

TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law & Policy

[February 11, 2021](#)

[We're Hiring—But The Window Won't Stay Open Long](#)

The Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law & Policy is in the market for our next postgraduate research fellow to start in August 2021! If you're a recent (2020) or upcoming law school graduate this spring (JD or LLM), you could be a part of the team who writes this remarkable newsletter (among other things). By the time the position starts, we'll hopefully be back in Chateau d'Eau and up to our armpits in office coffee, Tulane Tuesday giveaways, morning bagels, puzzled reactions to mid-20th-Century-pop-culture references, and long, rousing discussions of water law and policy! If you're interested in the position (and who wouldn't be?), check out [this job posting](#) and send your resume on in before February 19th!

A Case of Salmon-ella

Removing dam(n)s used to be the work of censors, but increasingly it is the work of elected officials, water managers, and natural resources advocates. Case in point, a [\\$33.5 billion plan to remove four dams on the Lower Snake River](#) in eastern Washington state. Dams that provide power and facilitate movement of agricultural products on barges to market. Who/what could be behind something like that? Does it really cost \$33 billion to get rid of a few dams? ([we know some folks who blow up stuff for a whole lot less](#)). The answer to the first question is "salmon" and Senator Mike Simpson (R-ID), and the answer to the second is, of course not. Let's break it down. Salmon have [complex life cycles](#) and are an important part of life and the economy in the Pacific Northwest. Salmon runs are in bad shape, thanks in no small part to dams like those on the Lower Snake. Efforts to recover salmon populations have done little despite costing over \$17 billion ([some of which seem cool but likely to have not been run by salmon focus groups](#)). Senator Simpson's idea? Breach the dams (\$1.4 billion). Replace the power being lost (various means, \$10 billion). Subsidize farmers to find other ways to transport their products (\$2.2 billion). Top it all off with a new Northwest State and Tribal Fish and Wildlife Council to handle salmon recovery, and there you have it. All that is left is the easy business of convincing [skeptical constituencies](#), getting authorized, and funding. Win or lose, this is a glimpse into the scale of thinking that is going to be necessary to do things like save (to the extent one can) coastal areas facing sea level rise and habitat collapse – even inland. [Gulp](#).

Giving Lye to the Ideas that Water Supplies are Secure

Maybe you breathed a sigh of relief to see that we managed to hold elections across this great nation without Russia, China or dead Venezuelan autocrats hacking in to steal it. Admittedly that usually

The **Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy** is a program of the Tulane University Law School.

The Institute is dedicated to fostering a greater appreciation and understanding of the vital role that water plays in our society and of the importance of the legal and policy framework that shapes the uses and legal stewardship of water.

Coming up:

[Cost-Benefit Analysis and the Environment](#); February 17

[CPRA Virtual Draft FY 2022 Annual Plan](#) – Southwest LA; February 22

[CPRA Virtual Draft FY 2022 Annual Plan](#) – Southcentral LA; February 23

[ELI: PFAS and Public Health: Covid-19, Vaccines, and Environmental Justice](#); February 23

[EPA Small Systems Webinar: Lead and Copper](#); February 23

[CPRA Virtual Draft FY 2022 Annual Plan](#) – Southeast LA; February 24

[Tulane Environmental Law and Policy Summit](#), February 26 and 27

Water jobs:

[New Orleans Policy Manager and Climate Coordinator](#); Alliance for Affordable Energy; New Orleans, LA

[Manager, Conserving Marine Life in the U.S.](#); Pew Charitable Trusts; Washington, D.C.

[Associate Attorney](#); Earthjustice; Seattle, WA

[Director of Conservation](#); The Nature Conservancy; TX

[Senior Staff Attorney](#); San Francisco Baykeeper; San Francisco, CA

[Water Policy Fellow](#); Berkeley Law Center for Law, Energy & the Environment; Berkeley, CA

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would be a low bar to clear, but these are not usual times. Before you get too relaxed about hacking you should take a look at your faucet and ask yourself: just how secure is your water supply? Less than you would like if Oldsmar, Florida any indication. While everyone's attention in the town on the outskirts of Tampa was focused on the Buc's upcoming game with the Chiefs, other forces were up to no good. According to local authorities, [someone hacked into the computer system that controls the addition of chemicals to the water supply](#) with the aim of increasing the level of lye in the water, an increase that could have had dangerous consequences. The good news is that it was detected and corrected quickly. The bad news that the system could be accessed so easily, and that the downside was so large. Saboteurs used to be like cat burglars who would physically break in and ply their trade with explosives and safe cracking tools, but now, they can enter from anywhere in the world and use only a keystroke or two to corrupt or shut down entire systems. This threat is not new, but until now it [was mostly warned about](#) but not seen. Not anymore.

You Say You Want a Revolution?

If one thing is certain, it is that we are on the cusp of a revolution in how and where we use water in this world. The end of the COVID-19 crisis will exacerbate that as the impacts of months of job losses, unpaid water bills and depressed economies (compare and contrast to the stock market) become clearer. The thing about revolutions though is that it is way easier to overthrow things than to replace them with things that are better. So, before we sign on to your water revolution, [we'd love to see the plan](#). Well, bless their hearts, the [US Water Alliance](#) has gone and done that by launching what they are calling the [Recovering Stronger Initiative](#). We admit from a sloganeering standpoint, it leaves a lot to be desired ("What do we want? To recover stronger!! When do we want it? NOW!!!"), but it does contain some things worth thinking about. Things like making water supplies safer, more affordable, universally available, and more resilient. Since the US Water Alliance is made up, in large part, of members of the water supply sector, it is worth looking at. Change is coming, but for it to amount to progress it needs some guiding principles. This is one set.

26th Annual Environmental Law and Policy Summit—February 26 and 27, Be There or Be Square

In these times that are so often marked by what is not happening and what we can't do, the [26th Annual Tulane Summit on Environmental Law and Policy](#) stands out as something that is happening—thanks to Tulane law students and their Environmental and Energy Law Society. Against long odds and the limits of virtual meeting technology, the Summit team is assembling a remarkable line up of speakers and panels. And it is free, yes free. Even for Continuing Legal Education credits. So, go ahead and register, you will be glad you did.