Earth Law Center (ELC) works to transform the law to recognize, honor and protect nature’s inherent rights to exist, thrive and evolve.

2018 in Numbers

- 12 new legal initiatives launched
- 280+ volunteers donated over $650,000 worth of expertise and time
- 36 local community partners in Argentina, Canada, Chile, Ecuador, France, Mexico, Nigeria, Serbia and the U.S. collaborated on rights of river projects
- 500+ law schools, universities and educational NGOs introduced to ELC’s Earth Law course, Earth Law Clubs, and Mock Trial workshops for middle and high school students
- 1,000+ ocean experts and organizations received ELC’s Ocean Framework
- 100+ outreach campaigns to over 50,000+ recipients
- 300%+ increase in website traffic, 120% increase in LinkedIn followers since 2017, a 55% increase in Facebook “likes” and 130% increase in Facebook post reach
Dear Friends,

Thanks to your support, Earth Law Center has continued to connect and catalyze with nearly 20 active legal initiatives this year. We helped write and pass an Earth Law resolution in Crestone, Colorado, passed Rights of Rivers legislation in Mexico City and created language which the Seneca Lake Watershed Association used to amend their by-laws.

Our local partners, funders and 200+ volunteers and interns have also helped expand our awareness and educational outreach. We published our first ebook (available on Amazon and iTunes) while writing of the first Earth Law legal textbook started.

Law schools around the world have started teaching ELC’s Earth Law course, with video lectures to graduate and undergraduate classes. The Mock Trial Workshop has piloted in New York City, and outreach completed to high school Mock Trial teams for adoption of Earth Law as a case study.

ELC is gaining momentum, and we can’t do it without you. Help us pick up speed in 2019 by making a recurring gift on our website today.

In gratitude,

The Earth Law Center Staff

Darlene May Lee
Executive Director

Grant Wilson
Directing Attorney

Michelle Bender
Ocean Rights Manager

Devon Kearney
Director of Development
Empowering nature empowers communities: when advocates see themselves as rights defenders rather than responsible stewards of nature for human ends, the stakes are raised, and the relationships between people and the environment is transformed.

ELC connects these emerging local advocates to build regional movements, with the ultimate aim of creating national and international momentum to transform how we view and interact with the natural world.

**Earth Law Center Initiatives In 2018**

Angoon, Alaska  
Belgrade, Serbia  
Bogotá, Colombia  
Boulder, Colorado  
Charles River (Newton, Massachusetts)  
Crestone, Colorado  
Doljanka River, Bosnia  
Durango, Mexico (San Pedro Mezquital River)  
Fernando de Noronha, Brazil  
Indus River, Pakistan  
Jerusalem, Israel  
Mexico City, Mexico (Magdalena River)  
Nigeria (River Ethiope)  
Pacific Island Nations (Auckland, New Zealand)  
Pakistan (Indus River)  
Paris, France (Bièvre River)  
Patagonian Shelf  
Puebla, Mexico (Atoyac River)  
Salish Sea, Washington and Canada  
Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Quito, Ecuador  
Sacramento, California  
San Francisco, California  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
Whale and Dolphin Sanctuary, Uruguay
2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Our work gives better grounding to the idea that humans have a responsibility towards how we impact the world around us. We work with local communities to help them organize around Rights of Nature to protect the natural environment around them. Our accomplishments in 2018 include:

Passing an Earth Law resolution recognizing the Rights of Nature in Crestone, Colorado. Crestone’s unanimous vote signals the local community’s strong interest in pursuing additional protections from an Earth Law perspective.

Passing Rights of River legislation in Mexico City that will help protect the Magdalena River. The law now needs to be published in the Official Gazette for promulgation.

Launch of the Earth Law Framework for Marine Protected Areas — endorsed by Mission Blue — at EarthX, the largest environmental conference in the United States.

Submission of five amicus briefs to support Earth Law in Colombia, Ecuador, and the United States.

Successful advocacy for development of California’s first-ever regional flow objective, which will create a standard ensuring there will be enough water in rivers to protect aquatic life.

Amending Seneca Lake Watershed by-laws to include Earth Law provisions.

