

2026 Great Plains Environmental Law Summit | Speaker & Moderator Bios

Alphabetical by last name; The views and opinions expressed during this event are those of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect official policy or position of any agency or employer.

Sumudu Atapattu



Sumudu Anopama Atapattu is a Teaching Professor and Director of the Global Legal Studies Center at UW Law School. She is also the Executive Director of the Human Rights Program at UW-Madison. She teaches in the areas of International Environmental law and climate change and human rights. She is affiliated with UW-Madison's Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, Global Health Institute, the Center for South Asia, and the 4W Initiative and was a visiting professor at Doshisha University Law School, Japan (2014), Justus Liebig University, Germany (2016, 2022), Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona, Spain (2019) and Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile (2025). She has also taught in UN Regional Training Programs on International Law (Ethiopia and Chile). Dr. Atapattu has worked on several projects as an independent consultant, attended several climate COP meetings, UN experts consultations, and taught blended learning courses on human rights and the environment in Asia organized by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Human Rights. Her research examines the link between human rights and the environment, especially climate change, climate migration and small island states.

Warigia M. Bowman



Warigia M. Bowman currently teaches water law, administrative law, natural resources and energy at the University of New Mexico School of Law. Her work has been cited in the New York Times, and she is a sought after expert in infrastructure, water, energy and regulation who has been interviewed by PBS, CNN, and Democracy Now. Bowman has extensive law and policy experience in local, state and federal government, as well as in the non-profit sector. Bowman has published widely on infrastructure, water law, telecommunications and regulatory issues. She has consulted for the Kenyan Government, USAID, the United Nations, and the U.S. State Department. Before joining The University of New Mexico, she taught at the University of Tulsa, the American University in Cairo, Egypt during the revolution of 2011, as well as at the University of Mississippi, the University of

Arkansas and Kabarak University in Kenya. In 2023, she published a book with Palgrave McMillan, “Digital Development in East Africa: The Distribution, Diffusion, and Governance of Information Technology.”

Rebecca M. Bratspies



Rebecca Bratspies is the Oliver Houck Professor of Environmental Law at Tulane University. A scholar of property law, environmental justice, and human rights, Rebecca has written scores of law review articles. Her most recent book is “Teaching Environmental Law In Context” (with Carmen Gonzalez). Her co-authored textbook “Environmental Justice: Law Policy and Regulation” is now in its fourth edition. Her award-winning history book “Naming Gotham: The Villains, Rogues and Heroes Behind New York Place Names” is in its second printing. Rebecca serves as an appointed member of New York City’s Environmental Justice Advisory Board, is a past member of EPA’s Children’s Health Protection Advisory Committee, and past president of the AALS Environmental Section. ABA-SEER honored Rebecca’s work with its 2021 Commitment to Diversity and Justice Award. She is best known for her EPA Clean Air Excellence Award winning graphic novel series “The Environmental Justice Chronicles: Mayah’s Lot, Bina’s Plant, and Troop’s Run,” (with artist Charlie LaGreca-Velasco.) Her graphic novella “The Earth Defenders” (a collaboration with the United Nations Environmental Programme) shines a spotlight on the dangers that environmental defenders face around the world.

Robin Kundis Craig



Robin Kundis Craig specializes in all things water, including the relationships between climate change and water; the water-energy-food nexus; the Clean Water Act; the intersection of water issues and land issues; ocean and coastal law; marine biodiversity and marine protected areas; water law; ecological resilience and the law; climate change adaptation, and the relationships between environmental law and public health. She is the author, co-author, or editor of 12 books, as well as textbooks for Environmental Law, Water Law and Toxic Torts. She has also written more than 100 law review articles and book chapters in both legal and scientific publications.

Martha F. Davis



Martha F. Davis is a University Distinguished Professor at Northeastern University School of Law, co-director of the Center for Global Law and Policy, and an affiliated professor with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law in Lund, Sweden. Her research, writing, and legal advocacy focus on human rights and social justice issues, with particular emphasis on subnational laws and policies. Her scholarship on the human right to water has been lauded by American Water Resources Association, and she is a member of the Expert Committee of the Geneva-based organization HumanRight2Water. Professor Davis is co-editor of the new book “Human Rights Economies and Subnational Governance: Theory and Practice,” and co-editor of the “Research Handbook on Human Rights and Poverty,” now in its second edition. She serves as coordinator of the Bringing Human Rights Home Lawyers Network, a network of over 800 U.S. lawyers working to advance domestic human rights implementation.

