



ADVOCATES for the WEST

2026 Fall/Winter Case Notes

*'Cimarron Color' – Mark Darnell Photography
Cimarron Ridge, Uncompahgre National Forest, CO*

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A NEW CHAPTER, POWERED BY AN EXCEPTIONAL TEAM

Ben Gordon, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I’m thrilled to introduce myself as the new Executive Director of *Advocates for the West*.

If we haven’t met yet, I’ve spent my career protecting the public lands, water, and wildlife that make the West extraordinary. Most recently, I served as Executive Director of Central Oregon LandWatch, where I worked alongside communities and conservation partners to defend Oregon’s public lands and natural resources. I’m excited to bring that experience to *Advocates for the West*—and to join an organization whose work I have long admired.

Starting a new job always presents a learning curve. Assuming the role of Executive Director at *Advocates for the West* feels a little more like jumping aboard a fast-moving train.

That’s because while I’m getting up to speed, this remarkable team is moving full steam ahead. Our attorneys continue to file important cases, achieve significant victories, and stand up for the conservation

values that have guided *Advocates for the West* from the beginning. I’m inspired by the impact we’re having and by what I’m learning from the talented folks who tenaciously serve our mission.

Beyond talent, something that drew me to *Advocates for the West* is the depth of experience on our team. Senior Attorneys Laurie Rule and Todd Tucci have been here since the organization’s earliest days, and many of our Staff Attorneys for not much less. Together, they have decades of experience navigating the complexities of environmental law, building partnerships, and delivering results in court. They bring institutional knowledge and an extraordinary record of success.

At the same time, *Advocates for the West* continues to add attorneys who bring fresh energy, new ideas, and a deep commitment to stewarding the West. The legal team is paired with a top-notch administrative team led by Deputy Director Aimee Moran, whose vast experience in non-profit

administration and development provides the foundation for *Advocates for the West*’s continued success. This combination puts *Advocates for the West* in a powerful position to continue winning the environmental legal battles that matter most.

But one of the things I’ve come to appreciate most about *Advocates for the West* is that our work isn’t simply about filing lawsuits and winning cases. Litigation is a necessary tool, but it is a means to a larger end: supporting our 85+ conservation partners to achieve lasting change vital to the wellbeing of their communities and cherished natural wonders.

We are finding creative and exciting new ways to put our legal expertise to work for our partners. My previous organization, Central Oregon LandWatch, is a great example. The partnership with LandWatch demonstrates how *Advocates for the West*’s lawyers can empower our partners by increasing legal capacity—helping

partners identify opportunities, navigate complex legal questions, build stronger strategies, and ultimately accomplish more than either organization could alone.

I’m stepping into this role at an exciting moment. The challenges facing the West are enormous, but so is the talent, determination, and creativity of the people working to protect it. I’m honored to join this team, and I’m eager to get to work alongside our staff, board, partners, and supporters.

Thank you for believing in *Advocates for the West* and for making this work possible. I look forward to meeting each of you in the months ahead—and building the next chapter, together.

With gratitude,

'The Glowing Buttes' – Mark Darnell Photography
Valley of the Gods, Bears Ears National Monument, UT



PROTECTING PEOPLE, WILDLIFE, AND WILDLANDS WITHIN THE OWYHEE CANYONLANDS

Lizzy Potter, Staff Attorney

Spanning thousands of square miles where Oregon, Idaho, and Nevada converge, the Owyhee Canyonlands is one of the few places in the Lower 48 where true quiet abounds. This vast and wild landscape of rolling sagebrush steppe includes hundreds of miles of deep, rugged canyons through which life-sustaining rivers flow. The area supports one of two remaining strongholds of contiguous sagebrush habitat in North America, the preservation of which is essential for the recovery of the imperiled greater sage-grouse.

Throughout its history, *Advocates for the West* has been fighting to protect the Owyhee in this tri-state area from a wide range of threats. Our lawsuits and advocacy efforts have curtailed harmful livestock grazing, secured stronger management plans for sage-grouse, pushed to limit hard-rock mining, and stopped commercial trapping in Wilderness Areas.

We have also worked to limit impacts from low-level military jet

training in this wild and wonderful area. Nearly 30 years ago, when the U.S. Air Force expanded its training on the Idaho side of the Owyhee, *Advocates for the West* founder Laird Lucas helped force the Air Force to adopt mitigation measures for Wilderness Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and bighorn sheep habitat during the most sensitive times of the year.