Proposal submitted to amend national constitution of El Salvador to recognize Rights of Nature.
“Working with Grant and his team at Earth Law Center speaks to the core of what we must engage with as humans. Collaborating across boundaries, be it language, nations, time zones and understandings, to co-create the foundations for a healthier planet, one river at a time.”

— Cuatro al Cubo

“Grant’s lecture provided a fantastic overview of the Rights of Nature. VJEL brought him to Vermont Law School to provide background for its 2018 Symposium, and Grant gave a thoughtful and engaging presentation that has started the campus-wide conversation on whether nature should have rights.”

— Jay Crowder, Vermont Journal of Environmental Law

“I am beyond excited to be working with Earth Law Center on evaluating ways that their nature-first framework could be applied to solving the root causes for coral reef destruction! I’ve had the privilege of working on market-based coral reef restoration globally. The limiting factor with the market-based approach is the patchwork of conflicting oceans-focused policies. By merging the best of both frameworks, I think there is real potential to solve root cause issues by applying a new tool that could help us scale breakthrough solutions for marine conservation globally.”

— Brett Howell, Enviropreneur

“I am extremely grateful and feel fulfilled that an idea that I stood for and have been fighting in ‘blind’ circumstances for almost three decades now has finally been accepted as a universal principle. My sincere thanks to ELC for coming at this time to join in supporting on-the-ground efforts that will save River Ethiope, one of the seven wonders of the world, currently facing the threat of complete destruction. I see victory for River Ethiope as both certain and soon. And I am thankful for this partnership.”

— Irikkefe V. Dafe, Founder/President, RETFON

“Brooklyn College Community Partnership is thrilled to be working with the Earth Law Center on developing a series of mock trials that illustrate the rights of the natural world to Brooklyn youth.”

— Steven Ausbury, Executive Director of the Brooklyn College Community Partnership
RIVERS AND LAND RIGHTS

**Rivers**

- Secured rights of waterways in the Water Sustainability Law of Mexico City (pending publication), seeking same for the Atoyac and San Pedro Mezquital Rivers.
- Launched Universal Declaration of Rights of Rivers with French, Spanish and German versions.
- ELC Board member Rachelle Adam defended the Ein Lavan natural spring from being destroyed by development, in Israel.
- ELC completed the draft for the Rights of the Bièvre River, in Paris, France, to help continue the daylighting of this culverted river.
- With the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, ELC has drafted the Indus River Rights Act, to prevent further destruction to the river and allow it to rebuild its former biodiversity.
- Completed and submitted draft of the petition for legal rights for River Ethiope with the River Ethiope Trust Foundation (RETFON).
- With Eko Akcjja and Gotusa, working to halt destruction of the Doljanka River, Bosnia.
- ELC submitted amicus briefs to the Constitutional Court, State Council, and Inter-American Commission on Human Rights for the Anchicayá River in Columbia.
- ELC and local groups successfully advocated for the North Coast Regional Water Board (California) to mandate the development of a narrative instream flow objective — a win for California rivers.
- ELC joined a coalition of river defenders suing the State Water Resources Control Board for its failure to meet key Clean Water Act requirements.
- Wrote California Clean Water Act Advocacy Toolkit to help local activists restore flows to rivers.
- Completed draft of rights for the Boulder Creek (Colorado) Watershed with Boulder Rights of Nature (BRON).

**Land**

- ELC consulted with the Crestone, Colorado, Board of Trustees to help draft and pass an Earth Law resolution unanimously.
- Partner with Earth Thrive to establish pesticide free zone in Serbia.
- Advancing a Biodiversity Rights Ordinance in San Francisco via Community Ordinance, building on the San Francisco Biodiversity Policy to include Earth Law.
- Submitted proposal to amend national constitution to include Earth Law in El Salvador.
OCEAN RIGHTS

Oceans

ELC builds on the formation of our ocean rights program last year with new initiatives launched in 2018.

