The Idaho Difference

University of Idaho College of Law has made a substantial commitment to meet the needs of a new generation of graduates who understand not only the law, but the resources and the people who use them. With seven faculty and the synergies made possible through the outstanding graduate programs in other university colleges, students will enter a rich environment for learning to solve some of the difficult problems society faces at the intersections of law and science, and law and society.

The Natural Resources and Environmental Law Emphasis

The academic emphasis in Natural Resources and Environmental Law (NREL), allows students to earn a designation on their diplomas upon completion of at least 15 hours of required coursework in the area and a major writing project. Obtaining the emphasis is equivalent to earning a certificate or concentration elsewhere, and the Idaho program has some of the more rigorous requirements in this area. The program was developed in response to the general fact that the practice of law is becoming more specialized and, specifically, that the practice of natural resources and environmental law has become highly technical and complex. The course of study is designed to give students broad expertise in natural resources and environmental law and an understanding of how to develop in-depth expertise in a specific topic while not sacrificing their broader legal education. The seven NREL faculty do research and teach courses in environmental law, land use, urban planning, wildlife, public lands, water, international environmental law, Native American resources, administrative law, and law and science.

Students in this emphasis or who are pursuing one of the concurrent degree programs have the opportunity to apply to participate in a summer externship program in Boise, Idaho, with placements in state and federal agencies, and the State Office of the Attorney General. In addition, students may apply to participate in the NAL/NREL externship with placements with legal counsel for Tribes located in Idaho.


One College, Two Locations

For more information, contact: Natural Resources and Environmental Law Program University of Idaho College of Law STS Post Office Box 400 Moscow, ID 83844-2091 Phone: (208) 885-4977 Email: NREL@uidaho.edu Website: uidaho.edu/env-resources-law

The Natural Resources and Environmental Law Courses

Administrative Law
Economic Development Clinic
Environmental Law
Environmental Policy
Interdisciplinary Methods in Water Resources
International Environmental and Water Law
Introduction to Natural Resources Law
Land Use Law and Planning
Law, Science, and the Environment
Lawyering Process
Native American Law
Native American Natural Resources Law
Natural Resources and Environmental Law Seminar
Water and Energy Policy Seminar
Water Law Seminar
Water Law Practicum
Wildlife Law and Policy
Concurrent Degree Options

Environmental Science

Rising interest in the connection between sustainable economic development and environmental protection has increased the demand for professionals with both legal and technical training. To meet this demand, the University of Idaho College of Law and the University-wide program in Environmental Science offers a concurrent degree program. The concurrent program combines the study of scientific, social, philosophical and legal aspects of environmental issues. The program is designed to allow students to obtain both a J.D. from the College of Law as well as an M.S. in Environmental Science in as few as eight semesters. Additional information can be found at uidaho.edu/cogs/envs/envsci.

Natural Resources and Environmental Law

Water Resources

Launched in 2006, the Water Resources Program draws on expertise from 56 faculty members in seven colleges to integrate aspects of law, aquatics, biology, hydrology, engineering, political science, and social sciences. In 2014 the program was awarded an NSF IGERT which will provide funding for 24 Ph.D. students over the coming years. The unique program focuses on developing sophisticated strategies and solutions to the world’s critical water shortage. It also offers a joint J.D./M.S. in Water Resources, which can be completed in as few as four years, and a joint J.D./Ph.D. in Water Resources, which can be completed in as few as six years. All degrees in Water Resources are offered in three tracks, and in any track can be completed concurrently with the J.D.

1. Engineering and Science;
2. Science and Management; and
3. Law, Management and Policy. Additional information is available at the Water Resources website: uidaho.edu/nrel/master-resource.

Application to Concurrent Degree Programs

Students are required to apply separately to the College of Law and the specific program in the College of Graduate Studies, and an acceptance to both is required. Students may apply to both colleges, but it is not possible to apply to both colleges concurrently, and students may apply after beginning their first year of law school. The GREs are not required in addition to the LSAT. Information on application to the College of Graduate Studies is available at uidaho.edu/graduateadmissions.

NREL/Boise Summer Externship

The Natural Resources and Environmental Law (NREL) edition provides an excellent forum for the interface of law and science. Each article in the NREL edition is peer-reviewed before undergoing the traditional law review editing process. Through this cutting-edge approach, the NREL edition provides significant contributions to the field of environmental law.

Our NREL edition is among one of few formally peer-reviewed law journals. We invite contributions to this edition from our network of knowledgeable and diverse outside experts in the traditions of academic scholarship, to further educate the future, to honor invited scholars, practitioners, and judges to be engaging members of the edition’s Board of Editors.