A few years ago, we filed suit challenging the U.S. Air Force's dramatic expansion of its low-level training over the Owyhee despite wide opposition and criticism from a broad coalition of conservation groups, Tribal members, hunters, ranchers, state and federal wildlife agencies, and local governments. Based on the Air Force decision, swarms of fighter jets may now engage in "dogfighting" just 100 feet from the ground and fly at supersonic speeds just 10,000 feet from the ground—a massive change from the prior airspace "floors" of 3,000 feet for normal flights and 30,000 feet for supersonic flights.

Groups of jets flying lower than the tops of tall trees, and racing through remote canyons, shatter the silence and solitude for which this area is prized. Jets produce noise at levels that causes pain and physically damages human and wildlife hearing, while supersonic flights create sonic booms that are powerful enough to shatter glass and cause structural damage.

Recreationists in the area have described harrowing experiences of being knocked to the ground when fighter jets race by, and looking down on jets while hiking up canyon walls. One of our partner's members, who grew up near the Owyhee and still takes her grandchildren on rafting trips there, fears for her safety when riding horseback in the area because the fast and low jets can cause horses to buck. Many Tribal members informed the Air Force that its existing and expanded fighter jet training harms and threatens the people within the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation and Fort

McDermitt Paiute Shoshone Tribal Reservation.

Moreover, fighter jets release about 18,000 pyrotechnic flares into this arid area each year, which poses a serious threat of wildfire. Despite admitting this is likely to cause fires in the area, the Air Force allows flares to be dropped when fire danger is high, claiming that if a wildfire starts, suppression and restoration efforts will prevent such impacts from becoming significant. But as the Big Grass Fire this summer demonstrated, once wildfires start in this remote area, they can quickly spread to catastrophic levels and cause widespread damage to the places upon which people and wildlife depend. Recovery and restoration of sagebrush habitat takes decades, if it is even possible.

Our suit on behalf of a strong coalition of conservation partners targets the Air Force's environmental analysis, which grossly underreported the

magnitude and duration of noise impacts, inappropriately downplayed harm to wildlife and environmental justice communities, and failed to consider mitigation measures that would protect the most sensitive areas from low-level flights. We expect a decision on the merits in this case soon and stand firm in our efforts to protect the health of people, wildlife, and wildlands of this unique landscape.

“OUR SUIT ON BEHALF OF A STRONG COALITION OF CONSERVATION PARTNERS TARGETS THE AIR FORCE’S ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS, WHICH GROSSLY UNDERREPORTED THE MAGNITUDE AND DURATION OF NOISE LEVELS, INAPPROPRIATELY DOWNPLAYED IMPACTS TO WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITIES, AND FAILED TO CONSIDER MITIGATION MEASURES THAT WOULD PROTECT THE MOST SENSITIVE AREAS FROM LOW-LEVEL FLIGHTS.”

*'Rain Gives Succor' – Mark Darnell Photography
Succor Creek Natural Area, Owyhee River Region, OR
Advocates for the West*

Oregon Natural Desert Association, Friends of Nevada Wilderness, Idaho Conservation League

Partners

“PERHAPS THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM IS THAT THE ANTIQUATED LEGAL DOCTRINE UNDERLYING MOST WESTERN STATES’ WATER LAWS—THE DOCTRINE OF ‘PRIOR APPROPRIATION’—DOES NOT ENCOURAGE IRRIGATORS AND OTHER WATER USERS TO BE MORE EFFICIENT AND LEAVE MORE WATER IN RIVERS AND STREAMS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE.”

*'Smith Rock Evening' – Mark Darnell Photography
Smith Rock State Park, OR*

2026 Fall/Winter Case Notes



PROMOTING A NEW PARADIGM TO PROTECT WATER FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE

Andrew Missel, Staff Attorney

Nearly 30 years ago, Professor Janet Neuman in her foundational work “Beneficial Use, Waste, and Forfeiture: The Inefficient Search for Efficiency in Western Water Use” noted the striking disconnect between the existential importance of water in the West and regulators’ tolerance of water waste and misuse. Professor Neuman imagined “an anthropologist from another galaxy” who “sets his spacecraft down in an alfalfa field in the middle of Nevada” and asks a local farmer, “What is the most precious and scarce natural resource in this area?” The astonished farmer naturally answers with “water,” prompting the alien anthropologist to say, “‘Ah, you must have highly developed technology for measuring and rationing this valuable resource. Will you show it to me?’ When the farmer gestures to [an] open ditch as the distribution device, and explains that measurement is not required, it is the visitor’s turn to be astonished.”