Monika U. Ehrman



Monika Ehrman is Professor of Law at SMU Dedman School of Law and Professor of Engineering (by courtesy) in the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering at SMU Lyle School of Engineering. She was recently awarded a Robert G. Storey Distinguished Faculty Fellowship. Prior to academia, she worked as both a petroleum engineer in the upstream, midstream & pipeline sectors of the energy industry and as an attorney for Pioneer Natural Resources (now ExxonMobil) and a national law firm. She researches in energy, oil and gas law, mining (terrestrial and outer space), Tribal energy sovereignty, natural resources, property, and environmental law & policy. She is principal investigator of a multi-year team grant awarded in 2021 from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to study energy decision-making on fossil energy Tribal Nations. Professor Ehrman earned a B.Sc. in Petroleum Engineering from the University of Alberta; J.D. from SMU Law; and LL.M. from Yale Law School. She serves on numerous national and international boards related to energy.

Burke Griggs



Burke Griggs is a professor of law at Washburn University School of Law and co-director of the Center for Resources, Environmental and Energy Law. His work explores the historical, cultural, and technical contexts of property and natural resources law, especially water law and policy. He has authored numerous scholarly articles and co-authors standard casebooks on water law and oil and gas law. He presently serves as a subject matter expert in environmental and energy law for the U.S. Department of Commerce and its critical minerals initiatives across South America. In 2023, he served as the inaugural Fulbright Scholar in Law and Sustainability at the NOVA School of Law in Lisbon, Portugal. Before joining the Washburn faculty, he represented the State of Kansas in federal, interstate, and indigenous water matters, most prominently *Kansas v. Nebraska*, 574 U.S. 445 (2015). He holds a B.A. from Stanford, a Ph.D. from Yale (both in history), and a J.D. from the University of Kansas.

Jim Grijalva



Professor Jim Grijalva speaks and writes on issues related to Indian Country Environmental Law. Since 1996, he has worked with the governments and grassroots organizations of Indian tribes across the country and Alaska as the Director of the Tribal Environmental Law Project, a component of the School of Law's Northern Plains Indian Law Center. He has also served as a technical services contractor and legal trainer for multiple offices of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resources Division. He is a Special Alternate Justice of the Supreme Court of the Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in North Dakota, and an Associate Justice on the Court of Appeals for the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes in Montana.

Rachel Guthrie



Rachel D. Guthrie is a founding member and partner in The Merryman Guthrie Law Firm LLC. Rachel's practice focuses on an array of environmental matters. Prior to forming The Merryman Guthrie Law Firm LLC, Rachel worked for a boutique environmental firm specializing in CERCLA ("Superfund") cost recovery and contribution cases. Rachel began her law career as an environmental associate at a large law firm in Kansas City, where she had a diverse practice in civil and criminal litigation, business transactions and regulatory compliance counseling in matters arising under various environmental and energy laws, including CERCLA, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Federal Insecticide, Rodenticide and Fungicide Act (FIFRA), and radiation safety and public utilities regulation.

Sam Kalen



Before teaching, Professor Sam Kalen practiced in Washington, D.C. for over 20 years, both in the private and public sectors. His private practice work focused principally on environment, energy, Native American, as well as public lands and natural resources law; and he worked primarily on public lands and natural resource matters when serving in the Solicitor's Office at the Department of the Interior during the Clinton Administration. Immediately after law school, Professor Kalen began his career as a law clerk for Justice Warren D. Welliver of the Missouri Supreme Court. Professor Kalen is active in the American Bar Association's Section on Environment, Energy, and Resources, having served as a Chair of two committees and Vice-Chair on several committees.

James May



James R. May, Esq. is Richard S. Righter Distinguished Professor of Law at Washburn University School of Law, where he teaches environmental and constitutional law and human rights, and co-directs the Center for Resources, Environmental and Energy Law. May is a Kansas native who joined Washburn Law in 2024 after decades in academia elsewhere, including at Widener University, and law schools at Georgetown, Duquesne, Hawai'i, Pace, Pittsburgh, Utah, and Vermont. As a lawyer May has championed causes to promote and protect environmental public health and welfare and human rights. May has litigated human rights and environmental cases pro bono publico throughout the United States, the InterAmerican Commission on Human Rights, and various UN bodies. May was lead counsel in pioneering cases to restore water quality and conserve threatened and endangered species and to enforce environmental justice and constitutional rights to a clean environment.

