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Natural Resources Journal, Annual Reports 2001 - 2002

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Natural Resources Journal (NRJ)
UNM School of Law
Annual Report July 2001-June 2002
Submitted by Professor G. Emlen Hall, Editor-in-Chief

The NRJ published four issues this year. The issues embody the editorial changes begun in last year's NRJ and have expanded the depth and range of the Journal's editorial reach. Continuing in the tradition of the NRJ, the 20 core pieces published during the period included a broad mix of inter-disciplinary articles on a wide array of natural resource topics. Each issue contained a rich blend; among issues the range of topics was even greater. The Fall 2001(41:4) issue featured a long, comprehensive analysis of oil and gas covenants. The Winter 2002 (42:1) issue described strategies for NGOs ("non-governmental organizations") in environmental politics. A detailed and revealing statistical analysis of land use allocations in the Northwest Forest Plan was at the center of the Spring 2002 (42:3) issue. Finally, as if to prove that no subject was beyond the Journal's ken, the Summer 2002 (42:4) issue contained a wonderful article focusing on elephants as pests in Sri Lanka. From the light of these distant mirrors, we can learn a lot about natural resource issues closer to home. The Journal continues to shine its lights into all corners of the natural resources world.

These four Journal issues continue the practice begun in the Winter 2001 (41:1) issue of opening each Journal with a more free-flowing essay on an important natural resources topic than is characteristic of the more academic articles at the Journal's core. Opening essays in the 2001-2002 issues included Professor Dan Tarlock's predictions as to the future of prior appropriation as a water doctrine in the west (41:4), professor Max Oelschlaeger's passionate description of the politics of wilderness preservation (42:2), and former Department of the Interior solicitor John Leshy's insiders view of efforts to reform the 1872 Mining Act (42:3). These readable, important, more general essays have rounded out the Journal's central academic mission.

The Journal added a new feature, beginning with the Winter 2002 (42:1) issue: a review essay of a range of recently published books on natural resource topics. This new feature follows on a previous effort to boost the Journal's reviews of individual books. Now each journal contains an opening essay for the book review section on the State of the Natural Resources Literature in a particular area. The new feature opened with University of Nevada historian Hal Rothman's essay on the state of environmental history. It was followed in 42:3 by a free-ranging review of books on the troubled relationship of science to environmental policy and in 42:4 by an essay called "Water Works," reviewing the spate of recent books on the world's waters. These new book review essays have added another layer to the Journal's depth.

Finally in the 2001-2002 period the Journal functioned as a showcase for the best of student writing on natural resource topics. We encourage student submissions from beyond the University of New Mexico School of Law, but the student writing published in the Journal naturally focuses on UNM's own students. As part of its educational mission, the Journal offers for its students an advanced writing course that culminates in

a full-length research project. The Journal publishes the best of these, including UNM law student Jaime Dawes's superb case note in 42:3.

Other changes have come to the NRJ in the period under review. We have increased recruiting efforts and now have a larger group of students helping with the Journal. Publishing four issues a year is a large undertaking and bringing in a larger number of energetic students has helped. Thanks to contributions from former NRJ editors and the local community, the NRJ was able to award six small textbook scholarships to current NRJ students as a reward for their unflagging efforts to maintain the quality and timely publication of the Journal. We have moved into renovated offices at the School of Law, and thanks to the renovations we now have a much brighter and more welcoming space in which to work. Our managing editor and business manager both have worked hard and well to get the Journal onto a sound editorial and financial footing. Thanks to both of them, the Journal has made real progress on both fronts. The Journal comes out on a more regular basis than it sometimes did in the past and its list of more than 1,000 subscribers has been updated and organized for the first time in many years.

The spring semester of 2003 will bring a new and exciting element to the NRJ's activities – the hosting of what we hope will become an annual event, a symposium on a “hot” natural resources topic. The 2003 symposium is planned for April and will focus on Growth Management: Impacts and Options, a topic that is now being debated all over the United States as well as internationally.

During the 2001-2002 period, the Journal continued to grow and evolve, a sign, we think, that it is healthy at its core.