Unfortunately, outdated water distribution infrastructure and lax monitoring requirements are far from the only problems with how western states manage water resources. Perhaps the most fundamental problem is that the antiquated legal doctrine underlying most western states’ water laws—the doctrine of “prior appropriation”—does not encourage irrigators and other water users to be more efficient and leave more water in rivers and streams for fish and wildlife. As climate change brings more frequent and severe periods of drought to the West, particularly the interior West, the shortcomings of our water laws become more and more apparent.

The smart approach to this problem is to use all the available levers—legislative reform, administrative actions, and litigation—to protect water in-stream for fish and wildlife. That’s the approach that WaterWatch of Oregon has taken for years: WaterWatch has worked to get legislation passed to modernize Oregon’s water laws;

WaterWatch has pushed hard for changes at the administrative level; and, where appropriate, WaterWatch has engaged in litigation to ensure that more water stays in Oregon’s rivers and streams. (Learn more about WaterWatch of Oregon on page 9.)

Advocates for the West has helped WaterWatch in its litigation efforts on several occasions in the past few years. We represented WaterWatch in successfully defending Oregon’s decision to protect water from being diverted from the lower Crooked River after being released from Prineville Reservoir. We filed an amicus (or “friend of the court”) brief in the Oregon Supreme Court on behalf of a coalition of groups in support of WaterWatch’s successful effort to stop a new dam from being built in Drift Creek in the Willamette River Basin. And we are currently representing WaterWatch in a case in the Oregon Court of Appeals concerning an irrigator’s attempts to divert more water from Bridge Creek, a tributary of the John Day

River that is critical habitat for Middle Columbia River steelhead, a species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

In litigating these cases, we’ve had to work within the existing (deeply flawed) legal regime based on the prior appropriation doctrine. But *Advocates for the West*, like WaterWatch, is good at turning lemons into lemonade. For instance, in the Crooked River case, we went back to the basics—cases from the early part of the 20th century interpreting the prior appropriation doctrine—to craft a winning argument as to why Oregon had the authority to provide legal protection for water released into the lower Crooked River from Prineville Reservoir.

WaterWatch, along with other partners of *Advocates for the West* like Central Oregon LandWatch, is working hard to change the outdated laws governing management of water resources in Oregon. In the meantime, though, *Advocates for the West* is proud to help WaterWatch win cases using the laws already on the books.

STAND WITH US TO RELENTLESSLY DEFEND ALL WE LOVE ABOUT THE WEST



SCAN TO
DONATE

Advocates for the West is not backing down. We're opposing unprecedented environmental regulatory rollbacks and pro-industry threats to our western public lands, water, wildlife, and communities. We offer our winning legal services to our partners at no charge, providing top-notch legal representation for the environment.

If you are inspired by the work you read about in these pages, we hope you'll consider how you can fortify our efforts. Thanks to your support, we continue to fight—and win—for the conservation values you treasure.

Did you know there are many ways to give to *Advocates for the West*, including as a beneficiary in your will or estate to protect the West for generations to come, or through a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA?

Visit AdvocatesWest.org/Donate or scan the QR code to make a tax-deductible gift today, or visit the "Ways to Give" tab on our homepage to learn about different ways to partner with us.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Advocates for the West and WaterWatch of Oregon have been collaborating on water cases since 2015, and the partnership is creating a brighter outlook for Oregon's rivers.

WaterWatch has been working since 1985 to protect and restore flows in Oregon's rivers and aquifers to sustain the native fish, wildlife, and people who depend on them. Working in the courts and legislative and administrative forums, WaterWatch passes pioneering laws, reforms archaic water policies that harm rivers and groundwater, reconnects habitat blocked by obsolete dams, and helps drive climate resilience for Oregon's freshwater environments, species, and people.



WaterWatch of Oregon

Advocates for the West and WaterWatch first came together to work on litigation seeking restoration of flows for the federally protected Oregon spotted frog in the Deschutes River in central Oregon. Since then, *Advocates for the West* has represented WaterWatch in cases to ensure water released from storage for fish is protected instream, to give fish their fair share of water stored in Willamette River Basin reservoirs, and to protect instream flows in a critical steelhead stream in the John Day Basin.