Jessica E. Merrigan



Jessica Merrigan is a partner in the Kansas City and Overland Park offices of Spencer Fane. She counsels clients on environmental matters regarding regulatory requirements and represents them in litigation of environmental claims, including contribution claims under the federal Superfund law. Throughout her career, Jessica has worked with clients to monitor the ongoing changes in chemical regulations and implement programs to manage evolving state, local, and federal requirements for chemical management, disclosure, and research.

Uma Outka



Uma Outka is the Leo S. Brenneisen Distinguished Professor of Law at the University of Kansas School of Law, where she has been on the faculty since 2011 and served as Associate Dean for Faculty from 2019-22. Her scholarship explores the legal context for energy transitions, with a focus on electricity regulation, renewable energy, energy and environmental justice, and decarbonization of the electric grid. In 2024, she served as the American Bar Association delegate observer to the United Nations climate conference (COP 29) in Baku, Azerbaijan. Outka is an elected member of the American Law Institute and a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation. Prior to joining KU, she was a Visiting Scholar in Energy and Land Use Law at Florida State University College of Law. Outka previously served as general counsel for the 1000 Friends of Florida, a non-profit organization focused on land use, environmental conservation, and affordable housing, and worked in private practice at the law firm Verrill Dana in Portland, Maine.

Sam Panarella



Sam Panarella is the Chief Executive Officer of The Foundation for Natural Resources and Energy Law, an educational non-profit dedicated to the scholarly and practical study of natural resources and energy law. He previously served as Dean of UMass Law from 2023 to 2026, where he championed the school's mission to pursue justice while guiding the education of future legal leaders and public servants. Prior to that, Sam spent nearly eight years as the founding Executive Director of the Max S. Baucus Institute, a non-partisan public policy center in Missoula, Montana. He earned his JD cum laude from Lewis & Clark Law School.

Michael Pappas



Michael Pappas is a Professor of Law at the University of Colorado Law School. Professor Pappas teaches primarily in the areas of property, natural resource, and environmental law. His scholarship draws upon interdisciplinary influences associated with economics and political economy, and his work explores the nature of property expectations, governmental responsibilities, and private rights in managing resources such as land, energy, water, wildlife, fisheries, and food.

Samantha Pappas



Samantha Pappas is an attorney in the water branch at EPA Region 7. She focuses on enforcement of the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act. She also provides counseling for the Underground Injection Control permitting program under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Her previous experience includes working for a private insurance defense firm, and as a right of way attorney for the Kansas Department of Transportation. She earned her undergraduate degree in chemical/biomedical engineering from the University of Kansas ('18), and her law degree from Washburn University School of Law ('21).

Robin M. Rotman



Robin M. Rotman is an Associate Professor at the University of Missouri. Her scholarship and teaching focuses on energy, environmental, and natural resources law and policy. Prior to joining the University in 2018, Robin worked as an attorney in governmental and private practice settings. She holds a JD from Yale Law School.

Joseph A. Schremmer



Joseph A. Schremmer is the Eugene Kuntz Chair of Law in Oil, Gas, & Natural Resources at the University of Oklahoma College of Law, where he also directs the Oil, Gas, Natural Resources, and Energy Center. He teaches courses in oil and gas and natural resources law, as well as first-year property and contracts. He is the author of multiple books on oil and gas law, including “Advanced Introduction to U.S. Oil & Gas Law (Edward Elgar 2026), Oil and Gas Law: Cases and Materials” (11th ed. Foundation Press) (co-author), and the multivolume treatise, “Kuntz on Oil and Gas Law” (sole update and revision author). His scholarly articles focus on property law issues in the development of minerals and natural resources. Schremmer is a graduate of the University of Kansas School of Law.