- With the Angoon Community Association (ACA) of Angoon, Alaska, proposed draft amendments to tribal constitution to address pollution in Hawk Inlet and gray water in the Chatham Strait.
- Developed an innovative approach to coral reef protection that moves from insurance and property rights to responsibilities with Brett Howell (Enviropreneur) and Board member Tony Zelle.
- Formed coalition, completed draft Salish Sea Bill of Rights, draft declaration on rights of the Southern Resident Orcas and completed GIS study.
- Drafted decree for Legal Rights for Uruguay’s Whale and Dolphin Sanctuary with Organización para la Conservación de Cetáceos (OCC).
- With MAPAS Brasil, seek ocean rights for the Fernando de Noronha archipelago.
- With GARN, CEDENMA and Hugo Echeverria, seek ocean rights for the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor.
- Finalized a Statement on Collective thinking towards a regional Convention on the Rights of the Pacific Ocean; participated and presented at the first gathering in Auckland, NZ.
For our educational activities this year, ELC:

- Began writing an Earth Law textbook, with a confirmed publisher and 30+ contributors.
- Created and led an online seminar to train lawyers and judges on Rights of Nature issues, hosted by the World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL), part of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- Spoke twice at Vermont Law School (VLS), including at its Rights of Nature Symposium. ELC’s Earth Law course has been taught at VLS for six years. Earth Law is now slated to be taught at four or more universities and law schools for 2019, in the U.S. and internationally.
- Conducted outreach to 300+ law, grad and undergrad schools in the U.S. and internationally.
- Piloted a Mock Trial Workshop, with at-risk urban high schoolers in partnership with the Brooklyn College Community Partnership (BCCP) in New York City.
- Published weekly blogs about Earth Law, featured on ELC’s website and on Medium.
- Launched an ELC e-book (introduction to Earth Law), available on Amazon and iTunes.

ELC was invited to speak at a variety of events to raise awareness about Earth Law:

- Executive Director Darlene May Lee spoke at the Patagonia panel Answer with Action at SXSW 2018.
- Directing Attorney Grant Wilson spoke at Vermont Law School and other law schools, presented on 21st century water governance to the Environmental Caucus and the Rural Caucus of the State Democratic Party, hosted a webinar on the Clean Water Act Advocacy Toolkit, served as a panelist at multiple environmental programs in Boulder, and was featured in the documentary “Bless the Water.”
- Ocean Rights Manager Michelle Bender spoke at the EARTHx Conference on Ocean Rights: presented on ocean rights hosted by Rights of Nature Sweden, and at a symposium by Australian Earth Laws Alliance; participated in a panel discussion on the Salish Sea initiative and spoke at the 10th anniversary symposium of Rights of Nature in Ecuador while meeting with local organizations and officials.
- Board Member Tony Zelle spoke at Wisconsin Law School on the Rights of Nature movement and moderated a panel at the VLS Rights of Nature Symposium.

ELC was featured nearly 20 times in media including print, radio and podcasts.
PARTNERS

Applied Archaeology
Australian Earth Laws Alliance, Australia
Bay Area Rights of Nature Alliance (co-organizer)
Boulder County CareConnect
Boulder Rights of Nature
CalConCon Initiative, California: Protecting People and Planet
Center for Earth Jurisprudence, USA
Council of Canadians, Canada
Cuatro Al Cubo
Dale la Cara al Atoyac
Earth Jurisprudence
Earth Law Club, Vermont Law School Gaia Foundation
Earth Thrive, Europe
Eko Akcija, Bosnia
Gaia Foundation, London
Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature
Global Ocean Refuge System (GLORES)
Guadalupe Madre Tierra
Harmony with Nature, United Nations Initiative
Indigenous Environmental Network, USA
Instituto Baleia Jubarte (the Humpback Whale Institute), Brazil
Instituto Justiça Ambiental (the Environmental Justice Institute), Brazil
International Rivers
International Union for Conservation of Nature, IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law
La Asociación Civil CAPIBARA, Naturaleza, Derecho y Sociedad
Lawyers for Clean Water
Legal Rights for the Salish Sea, Gig Harbor Washington
MAPAS, Brasil
Marine Conservation Institute
Mission Blue, Sylvia Earle Alliance
Movement Rights
Natural Resources Defense Council, NRDC
Nature’s Rights, Europe
Nonhuman Rights Project
North Coast Stream Flow Coalition
Nosotrox
Nuiwari, A.C.
Organi - K
Organización para la Conservación de Cetáceos (OCC), Uruguay
Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations
PETA
Reef Life Restoration
Rights of Nature Sweden
Sacred Land Sacred Water
San Francisco Baykeeper
SOS Mata Atlântica Foundation, Brazil
Taller 13
The Ecological Citizen, Peer-reviewed Ecocentric Journal
The Sea-Change Trust, South Africa
Research Affiliate, University of Victoria, Centre for Global Studies, POLIS Project
for Ecological Governance
Voices for Biodiversity
Women’s Earth and Climate Action Network, WECAN
ELC is a lean operation: direct program expenses account for 78% of our 2018 operating budget of $342,820.