The outcomes of this collaborative work are improving the way water is allocated and managed in Oregon to better care for the rivers, fish, and wildlife that grace our landscape. Both groups look forward to more shared water victories to come!

'Rushing Vitality' – Mark Darnell Photography
McKenzie River, Willamette National Forest, OR
Advocates for the West



"As the climate warms, species decline, public lands are threatened, and habitat quality deteriorates, *Advocates for the West* is there, fighting the good fight to protect these precious and vulnerable resources. Because of their deep commitment and persistently brilliant legal expertise, the planet is a much better place, and it is the reason why we have supported *Advocates for the West* for so many years."

Roger Rosentreter and Ann DeBolt
Boise, ID

THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT: A TOOL FOR HOLDING THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCOUNT

Wilderness Workshop

Partner

Advocates for the West Staff

Environmental litigation frequently begins with a problem that is visible from the outside, but whose factual foundation is less clear. For example, an agency announces a major change to a land-management policy; a forest is suddenly open for logging; a grazing decision appears to ignore scientific information, and so forth. The public can see the outcome, but the crucial evidence of how the agency arrived at and supported its decision is less known. This is where the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) can be particularly helpful.

FOIA aims “to pierce the veil of administrative secrecy and to open agency action to the light of public scrutiny,” as noted in a prominent 1976 U.S. Supreme Court decision. The statute gives any person a right to request records from federal agencies, subject to statutory exemptions. Agencies have a legal obligation to disclose responsive records in a timely manner when no exemption permits withholding. When agencies fail to comply,

which has been happening particularly often under the Trump administration, a requester can challenge the withholding in federal court, leaving the agency with the burden of justifying its decision to withhold records.

Advocates for the West has ramped up its FOIA litigation to respond to current concerns with government transparency under the Trump administration. For example, we recently filed a FOIA lawsuit as part of our longstanding work to protect the greater sage-grouse and the Sagebrush Sea. As you may already be aware, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) published new Resource Management Plan (RMP) Amendments in December 2025 that roll back protections for greater sage-grouse across the bird's range. The plans fall significantly short from the types of conservation measures scientists say are needed to recover the species from its extinction trajectory. As part of our broader work to protect sage-grouse, we submitted a FOIA

request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requesting communications between that agency and the BLM regarding the most recent RMP Amendments, which will hopefully provide insight into how the BLM considered expert input from the Fish and Wildlife Service—the agency responsible for determining whether sage-grouse warrant Endangered Species Act listing—when preparing the plans. The Fish and Wildlife Service failed to comply with our request in a timely manner, so we filed suit earlier this summer.

Another example of our FOIA litigation focuses on our work to protect the Uncompahgre region in southwestern Colorado. In 2020, we filed suit against the BLM on behalf of conservation groups over an RMP that opened nearly all public lands in the Uncompahgre Field Office for oil and gas drilling. Our settlement of that case forced BLM to revisit that decision and prepare an RMP Amendment with a new environmental analysis that evaluated conservation-focused

alternatives. As required, the Biden administration prepared a Draft RMP Amendment and environmental review that was circulated to local and state agencies for comment but never released to the public. Our partner, Wilderness Workshop, sent a FOIA request to the BLM seeking that draft, but the BLM withheld the draft in full, claiming it fell within one of nine FOIA exemptions. We disagreed with the BLM's interpretation of the exemption and filed suit. Our litigation prompted the BLM to turn over the draft, which will help inform our advocacy efforts as the Trump administration prepares to finalize the RMP Amendment later this year.

Through these and other FOIA matters, *Advocates for the West* is fighting to increase transparency under the Trump administration. Stay tuned for more!

“AGENCIES HAVE A LEGAL OBLIGATION TO DISCLOSE RESPONSIVE RECORDS IN A TIMELY MANNER WHEN NO EXEMPTION PERMITS WITHHOLDING. WHEN AGENCIES FAIL TO COMPLY, WHICH HAS BEEN HAPPENING PARTICULARLY OFTEN UNDER THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION, A REQUESTER CAN CHALLENGE THE WITHHOLDING IN FEDERAL COURT, LEAVING THE AGENCY WITH THE BURDEN OF JUSTIFYING ITS DECISION TO WITHHOLD RECORDS.”