Don C. Smith



Don C. Smith is a retired Professor of the Practice at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law. From 2009-2017, he was the director of the school’s JD and LLM Environmental and Natural Resources Law programs. Between 2012 and 2025 he was editor of the Journal of Energy & Natural Resources Law (JERL), a peer-reviewed publication affiliated with the Section on Energy, Environment, Natural Resources and Infrastructure Law (SEERIL) of the International Bar Association. During his tenure as editor, JERL was ranked in the top quartile of all international energy law journals. He has a Bachelor of Science in Journalism and Mass Communications degree from the University of Kansas and a Juris Doctorate degree from the Washburn University School of Law. He also has a Master’s in European Union Law degree from the University of Leicester (England) Faculty of Law. Before beginning to teach at the University of Denver he worked in publishing positions for McGraw-Hill and Reed Elsevier.

Temple Stoellinger



Temple Stoellinger is a professor and Wyoming Excellence Chair at the University of Wyoming with a dual appointment in the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources and the College of Law. Professor Stoellinger coordinates the Haub School's JD/MA program in Environment and Natural Resources and teaches wildlife law, environmental and natural resources law and policy, public land law, and a course on the National Environmental Policy Act. Her scholarship integrates thinking from the fields of law, economics, policy, and more to explore relevant and timely approaches for decision-making around wildlife, land, energy, and other valued natural resources. Before joining the University of Wyoming, Professor Stoellinger served as a natural resource advisor to Wyoming Governor Dave Freudenthal, worked as legal counsel for Shell International B.V., and served as natural resource counsel for the Wyoming County Commissioners Association. Professor Stoellinger is a member of the ABA SEER NR&E Editorial Board, and is a co-chair of the ABA SEER Biodiversity Committee. She is also a Senior Fellow with the Property Environmental Research Center, and an Adjunct Faculty member with the University of Wyoming School of Energy Resources.

David Tripp



David Tripp is the former EPA Region VII Regional Counsel and former chair of Stinson's environmental practice with more than five decades of experience helping regulated businesses, landowners, developers, and environmental-services clients resolve complex permitting, compliance, enforcement, investigation, administrative, and litigation matters. He brings practical agency insight, seasoned judgment, and technical fluency to federal and state environmental disputes.

Danny Volin



Danny Volin is a 2023 graduate of the University of Kansas School of Law. In law school, he served on the board of the Kansas Journal of Law and Public Policy and published an article on renewable energy policy in the Midwest. He currently works as an environmental attorney for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. In his free time, Danny enjoys reading, running and rock climbing.

Roger Walker



Roger Walker is the Executive Director of REGFORM (Regulatory Environmental Group for Missouri), where he has led the organization since 2007, helping members stay informed on environmental rules and policy while collaborating with state and federal agencies to advocate for sound science and cost-effective environmental protection. He also chairs the Planning Committee for the Midwest Environmental Compliance Conference, Region 7's annual environmental conference, and publishes MECC's "Midwest Environmental Insider," a biweekly information source for the region. Roger brings decades of legal and policy experience to his work, including roles in the Energy and Environmental practice at Armstrong Teasdale LLP, General Counsel and Government Relations lead for the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Attorney at the Bonneville Power Administration. He holds a JD from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, an LLM in Environmental Science from Lewis & Clark Law School, and a B.S. and M.A. in Journalism and American History from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Gina S. Warren



Gina S. Warren is the A.L. O'Quinn Chair in Environmental Studies and co-director of the Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources Center. Her teaching and scholarship focus on the nexus between the environment, property, social justice, and energy. Her scholarship has appeared in top 20 law review journals, books, and peer-reviewed journals. She is an internationally-recognized scholar with publications in prominent journals such as the Boston University Law Review, the Maryland Law Review, the

Missouri Law Review, the Nebraska Law Review, the Idaho Law Review (peer reviewed), the University of Cologne (Germany) Business Law Journal, and the Columbia Journal of Environmental Law. Warren's research has also been cited by the Texas Supreme Court, the Colorado Supreme Court, Massachusetts appellate courts, the Oxford Handbook of Sport and Society, and showcased by the Washington Post, among others. Professor Warren is an elected member of the American Law Institute. She was in private practice for several years prior to entering academia. She worked as a litigator in land use, environment, and utility law at Perkins Coie, LLP. Professor Warren also completed a clerkship for the Honorable Michael Winkelstein of the Appellate Division of the Superior Court of New Jersey. She received her Bachelor of Science from the University of Arizona and her Juris Doctorate from Rutgers School of Law. She is admitted to practice law in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Washington.