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NRULPC Newsletter Vol. 8, No. 2

June 27, 2025

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Co-Directors' Message

Hello friends,

We have had some changes to the Director position at NRULPC and we outline those changes in our Leadership Transition article below. We also introduce you to our newest staff member, Taylor Rogers. Taylor will be stepping into the role of Agriculture Policy and Outreach Manager. Welcome Taylor! Colin McKenzie provides some information about embedding counsel in Cooperative Extension and lastly, Anne Gondor finishes out her time with NRULPC with an update on the undergraduate course she has helped teach for the last several years. We thank Anne for all her great work with the class, Regulatory Round-up and so much more. We wish her the very best in her new position with the UA Water Resources Research Center!

Ed



Leadership Transition at the Natural Resource Users Law and Policy Center

It seems like only recently we were welcoming Dr. Ethan Orr as the new Executive Director of the Natural Resource Users Law and Policy Center (NRULPC). Today, we are writing to share a leadership update.

Dr. Orr has accepted a new position as Dean of the Don B. Huntley College of Agriculture at Cal Poly, Pomona. Please join me in congratulating him on this exciting opportunity.

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Ed Martin, Associate Vice President and Director of the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, will serve as Interim Executive Director of the NRULPC. Dr. Martin brings a wealth of experience and leadership to the role, and we are confident the Center will continue to thrive under his guidance during this transition.

Our goal is to have a permanent Executive Director in place by the end of the summer. Once the position has received the necessary approvals and is officially posted, we will share the job announcement widely. We appreciate your help promoting this opportunity to potential candidates and look forward to bringing strong applicants to campus for interviews.

Thank you for your continued support of the Center and its mission.

Welcome Taylor Rogers!



family in Maricopa County. She is a proud CALES alumni from the class of 20217, receiving her bachelor's degree in agriculture technology management. She received her masters degree from Texas A&M University in agriculture communications. After doing an internship on Capitol Hill with Senator John McCain's office, Taylor knew she wanted to work in politics. She also attributes her political interest to her professional development training from her time in FFA and 4-H through Maricopa County Cooperative Extension.

Taylor worked for the Arizona Farm Bureau as an outreach manager, getting to work with agriculturalists across the state. She then went on to work for U.S. Senator Mark Kelly's office as the Central Arizona Outreach Director, learning the political landscape of state in a variety of issues. We are happy to welcome her to the team as the Agriculture Policy and Outreach Manager for the Natural Resource Users Law and Policy Center.

Law in the Field: Embedding Practical Counsel in Cooperative Extension

Colin McKenzie

Conflicts over the use and management of natural resources rarely arrive in neat legal categories. That is why the Natural Resource Users Law and Policy Center's (NRULPC's) mission⁽¹⁾ represents a *law-in-the-field* model. This place-based scientific approach, embedded within Cooperative Extension, and applied to the domain of the law and policy—of the use and management of natural resources⁽²⁾—yields a problem solving grammar⁽³⁾. After all, public policy choices (often difficult ones) arise out of complex legal rights and obligations—here, in terms of a unique blend property, public lands, and environmental law doctrines. The aim is modest: a



vocabulary reach. In the vein of Extension’s historic mandate⁽⁴⁾, just as Specialists translate campus research into local advice, the field counsel model for law and policy can translate [statutes and permits] into plain-language scenarios, if not discrete options—or an “enhanced common sense” in the words of the general counsel of one Arizona irrigation district—allowing growers, land and water managers, and small operators to engage in, for example, a sort of preventative diplomacy⁽⁵⁾, or collaborative conservation.

“These things matter,” as has been observed, because “taken together, the management of our natural resources has a critical influence on where we live, our quality of life and, perhaps most important, the kind of world our children and their children will live in.”⁽⁶⁾ Two projects I’m involved with presently anchor and exemplify this approach: first, and one way to go, as a Clinic–Center collaboration is testing currently, in the mining “social license to operate” space, is taking a law and policy lab-based incubator approach to growing the requisite “community of practice” needed to grow—in real time—the *relevant* foundational research base. Following on the theme of last year’s mining law summit, and the first two annual Social License Summits put on by the School of Mining and Mineral Resources, we are developing community guides to good neighbor agreements.

Second: I’m redeveloping a survey course in environmental law and policy course (LAW 454/554), which runs three times a year—asynchronously and online—that over the years has had strong College of Agriculture, Life and Environmental Science (CALES) undergraduate student contingent—particularly from the School of Natural Resources and the Environment (SNRE). The salience and operative question here is, with a hat tip to NRULPC Assistant Director—and College of Law Global Mining Law Center founding Director—John Lacy’s approach to the extensive Mining Law and Policy curriculum that he and colleagues have developed over the past ten years: how can some of this material be repurposed, with an eye to accessibility, to the non-university public in what John has termed public- or industry-facing “community sites.”