*'Black Canyon' – Mark Darnell Photography
Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, CO
2026 Fall/Winter Case Notes*

Advocates for the West



CASE UPDATES

Victory to Restore Northern California's Point Reyes National Seashore

Our landmark January 2025 agreement is ushering in a new era of ecological protection, wildlife conservation, and recreational access at northern California's Point Reyes National Seashore. Under the agreement, owners of all dairies and nearly all cattle ranches at Point Reyes voluntarily agreed to end their operations and transition off the National Seashore in exchange for payments from The Nature Conservancy. Industrial dairy and ranching operations at Point Reyes had led to overgrazing, soil erosion, degraded water quality, and conflicts with native tule elk. But as of summer 2026, the dairies and ranches that are party to our agreement have all now closed their operations at the Seashore. The National Park Service agreed to prioritize resource conservation on those lands and allow native tule elk to roam freely across—and expand their numbers within—the National Seashore. Meanwhile we continue to staunchly oppose attempts to undo our settlement by some Point Reyes ranchers and others not party to the agreement through legal and political attacks.

Defending our Wins for Upper Willamette River Salmon and Steelhead

In August, we took legal action to defend our wins protecting threatened salmon and steelhead in Oregon's Upper Willamette River Basin from harm caused by federal dams. These eight U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dams cause severe harm to Endangered Species Act-protected Chinook salmon and steelhead

by cutting off upstream spawning habitat and impairing downstream water quality and quantity. Our victories have resulted in required actions the Army Corps must take to protect the threatened fish. But local governments filed lawsuits seeking to halt one of the key passage operations at Detroit Dam—a deep drawdown of the reservoir to help juvenile salmon migrate downstream—due to disruption of local tourism and other factors. In response, we've intervened to enforce the Endangered Species Act in prioritizing prevention of salmon extinction over economic inconvenience.

Safeguarding Idaho's South Fork Salmon River Watershed

In August, *Advocates for the West* filed an appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit seeking to reverse federal agencies' unlawful approval of the Stibnite Gold Mine and halt Perpetua Resources' initial construction of the mine in the headwaters of Idaho's South Fork of the Salmon River watershed. Perpetua's open-pit cyanide leach gold mine is within the Nez Perce Tribe's homeland and on the edge of the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. Yet the Forest Service brushed aside public comments and science showing that the mine and building a new access road would harm many fish and wildlife species, prevent Tribal and public access to cherished locations, and pose long-term threats to water and air quality. Perpetua has insisted on moving forward with mine construction—including initial efforts to cut a new access road through protected roadless and riparian areas and habitat for

threatened species—despite ongoing legal challenges. We're fighting the destructive Stibnite Gold Mine on many fronts and also recently filed a notice of appeal to the Idaho Supreme Court challenging an unlawful air pollution permit issued by Idaho Department of Environmental Quality for the mine.

Protecting Colorado's Pawnee National Grassland

Also in August, we filed an opening brief appealing to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit the Bureau of Land Management's failure to protect shortgrass prairie in northern Colorado's Pawnee National Grassland from continued oil and gas extraction. In issuing drilling permits, the BLM erroneously claims to lack authority to consider harms to wildlife, air and water, dark skies, or the aesthetic of the grassland because the federal minerals would be extracted by horizontal drilling and fracking from wells built on private or state lands. So we are challenging this unlawful loophole. Pawnee National Grassland is home to burrowing owls, swift foxes, and supports more than 300 other unique bird species. Oil and gas extraction in and around the area also contributes to ozone pollution in Colorado's Front Range, which since 2004 has consistently exceeded ambient air quality standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency.

JOIN OUR SAGE SOCIETY!

By joining Sage Society—our monthly giving community—you can be the steady current that pushes our work forward. Monthly giving provides the most reliable stream of support for *Advocates for the West*, allowing us to focus on what we do best: providing our partners with free, top-notch legal representation for the environment.

Strengthening the wave of support with your monthly gift is just a few clicks away, and you can change or cancel your monthly gift at any time! Scan the QR code, or visit: AdvocatesWest.org/Sage-Society



SCAN TO
JOIN

'Golden Arches' – Mark Darnell Photography
Grosvenor Arch, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, UT
Advocates for the West



To learn more about our
victories and active cases,
visit: AdvocatesWest.org/Cases

STAFF NEWS

**WELCOME
BEN GORDON**
Executive Director



Ben (he/him) joins *Advocates for the West* after serving since 2020 as Executive Director of Central Oregon LandWatch, an *Advocates for the West* partner organization. At LandWatch, Ben took over from a founding executive director, an attorney, and led strategic efforts to expand the organization’s reach and strengthen its impact to protect public lands and wildlife habitat, and to foster thriving, sustainable communities.

