

May 5, 2022

Dear Executive Committee and Section Members,

I am writing to express my interest in the at-large position on the Environmental and Land Use Law Section's Executive Committee. Working in environmental law in my community has been a long-held ambition of mine. I was able to realize this goal when I joined the Natural Resources Section of the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Born and raised in Renton, Washington, I feel a strong connection to Washington State and the Pacific Northwest broadly. This role with the PAO has given me the opportunity to work on a wide array of environmental issues confronting the County, as well as the chance to engage with, and learn from, members of the region's environmental bar. It has been an enriching experience that reaffirmed my initial desire to work in this field.

For the past two years I have also been a member of the King County Bar Association's Environmental and Land Use Section's managing board. My primary role for that organization has been student outreach for the section's networking events. Student outreach was a priority for the section as the pandemic prevented the normal avenues for interaction between attorneys and law students. After speaking with groups from the University of Washington and Seattle University about ways to engage with their peers, we organized a series of video call happy hours and offered to facilitate one on one conversations— "virtual coffees." Despite the obvious drawbacks to virtual events, it was a personal victory that the sessions were well attended and everyone seemed interested in the conversation.

I find the opportunity to work or speak with anyone who has a similar interest in environmental law topics to be incredibly rewarding. When my colleagues talk about their experience with WSBA's ELUL, they all emphasize the level of engagement from the community. Environmental or land use law does not seem to be the kind of practice you fall into—to some degree, I think it draws in people who share an interest in the puzzle created by the cross-section of complicated scientific and legal realities. My hope in joining the Executive Committee would be to further elevate those discussions around this fascinating area of law and to do what I can to bring more people into the conversation.

Thank you,  
Michael Graves