So, looking to FY2026, and the Center’s strategic planning process, now begun in earnest, the offer I’d flag to our readers here is straightforward: think of Extension as a statewide early-warning system for [*regulatory friction*], and of NRULPC as a sort of legal–policy translator. Our ask is equally plain: tell us about your intractable, or paradoxical, issues and help refine the model. We are

research *translation* layer that busy growers, practitioners, and public officials may lack. If the approach is efficacious in these test-bed spheres—place-based, parsimonious, and Extension-rooted—it can be made to do more, good “work.”⁽⁷⁾

(1) “. . . [to] promote collaborative partnerships between experts and communities to *address complex legal and policy analysis needs* of the natural resource community” of Arizona and the West.

(2) See Robert L. Fischman, *What is Natural Resources Law*, 78 U. Colo. L. Rev. 717 (2007), available at

<https://scholar.law.colorado.edu/lawreview/vol78/iss2/8>

(3) Cf. Burke Griggs, *Does Groundwater Management Work*, 15 Kan. J. L. & Pub. Pol’y 391, 401, available [here](#) via Adobe Cloud (comparing, in debate over groundwater management, the “understanding of [the] terms” and divergent meanings, in the respective approaches of “conservationists” vs. “realists”); see also *id.* Pt. IV, pp. 401–404.”

(4) That is, to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and “home economics;” in other words: turning campus research into hands-on advice that rural communities, for example, can make immediate use to improve productivity, health, and livelihoods.

(5) Cf. Utton Center for Transboundary Resources, Utton Center Scientific and Technical Report, July 2006, available [here](#) via osti.gov (reporting on the results of University of New Mexico-based interdisciplinary research center’s early 2000s work on “preventing and managing transboundary water conflicts,” in terms of “equitable and sustainable management and utilization of transboundary resources through impartial expertise, multi-disciplinary scholarship, and *preventive diplomacy*”).

(6) Josh Eagle, James Salzman and Barton Thompson, *Natural Resources Law & Policy* (West, 2017).

(7) Griggs, *supra* n.3, at 402 (asking an important rhetorical question: What does it mean for groundwater management to work?) Griggs goes on to frame the contours of the debate:

Within this context, work can have at least two apposite meanings. First, it is a term of industry: work, divided by time, equals power. To what extent, then, should groundwater management serve industry and those who work within the boundaries of a [Groundwater Management District], such as the irrigators, the ranchers, and local industries? In a second, more colloquial sense, work has the

forever? The longer the duration, the less water irrigators can pump.
Id.

Undergraduate Course Update 2025

Anne Gondor

The Agricultural and Environmental Legal Issues (ACBS-LAW-RNR 411) course was taught again by Joe Willis and Anne Gondor. Final enrollment was 25 students for in person, Spring 2025. There were 11 Law Program students, 13 College of Ag students and 1 Renewable and Natural Resources Program student. ACBS students were from program majors – Animal Sciences, Nutrition and Food Systems, Agricultural Tech Mgmt & Educ and one College of Architecture student. Law Students had additional programs of study such as Psychology, Philosophy, Bioethics and Criminology. The academic level demographics were 12 seniors, 7 juniors and 6 sophomores.



We had help from 14 guest speakers from the NRULPC board (3) and industry professionals (11) with expertise in the 14 regulatory topics covered in the course such as water law, food safety, farm bill, endangered species, NEPA, CERCLA, conservation easements and the business of ranching. This year we had 3 new speakers join the ranks. From The Nature Conservancy, Paul Maynard, the new Southern Arizona Land and Water Protection Manager, joined John Barrett in teaching the Conservation Easements topic. Due to the Federal workforce shake up, we thank the new presenter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who gave the ESA and Jaguar topic, Cassondra Walker. Many thanks also go out to Marit Alanen for giving the presentation for the past 7 years and best wishes for her next adventures. Lastly, we thank John Boelts, Arizona Farm Bureau, State President, for taking on the Farm Bill presentation this year.

Joe Willis has agreed to stay on as the instructor of record to teach the course again in 2026 on condition he can get a replacement for Anne, who will not be available due to her taking a new position with the U of A WRRC. Joe spoke to

Many thanks to all the board members and other guest speakers who gave presentations to our class, this year and over the last 8 years, the students greatly benefit from your expertise.

New Resources on the NRULPC Website and Blog

[Website](#)

- No new posts at this time.

[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.

Western Lands, Western Waters

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



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

[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 listserve? If so, please contact [Sheila Merrigan](#).

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