



## NRULPC Newsletter Vol. 6, No. 1

*February 23, 2023*

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### Co-Directors' Message

Hello from Tucson,

The year is off to a good start! We are excited to have two new associates. Jennifer Wendel joins us as the Assistant Director of the new Arizona Adjudications Project and Dr. Michael Kotutwa Johnson joins us as an Affiliated Faculty member whose role will be to bring American Indian and non-Indian Natural Resources issues forward. We look forward to working with Jennifer and Michael! Clinic students have posted two new blog posts: 1) "Hot" topics in Solar Energy in Central Arizona and 2) Protection of Land Central to Apache Religious Practices. These two posts, and all others, can be seen on the [Western Lands, Western Waters blog](#).

George and John,  
Co-Directors



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## Welcome Jennifer Wendel

Jennifer joined the law school's Natural Resource Use & Management Clinic at the end of December as the Assistant Director of the new Arizona Adjudications Project. Jennifer graduated from the U of A Law School in 2019, and spent about



two years in Idaho as an Assistant Attorney General representing the Idaho Department of Water Resources in the state's water adjudications. For the last year and a half, Jennifer was at the Phoenix Field Solicitor's Office of the U.S. Department of Interior. At DOI, Jennifer represented the Bureau of Indian Affairs in a variety of matters, lead the water adjudication work for the Bureau of Land Management, and worked with the National Park Service

water division on adjudication claims.

The new Arizona Adjudication Project aims to ease the burden on the water court by helping claimants navigate the adjudication claims process. The Project allows the Clinic both to help small landowners file adjudication claims and to represent these claimants in preliminary, settlement-directed status conferences in water court. As part of this effort, Jennifer is working with Clinic students to build a public information website for all Arizona adjudication claimants.

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## Greetings from Michael Kotutwa Johnson

The Natural Resource Users Law and Policy Center (NRULPC) is a unique

partnership between the University of Arizona's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cooperative Extension, and the James E. Rogers College of Law. In a collaborative effort to bring Indian and non-Indian Natural Resource issues forward, NRULPC has invited me to join the Center as an affiliated faculty member. I am a traditional Hopi dryland farmer. My primary work at the University of Arizona is with the Indigenous Resiliency Center in the School of Natural Resources and the Environment. My research focuses on Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (ITEK) and Land Use Management schemes related to food, energy, conservation, and water.



Consider the significance of American Indian agricultural producers in Arizona and the opportunity that working with them offers. Sixty percent of Arizona's agricultural producers are American Indian. Also, 21 million farm acres in Arizona are tended by producers on lands controlled by the state's twenty American Indian tribes and nations. This acreage accounts for nearly 80 percent of all land farmed in Arizona. Furthermore, Indian lands in Arizona are centers of plant and wildlife biodiversity. However, tribal governments lack the funding and capacity to provide the initiatives necessary to further develop their fish and wildlife departments. Projects and partnerships with goals such as developing sound water conservation methods on tribal lands will not only benefit Indian producers but all producers in Arizona.

My interests include developing a series of policy briefs or white papers on topics including:

- Regenerative Agriculture;
- Smart Agriculture;
- Meat Processing Centers; and
- Fish and Wildlife.

These policy briefs, white papers, and extension bulletins will aid in the outreach to tribal communities and help strengthen the Arizona agriculture community. These projects will highlight the various stakeholders involved in American

Indian natural resource management, including work in agriculture and conservation. The work will bring about a better understanding of the barriers that American Indian producers face and suggest ways to remove those barriers.

I will work on these projects with the James E. Rogers College of Law's Tribal Justice Clinic and Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program. The search is underway for a graduate research assistant to help me with these projects. One example of the work I am undertaking is an examination of seeds as objects of cultural patrimony. Under the Native American Graves Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), cultural funerary and ceremonial objects are required by law to be returned to their descendant communities. In my upcoming article, I collaborate with Dr. Matthew J. Rowe, School of Anthropology, and Rebecca Tsosie, James E. Rogers College of Law, to address the issue, "Do Indigenous seeds fall under the definition of cultural patrimony in NAGRPA?"

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Check out the latest [Blog posts](#) from the Clinic students!

["Hot" Topics in Solar Energy in Central Arizona](#) by Bailey Martin  
[Protection of Land Central to Apache Religious Practices](#) by Taylor Macy

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### ***New Resources on the NRULPC Website and Blog***

#### ***Website***

- [Regulatory Roundup](#) - none at this time

#### ***Western Lands, Western Waters Blog***

- ["Hot" Topics in Solar Energy in Central Arizona](#)
  - [Protection of Land Central to Apache Religious Practices](#)
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## 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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## Western Lands, Western Waters

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

## [Blog](#)

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



Time sensitive law and policy information.

## [Regulatory Roundup](#)

Time sensitive policy and legislative information. 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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