL). The Center’s mission is to help landowners, farmers, ranchers, and small mining operators solve legal and regulatory issues related to using the land, allowing them to be more productive and profitable,

and service to stakeholders in partnership with Cooperative Extension, 2) through the Natural Resource Use and Management law clinic (NRUM) based at the CoL that helps stakeholders with specific legal matters and 3) by providing undergraduate student training through coursework and specific projects. A recent addition to the Clinic is the Water Adjudication Project which provides information and limited legal representation for water right claimants.

The Center recently underwent The University of Arizona review and reauthorization process (required of all units every 5-7 years). The Review Committee provided strong support for the NRULPC and recognized that it is unique within the state and nationally both because of the partnership between CALES and the College of Law historically (and now Cooperative Extension and the College of Law) and the focus on the practical legal issues facing natural resource users and related policy concerns. This unique breadth allows the NRULPC to work with stakeholders in different ways according to their needs. It provides a variety of educational and training opportunities for students across the University. The Committee noted that there were no comparable peer programs in the United States.

We are pleased that the Center has been reauthorized for another seven years and is currently undergoing a strategic planning process to help determine the best possible future. If you would like to stay informed about the NRULPC, please consider signing up for the NRULPC Natural Resource Briefs newsletter, Regulatory Roundup for highlights on recent regulatory changes or listserv for periodic updates by contacting [Sheila Merrigan](#).

New Resources on the NRULPC Website and Blog

Website

- [Regulatory Roundup - Issue 13](#), November-December 2024.

Western Lands, Western Waters Blog

- No new posts at this time.

Natural Resource Users Law & Policy Center (NRULPC)

The Natural Resource Users Law and Policy Center (NRULPC) is a creative partnership of the University of Arizona's James E. Rogers College of Law and Cooperative Extension that grew out of grassroots discussions. The Center's aims are to collaborate with stakeholders, mentor student clinicians and fellows, provide scholarly legal and policy analysis, and address the underrepresented law and policy needs of the natural resource community of Arizona and the West.



[NRULPC Website](#)

The NRULPC website provides information on the about the center, student programs, leadership and staff, out publications and the Advisory Board.

Newsletter and Other Resources

Newsletters

- Vol. 1, Number 1 - November 2, 2017 - Welcome to the First NRULPC Newsletter!
- Vol. 1, Number 2 - December 22, 2017
- Vol. 1, Number 3 - February 9, 2018
- Vol. 1, Number 4 - March 19, 2018
- Vol. 1, Number 5 - April 30, 2018
- Vol. 1, Number 6 - May 31, 2018
- Vol. 1, Number 7 - July 24, 2018
- Vol. 2, Number 1 - October 19, 2018
- Vol. 2, Number 2 - December 20, 2018
- Vol. 2, Number 3 - February 25, 2019

[Newsletter](#)

The first issue of the NRULPC newsletter was released November 2017. It is published at various times of the year, but generally about every two months.



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[Blog](#)

Our Blog posts are carefully researched and written by NRULPC Clinic students.

Western Lands, Western Waters

Hot topics in natural resource law and policy affecting the American West



[Regulatory Roundup](#)

Summarized updates to law, policy, legislative and regulatory changes. Information made available several times a year.

Would you like to be on our NRULPC listserv? If so, please contact [Sheila Merrigan](#).



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