



GETCHES-WILKINSON CENTER

**for Natural Resources, Energy, and
the Environment at Colorado Law**

The 2020 Ruth Wright Distinguished Lecture in Natural Resources



Public Land Policy after the Trump Administration: Is This a Turning Point?

Professor John Leshy

Harry D. Sunderland and Distinguished Professor of Law Emeritus
University of California Hastings, College of Law
Solicitor, Department of the Interior, 1993-2001

**Thursday, February 27, 2020
Wolf Law Building, Wittemyer Courtroom
University of Colorado School of Law**



The Ruth Wright Distinguished Lecture in Natural Resources

The annual Distinguished Lecture Series is a cooperative venture between the Getches-Wilkinson Center (GWC) and the Colorado Natural Resources, Energy, & Environmental Law Review to host a distinguished figure in the fields of natural resource, energy, and environmental law and policy. The Distinguished Lecture series provides a public forum for thought-leadership, allowing the speakers to reflect on their experiences and provide insights on the current challenges facing natural resources, energy, and the environment. The articles and transcripts resulting from these lectures are published in the Law Review.



In 2018, the GWC received a generous gift from the Wright Family Foundation to establish the Ruth Wright Distinguished Lecture in Natural Resources in honor of her inspiring legacy as a leader in western natural resources, land conservation, and environmental policy and advocacy. With this support we look forward to bringing this free event to our community for years to come.

As a legislator, environmentalist, and historian, Ruth Wright dedicated her career to environmental issues and activism. While a student at Colorado Law, she led efforts to preserve Boulder's open space and limit the height of buildings in Boulder to 55 feet to protect enjoyment of the unique landscape for the ages. In 1980, she was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives, where she represented Boulder until 1994. She was also the second woman ever to become the House minority leader, a role she held from 1986 until 1992. While serving in the House of Representatives, Wright continued to be a strategic champion for the environment, and has been recognized by such groups as the Colorado Wildlife Foundation, the ACLU, the Sierra Club, and Colorado Open Lands. We look forward to recognizing her inspiring legacy for years to come.

Past Distinguished Lecturers

Lisa Heinzerling (November 9, 2018)

Justice William J. Brennan, Jr. Professor of Law
Georgetown Law

Mary Wood (September 20, 2017)

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

Bill Hedden (April 21, 2016)

Executive Director, Grand Canyon Trust

Michael Connor (March 10, 2015)

Former Deputy Secretary, United States Department of the Interior

Bruce Babbitt (March 17, 2014)

Former Secretary, United States Department of the Interior

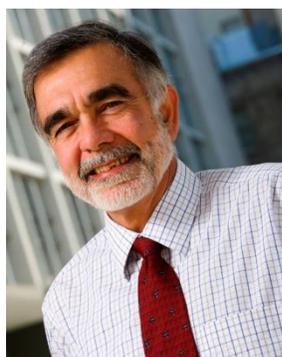
Public Land Policy after the Trump Administration: Is This a Turning Point?

Since the Civil War, a strong, bipartisan consensus has developed in support of the national government's owning large amounts of land. Over the last half-century, that consensus has favored managing more and more of these lands primarily for inspiration, education, human-powered recreation, and environmental conservation.

The Trump Administration has moved aggressively to open previously protected public lands to fossil fuel and other forms of intensive development and to roll back protections in a host of other ways, including starving and shrinking the agencies that manage these lands.

Is this the harbinger of a fundamental change in the trajectory of public land policy, or is it an aberration? Professor Leshy will be drawing upon material from his much-anticipated book, forthcoming from Yale University Press, with the working title *Our Common Ground: A History of America's Public Lands*.

Distinguished Lecturer: Professor John Leshy



John Leshy, the Harry D. Sunderland Distinguished Professor Emeritus, University of California, Hastings College of the Law, is the preeminent authority on the law, history, and policy of America's public lands. After graduating from Harvard Law School in 1969, John served as an attorney for the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department (1969-1972) and the Natural Resource Defense Council (1972-1977) and as Associate Solicitor for Energy and Resources at the Interior Department (1977-1980).

He joined the faculty at the Arizona State University College of Law as Professor of Law in 1980 and remained on the faculty until 2002. During that time, he served as Solicitor of the Department of the Interior (the highest legal official in the Department) from 1993 through 2001 and was Secretary Bruce Babbitt's closest advisor. He joined the faculty at the University of California-Hastings in 2001 and remains there today.

Throughout his career John has been a prodigious author. In addition to many articles, book chapters, and op-ed pieces, he wrote the classic study of mining on the public lands, *The Mining Law: A Study in Perpetual Motion* (1987); authored *The Arizona State Constitution* (2nd ed. 2013); and is co-author of two standard casebooks, *Federal Public Land and Resources Law* (7th ed. 2014) and *Legal Control of Water Resources* (6th ed. 2018). For the past several years, he has been writing a comprehensive history of America's public lands, which is expected to become the definitive work on the subject.

John has always dedicated himself to public service, taking on many special assignments for federal, tribal, state, and local entities. He has served as a long-time board member of the Wyss Foundation, the Grand Canyon Trust, and the National Heritage Institute.

Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy, and the Environment



The Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy and the Environment endeavors to serve the people of the American West, the nation, and the world through creative, interdisciplinary research, bold, inclusive teaching and innovative problem solving in order to further true sustainability for our use of the lands, waters, and environment. Major programs and initiatives focus on natural resources, water and public lands issues in Colorado and the West; energy and environmental security in the developing world; electricity regulation and energy policy; climate change law and policy; and native communities and environmental justice. The name comes from the contributions of two iconic figures in the law school's environmental law history, David Getches and Charles Wilkinson.

Co-sponsor



Upcoming GWC Events

7th Annual Clyde Martz Winter Symposium

A Green New Deal for Public Lands?

Friday, February 28th, 2020

41st Annual GWC Summer Conference

Finding the Money For Improved Water Management in the West:

A Review of Issues, Options and Promising Innovations

June 4th and 5th, 2020

GWC event information and updates available at:

<https://www.getches-wilkinsoncenter.cu.law/>