### 2018 TOTAL EXPENSES

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### 2018 PROGRAM COSTS BY CATEGORY

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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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Supporting Foundations

Many thanks for the generous support of our foundation partners, who make our work possible.

Amalgamated Foundation
Bank of America Charitable Gift Fund
Cottonwood Foundation
Environment Now
Horne Family Foundation
Kalliopeia Foundation
Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation
Lush Charity Pot
Namaste Foundation
Patagonia Foundation
Pisces Foundation
Seed Fund
Schumaker Family Foundation
The Segalo Family Gift Fund
Waitt Foundation
Wallace Global Foundation

Major Donors in 2018

$1,000–$5,000
- Adrian Dominican Sisters
- Jason Beers
- Nicolas Bijuk
- Elisabeth DesMarais
- Damien Lee
- Lye
- Clare S. Rosenfield
- Lydell Tyson

$500–$999
- Aja Hudson
- Denise Gindhart
- Devi Wetterer
- Dun-Wei Yu
- Jim Liu
- Marsha Moutrie
- Michaela Sexton

In addition, 100% of Earth Law Center’s dedicated and committed board donates to ELC in addition to volunteering their expertise and time.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS & ADVISORY COUNCIL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Board Chair** Liz Musch brings 30+ years of global business, marketing and branding experience to Earth Law Center.
- **Anthony R. Zelle** brings 25+ years of litigation experience to lead the Earth Law legal textbook project, chair a panel discussion at the Vermont Law School Rights of Nature Symposium and speak as a leader in the Earth Law movement.
- **Board Secretary** Elise García, OP is a Dominican sister who brings 35+ years of experience in nonprofit communications, development and strategic planning.
- **Board Treasurer** Rellie Seville has 20+ years of financial experience and a lifelong passion for protecting ecosystems and animals. He joined the Board as Treasurer in June 2018.
- **Board Member** Joanne Borek is a Digital Marketing and Creative Leader, offering her clients 20+ years experience with a proven track record in integrated marketing, digital strategy, social media and e-business solutions.
- **Board Member** Rachelle Adam has 25 years of experience in Rights of Nature legal issues. As an attorney for Israel’s Environment Ministry, she worked extensively on nature protection and biodiversity issues.
- **Board Member** Diana Weynand, author and award-winning producer, director and editor, combines 30 years of business, media and marketing skills with her passion to protect the environment. Diana rotated off the board in September after fulfilling her six-year term.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

- **Cormac Cullinan**, Cullinan & Associates Inc., and EnAct International
- **Linda Sheehan**, Executive Director, Planet Pledge Alliance and former Executive Director of Earth Law Center
- **Peter Barnes**, Entrepreneur and co-founder Working Assets Money Fund
- **Joshua Farley**, Fellow at the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics, and Associate Professor in Community Development & Applied Economics and Public Administration at the University of Vermont
- **Randy Hayes**, Principle Organizer of Foundation Earth and Founder of Rainforest Action Network
- **Terry O’Day**, eVgo and former Executive Director of Environment Now
Directing Attorney: Grant Wilson
Grant Wilson is an attorney who has advanced environmental campaigns in the United States and worldwide: from the 2010 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Cancún to Kenyan National Land Policy work to Deputy Director of the Global Catastrophic Risk Institute in the United States. Grant earned a degree in environmental policy from Huxley College of the Environment at Western Washington University, and a J.D. with a Certificate in environmental and natural resources law from Lewis & Clark Law School in Portland, Oregon.