Throughout his career, Ben has demonstrated a deep commitment to conservation and community engagement, bringing experience that will help advance *Advocates for the West*’s mission in a rapidly changing landscape.

Ben also previously served as Program Director for the Oregon Natural Desert Association and has worked in outreach and campaign organizing roles for 1000 Friends of Oregon, the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, and the Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center. Ben earned a bachelor’s degree in Anthropology from the University of Colorado. He lives in Bend, Oregon.

**WELCOME
HOLLY BAINBRIDGE**
Staff Attorney



Holly (she/her) comes to *Advocates for the West* from a background fighting industrial agricultural practices that harm communities, animals, and the environment. Before joining *Advocates for the West*, she worked at non-profits where she led cases to combat factory farm pollution, strengthen oversight of farm animal welfare, and reinstate grants terminated based on federal policies against diversity and climate action. Previously, Holly worked as an environmental litigator for the State of California and a large law firm, and clerked for the U.S. District Court in San Diego. She holds a J.D. and B.S. from the University of Arizona.

Holly lives in Tucson, Arizona, and loves exploring the Southwest with her family. She is excited to combine her passion for the outdoors and litigation experience to protect the public lands and wildlife that make the West home.

**WELCOME
ERIN HOGAN-FREEMOLE**
Staff Attorney



Erin (she/her) has spent most of her adult life studying, working on, and litigating to protect public lands. Erin grew up in western Oregon and studied environmental sciences at the University of Oregon. After earning her J.D. from the University of Colorado, Erin spent a year clerking for the Alaska State Supreme Court before returning to Oregon as a legal fellow at Crag Law Center, where she worked on a range of environmental issues affecting public lands and communities across the Pacific Northwest. She comes to *Advocates for the West* from WildEarth Guardians’ Wild Places program.

Prior to attending law school, Erin worked as a wildland firefighter for nearly a decade, a job that took her all across the West to some of the country’s most remote and beautiful—if very smoky—public lands. She now lives and works in beautiful Portland, Oregon with too many houseplants and a slightly feral community garden. Erin enjoys hiking, camping, paddling, horror novels, long slow runs, and continuing to explore wild places across the West.

'Lone Pine' – Mark Darnell Photography
Deschutes National Forest, OR
2026 Fall/Winter Case Notes

LAW CLERKS, EXTERNS, & INTERNS

**WELCOME
AIDAN MCINTYRE**
Fall Law Extern



Aidan (he/him) is a second-year student at Columbia Law School, born and raised in Boise, Idaho. During his first year, Aidan won the 2026 National Environmental Law Moot Court Competition at Pace University with his Columbia teammates, and spent his first summer working at the Alaska Department of Law's Special Litigation section in Anchorage.

Aidan is also an Articles Editor for the Columbia Journal of Environmental Law, a Coach of Columbia's 2027 National Environmental Law Moot Court Competition team, and a Research Assistant to Professor Anu Bradford on comparative United States and European Union Law.

Prior to law school, Aidan completed his master's degree in Regulation at the London School of Economics. Aidan attended the University of Southern California, double majoring in Music Industry and Economics. Outside of work, Aidan loves visiting National Parks (35 and counting!), playing guitar and writing for his progressive metal band, and reading fantasy novels.



ADVOCATES for the WEST

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FEATURED ARTIST:

Mark Darnell



“It all started when I ventured onto our public lands in remote southeast Oregon to take pictures for the Oregon Natural Desert Association. I spent so much time in the desert wilderness, waiting alone for the right lighting conditions on some windswept off-trail peak, that I gained a deep connection to the natural world. Photography began to take a back seat to my main passion—exploring the wild places just to feed my soul and feel nature’s immensity surrounding me. So now, if I get a good photo, it’s just a bonus!

In sharing images of nature’s beauty in our remote public lands, I hope to spread awareness of the critical need to provide permanent protections for these irreplaceable areas. Most of my photos avoid showing any sign of man, in the desperate attempt to remind us all how nature looked before man changed the picture.” **-Mark Darnell**



Mark’s work can be found at
www.markdarnellphotography.com

‘Golden Winds’ – Mark Darnell Photography
Green River Lake, Bridger Wilderness, Wind River Mountains, WY

When you’re finished reading this publication, pass it on to someone who shares your love for the West!