



**THIRD SYMPOSIUM ON ADVANCED LEGAL TOPICS
ON LAND CONSERVATION
June 11-12, 2012 | Charleston, SC**

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES

David Braun is a land conservation attorney focused on helping clients create and protect value in environmentally sensitive land. His firm, Braun & Gresham, PLLC, uses conservation easements, conservation development, mitigation banks and other similar approaches in real estate, tax and regulatory law to bring incentives to clients who wish to protect their land. David is also co-founder, Chairman and CEO of Plateau Land & Wildlife, which provides ecological services and property tax consulting to land owning clients. From 1988 until 1995, David served as Director of The Nature Conservancy of Texas. David is a Certified Senior Property Tax Consultant. He is a graduate of The University of Texas School of Law. While in law school he helped lead the effort to open the Texas offices of the Environmental Defense Fund. He began his legal career as a staff attorney for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. He also holds an undergraduate degree in biochemistry from the University of Texas. Before law school he worked throughout Mexico and Central America as a field biologist, studying evolution and systematics of wild bird populations.

Tom Fanslow has served as land protection director at Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy since 2006. A native of Tennessee, Tom earned his law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law. He has worked on conservation issues as a Peace Corps volunteer in Togo, West Africa, and as an attorney in coastal Georgia.

Laurel Florio is an attorney and consultant primarily working with land transactions and conservation easements. She has been participating as a member of the Alliance's faculty for many years, conducts seminars and training sessions for the Alliance and other entities, as well as acts as a consultant to the Alliance, land trusts, landowners, governmental and other nonprofit organizations around the country.

Elizabeth Hagood is the executive director of Lowcountry Open Land Trust (LOLT). She has a masters from the Darden Graduate School of Business Administration at the University of Virginia and graduated from the Honors College at Davidson College. She was the first executive director of LOLT, serving from 1989-1994 and has been active in other community organizations, to include service as the director of land protection for the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League, and on the boards of the Historic Charleston Foundation, Woodberry Forest School, the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina, the Gaylord and the Dorothy Donnelley Board of Advisors, the Mayor's Green City Committee, the Charlestown Neighborhood Association and First Scots Presbyterian Kindergarten. From 2002-2006, Elizabeth was the Chairman of the South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control, with the Governor awarding her the Order of the Palmetto, South Carolina's highest civilian award in 2008. Mayor Riley awarded her the City of Charleston Stewardship Award in 2010.

Catherine M. Howell is a senior attorney for The Nature Conservancy, and has been with the global conservation organization since 1999. Catherine provides general legal services to the Conservancy,

including in the areas of real estate, oil and gas, and contracts, and serves as chair of the Oil, Gas, Minerals and Energy legal practice team. She is a frequent presenter on conservation easements, oil and gas issues on conservation lands, and government grants. Catherine received law degree with honors from the University of Texas School of Law in 1990, and began her legal career in private practice specializing in real estate and corporate matters.

Jessica Jay is the founding partner of Conservation Law, P.C., a law firm devoted to ensuring the permanence of land conservation through sound land conservation transactions and the defense and enforcement of perpetual conservation easements. Jessica represents and partners with land trusts, government entities, and landowners to conserve working landscapes and environmentally significant properties in the Rocky Mountain West. She actively engages conservation professionals, land trusts, and landowners in conservation workshops and discussions, and guides the next generation of land conservationists through her Land Conservation Law courses at the Vermont Law School and the University of Denver's Sturm College of Law. Jessica collaborates with the land trust community to develop and implement legal defense and enforcement mechanisms for easement holders, to design and protect conservation easement incentives, and to create enforceable perpetual conservation easements that anticipate changing conditions, climate, and public interests.

Lawrence Kueter is an attorney with The Law Office of Lawrence R. Kueter in Denver, Colorado. His law practice is limited to land conservation. For 30 years he was with the law firm of Isaacson Rosenbaum, a firm nationally known for its conservation practice. Since 1990, his practice has included representing numerous landowners, local land trusts, governmental entities, and statewide and national conservation organizations in land conservation matters. He serves as legal counsel to the Colorado Coalition of Land Trusts and the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust. He is currently a member of the Board of the Land Trust Alliance and chair of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. Larry received his law degree from the University of Denver. He has a master's in economics from Wayne State University and received his bachelor's from the University of Wisconsin.

Ronald Levitt is a shareholder with the Birmingham law firm of Sirote & Permutt, P.C. Ronald's practice focuses on business and tax planning issues, particularly for closely held and family owned businesses. Specifically, he counsels clients in the areas of business planning, succession planning, entity formation, representation of S Corporations, Limited Liability Companies (LLC's) and other flow-through entities, mergers and acquisitions, purchases and sales of businesses, health care law (focusing on the representation of physician practices), estate planning and charitable deduction planning, including planning for and defending conservation easements. He has taught Partnership Taxation at Cumberland School of Law and the University of Alabama School of Law's LLM in Taxation Programs. Ronald graduated with a bachelor's in Marketing from the University of Alabama School of Business and remained at the University to earn an MBA and law degree. He then earned an LLM in Taxation from the University of Florida.