Director of Development: Devon Kearney
Devon Kearney is a fundraising professional who has spent his career in the service of organizations that defend fundamental rights and advance solutions to pressing social problems. From post-September 11 threats to civil liberties at the Center for Constitutional Rights to efforts to overcome the legacy of mass human rights abuses at the International Center for Transitional Justice, he has followed a passion for building strong, creative institutions that use legal and political know-how to create a more just world.

Ocean Rights Manager: Michelle Bender
Michelle Bender is an environmental law and policy specialist with expertise in ocean and wildlife law, including the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act. She serves on the Executive Committee for the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature and is a member of the IUCN’s World Commission on Environmental Law. Michelle graduated summa cum laude from Vermont Law School, where she earned a master’s in environmental law and policy, and she holds a B.S. in biology with a marine emphasis from Western Washington University.

Executive Director: Darlene May Lee
Darlene has a track record of delivering against organizational objectives, having built and led high performing teams of 240+ in the market research industry before finding her calling at ELC. She has worked and lived in Europe, Asia Pacific and the United States, joining Earth Law Center in 2017. Darlene graduated from Cornell University with a degree in nutritional biochemistry.
VOLUNTEERS

A heartfelt thank you to the 200+ volunteers and interns who shared their time, talent and expertise with ELC.

“Volunteering with Earth Law Center has truly been wonderful! Earth Law Center helps you hone your skills and apply them to natural rights initiatives that you feel passionate about, so you know you are helping make a real difference. The entire team of volunteers and staff members have amazing communication and are so helpful, informative and appreciative. If you care about environmental justice and are eager to contribute to an actionable cause, then volunteering with Earth Law Center is an experience unlike any other!”

— Olivia Leeder, Earth Law Center Volunteer

Abigail Benesh
Abigail Diggs
Adetoun Quadri
Aditi Suresh
Adrian Laufer
Agostina Belen Coll
Al Palmer
Alec Middleton
Alex Delorenzo-Lawley
Alex Parks
Alexander R Sneirson
Allison Fijolek
Amanda Potts
Amy Eng
Amy Krikava
Amy Youngman
Anderson Tran
Andrea Casa
Andrea Galassi
Andrew Hulett
Anna Ulanova
Ariel Dasher
Ariel Genovese
Beatriz Vazquez Cid
Ben Allen
Ben Gurin
Benjamin Bonahoom
Bridget Buckley
Callie Wight

Carley Tsiames
Caroline Abid
Casey Fritz
Charles Edward Ryan
Charles Kruezberger
Charles Roessler
Cheri Neal
Cheryle-Mary Ramirez
Christianna Ogden
Christopher Hsu
Chuck Gooley
Claire Fitzpatrick
Claire Smith
Claudia Santos
Constanza del Rosario Prieto Figelist
Corey Todd
Cornelia Medrick
Danielle Bilecki
David Martinez
Divya Nair
Edward Ong
Eileen Snyder
Elena Rabinovici
Eleonore Bacquet
Elizabeth Drayer
Elizabeth Gertz
Elizabeth D McKee
Ella Broadhurst-Wilson
Emily (Emma) Szymanski
Emily Robb
Erika Natalia Bithell
Fei Yu
Feng Yiting
Flora Massah
Francesca Sparaco
Gabriella Girardi
Greg Naylor
Haley McCullough
Hannah Fitzpatrick
Hannah Gardner Shor
Hassan Sheikh
Hayley Grey
Helen Louise George
Hugh Arceneaux
Hunter Edmonds
Igoh Benjamin Owhonda-Wopara
Isaias Hilario-Azpeitia
J J Lee
Jack Hessel
Jaishal Dhimar
Janay Brun
Janet Kanzawa
Jany Brun
Jarred Williams
Jason Grewal
Jean Isolde
Jenille Scott
Jessica Askey
Congratulations
Dozens of ELC volunteers advanced to law school, graduate studies, and new careers after their time at ELC. Congratulations to you!
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