ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES LAW

FALL '09 newsletter
If you know our Environmental and Natural Resources Law Program, you may be wondering about the new face on this director’s page. I’m the one in red running the borehole logging instrument. My work almost 35 years ago as a field geologist for a French uranium exploration company gave me hands-on experience in alternative energy sources during a previous oil crisis. As our nation faces many of the same, as well as new, energy challenges today, I am delighted to take over the reins of this program at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law. Our previous director, Fred Cheever, has assumed the onerous responsibility of serving as our law school’s associate dean of academic affairs, while I, in the more enviable role as director, have the pleasure of sharing with you in this newsletter many of the exciting aspects of our program.

- Associate Professor K.K. DuVivier
WHAT ARE ENRLP FACULTY UP TO?

PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, MEDIA APPEARANCES, ETC.

**Presentations:**


Federico Cheever, "The Endangered Species Act and the Obama Administration," to the Environmental Section of the Colorado Bar Association (October 2009).


Rock Pring (with Kitty Pring), "The Environmental Courts and Tribunals (ECTs)," (World Resources Institute, forthcoming 2009).

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Fred Cheever was re-elected RMMLF Trustee at Large, an honor rarely granted to academics.

K. K. DuVivier, Mike Harris, and Fred Cheever, Co-faught an Environmental Partners course, "Environmental Laws & Regulations," to approximately 35 employees of the Army Corps of Engineers from all over the U.S., Denver, Colo. (August 17-21, 2009).

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The University of Denver Sturm College of Law is located in one of the premier legal centers in the world for environmental, natural resources and renewable energy law. DU's Legal Externship Program has a strong focus on externships in these areas. Externs in the program work with leading federal, state and local government agencies, international, national and local public interest organizations, and private law firms and corporations, each of which offers legal learning and career advancement opportunities. Working under the guidance of a dedicated attorney mentor, students participate in everything from drafting legal documents to attending court and a wide range of business meetings. The law school's Legal Externship Program is also one of the largest of its kind in the country: 66% of students in our 2009 graduating class participated in a legal externship. 429 students participated in legal externships during the 2009 academic year in 255 different externship placements. Approximately 15% of our students extern each year in the environmental, natural resources and renewable energy areas. Placements include the Environmental Protection Agency, The Nature Conservancy and Earth Justice, as well as outstanding private law firms and corporations. As Colorado and the country focus on a New Energy Economy, we are creating more placements in the area of renewable energy. For example, this year, several of our students have worked with Bye Energy, a start-up organization focused on expediting the commercialization of alternative energy sources in renewable biofuels.

-- Ann Vessels, director of the Legal Externship Program

Our students work with many of the most outstanding environmental and natural resource organizations in the Front Range and throughout the world. We appreciate the work of our mentors and welcome others interested in working with our students. To become a mentor in the Legal Externship Program, please contact Ann Vessels, director, avessels@law.du.edu.

Two of our recent students described their externships this way:

This was the best experience I had in law school. The substantive work was both challenging and of significance to the office, so the bar was raised high. Working with a real client provided an invaluable bridge to the practice world one can't get in a classroom. I worked on issues as varied as wind power development on federal lands and managing the size of the elk population on a federal refuge. The interaction with the attorneys in the office and the clients of the DOI was invaluable. My mentor included me in every meeting or experience possible, and also offered great career advice.

— Kate Williams-Shuck, Extern with Dana Jacobsen, Solicitor's Office, U.S. Department of the Interior

I gained a whole new appreciation and skill set for the drafting of legal documents. I've also gained considerable knowledge about corporate business practices and the partnerships that had previously been mysteries to me. I was able to participate in everything from company-wide meetings to CLEs regarding renewable fuels, to Renewable Energy Task Force meetings. We saw negotiations between clients, investors, and partners develop into actual legal issues and were there from start to finish on many of the deals that our company brokered.

— Adam Royval, Extern with Debra Wilcox, Bye Energy