Tim Lindstrom holds a bachelor's from Kalamazoo College and degrees in law and planning from the University of Virginia. He taught zoning and planning law at the University of Virginia School of Architecture from 1979 until 1998. He practiced law in Charlottesville, Virginia until 1998. In 2000 he and his family moved to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, where he is currently in private practice. Tim represents land trusts and landowners in conservation transactions. His practice includes land trusts and individuals in Wyoming, Idaho, Virginia and Michigan. He is an active member of the Virginia, Michigan, Idaho and Wyoming Bar Associations. He has written and lectured extensively on topics of planning law, and the tax law relating to conservation easements, including numerous continuing education programs for lawyers, appraisers, accountants and realtors in Wyoming, Montana, Kentucky, Idaho, and Virginia. In 2008 he authored *A Tax Guide to Conservation Easements* published by Island Press. In 2007 he testified before the U.S. Senate Finance Committee regarding tax abuses relating to

conservation easements. Tim led a national effort that successfully amended the federal estate tax provisions to increase the tax benefits for the families of conservation easement donors (section 2031(c) of the Code) and he played an instrumental role in the development of Virginia's income tax credit for easement donations. Tim and his family have contributed conservation easements on farms in Michigan and in Virginia.

Leslie Ratley-Beach is the conservation defense director for the Land Trust Alliance. Previously, she was stewardship director for the Vermont Land Trust, leading the program responsible for more than 1400 conservation easements on over 465,000 acres of land with more 1300 landowners. Leslie is also the author of Alliance curriculum on conservation easement management and a course reviewer and pilot instructor.

R. Anthony Rupp III is a partner at Rupp, Baase, Pfalzgraf, Cunningham & Coppola LLC in Buffalo, NY. He has extensive experience in first party insurance matters, including fraud and arson. He also advises clients about the formation of contracts, construction, and other commercial matters. He has successfully tried high-exposure cases to verdict in both state and federal court. An experienced appellate litigator, Tony routinely handles appeals before intermediate appellate courts and has presented appeals to the New York Court of Appeals. He has a bachelor's from the University of Rochester and a law degree from Cornell Law School.

Bill Silberstein is a partner at Kaplan Kirsch & Rockwell LLP, a Denver, Colorado law firm. In the past 30 years, Bill has built a land conservation practice with a national reputation for excellence. He has represented landowners and conservation organizations in hundreds of conservation easement transactions and in more than 30 IRS audits of conservation easements. Bill helped the Forbes family create a conservation easement for half of its ranch in the San Luis Valley. More than 80,000 acres were included in the easement, the largest in Colorado. Bill is counsel to Colorado Open Lands and the Colorado Coalition of Land Trusts, as well as a frequent lecturer and author on conservation easements and protective developments.

Jessica Wilkinson is a senior policy analyst and director of the State Biodiversity and Wetlands Programs at the Environmental Law Institute (ELI) in Washington, DC. As director of ELI's Wetlands Program, Jessica oversees the Institute's program of wetlands research and training, provides guidance on the National Wetlands Awards Program, and serves as an advisor to the National Wetlands Newsletter. She has been the lead researcher on several of ELI's seminal wetlands publications, including *Banks and Fees: The Status of Off-Site Wetland Mitigation in the United States* (2002), *The Status and Character of In-Lieu Fee Mitigation in the United States* (2006), and *Design of U.S. Habitat Banking Systems to Support the Conservation of Wildlife Habitat and At-Risk Species* (2008). In 2009, she authored *The Next Generation of Mitigation: Advancing Conservation Through Landscape-Level Mitigation Planning* with The Nature Conservancy and *In-Lieu Fee Mitigation: Model Instrument Language and Resources*.

David Wooldridge has been a member of the law firm of Sirote & Permutt in Birmingham, Alabama, for 31 years, and was the firm's Managing Partner 1992-1999. His practice is focused on tax litigation and tax controversies, both in administrative proceedings and litigation in federal and state courts. Recently these have included defending conservation easement deductions, most notably in *Kiva Dunes Conservation v. Comm.* in the U.S. Tax Court (June 2009). From the University of Alabama, he received a B.S. in Engineering (1972) and J.D. (1975) (Managing Editor, *Alabama Law Review*); and an LL.M. in Taxation from N.Y.U. (1976) (Graduate Editor, *Tax Law Review*). Thereafter, he served as law clerk to Judge Irene F. Scott of the U.S. Tax Court from 1976-1978. In addition to his law practice, Wooldridge teaches regularly at the graduate level on tax practice and procedure for the University of Alabama School of Law and School of Accounting.