



Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural  
Resources, Energy, and the Environment

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO LAW SCHOOL

## **The 2022 Ruth Wright Distinguished Lecture in Natural Resources**



### ***Mobilizing the Global Community on Climate Change: An Indigenous Leadership Perspective***

**Fawn R. Sharp**

**Quinault**

**President, National Congress of American Indians**

**Thursday, October 13, 2022**

**6:00 p.m.**

**Wolf Law, Wittemyer Courtroom**

**University of Colorado School of Law**



**COLORADO LAW**  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

## **The Ruth Wright Distinguished Lecture in Natural Resources**

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The annual Distinguished Lecture Series is a cooperative venture between the Getches-Wilkinson Center (GWC) and the Colorado Natural Resources, Energy, & Environmental Law Review to host a distinguished figure in the fields of natural resource, energy, and environmental law and policy. The Distinguished Lecture series provides a public forum for thought-leadership, allowing the speakers to reflect on their experiences and provide insights on the current challenges facing natural resources, energy, and the environment. The articles and transcripts resulting from these lectures are published in the Law Review.



In 2018, the GWC received a generous gift from the Wright Family Foundation to establish the Ruth Wright Distinguished Lecture in Natural Resources in honor of her inspiring legacy as a leader in western natural resources, land conservation, and environmental policy and advocacy. With this support, we look forward to bringing this free event to our community for years to come.

As a legislator, environmentalist, and historian, Ruth Wright dedicated her career to environmental issues and activism. While a student at Colorado Law, she led efforts to preserve Boulder's open space and limit the height of buildings in Boulder to 55 feet to protect enjoyment of the unique landscape for the ages. In 1980, she was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives, where she represented Boulder until 1994. She was also the second woman ever to become the House minority leader, a role she held from 1986 until 1992. While serving in the House of Representatives, Wright continued to be a strategic champion for the environment, and has been recognized by such groups as the Colorado Wildlife Foundation, the ACLU, the Sierra Club, and Colorado Open Lands.

### ***Mobilizing the Global Community on Climate Change: An Indigenous Leadership Perspective***

Indigenous Peoples have long embraced a special responsibility to care for all living beings and steward their lands consistent with cultural, spiritual, and economic traditions. Fawn Sharp will share her perspectives on the relationship between human rights and climate justice, as well as advocacy under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, comparative experiences among Indigenous Peoples around the world, and local needs of tribal leaders and communities in the United States.

## **Distinguished Lecturer: Fawn R. Sharp (Quinault)**

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Fawn R. Sharp, a five-term President of the Quinault Indian Nation, now serves as President of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the oldest and largest American Indian and Alaska Native tribal government organization in the country. A leading voice in the global movement to address climate change, President Sharp has delivered presentations and published articles on this topic in venues throughout the United States and around the world. In 2021, President Sharp became the first Indigenous leader to be credentialed by the U.S. State Department to attend the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), and she regularly advises UN bodies on the human rights of Indigenous Peoples. President Sharp's international advocacy on climate change issues is informed by her experience as an elected tribal leader in the Northwest where environmental disasters have deeply affected Indigenous Peoples, lands, and resources.



Sharp graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Gonzaga University in Spokane Washington at the age of 19, and received her Juris Doctorate from the University of Washington in 1995. She has been honored by the National Judicial College at the University of Nevada and the International Human Rights Law program at Oxford University.

## **Past Distinguished Lecturers**

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**Marcilynn A. Burke (April 7, 2021)**

Dean and Dave Frohnmayer Chair in Leadership and Law  
University of Oregon School of Law

**John Leshy (February 27, 2020)**

Harry D. Sunderland and Distinguished Professor of Law Emeritus  
University of California Hastings, College of Law

**Lisa Heinzerling (November 9, 2018)**

Justice William J. Brennan, Jr. Professor of Law  
Georgetown Law

**Mary Wood (September 20, 2017)**

Philip H. Knight Professor, University of Oregon School of Law  
Faculty Director, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center

**Bill Hedden (April 21, 2016)**

Executive Director, Grand Canyon Trust

**Michael Connor (March 10, 2015)**

Former Deputy Secretary, United States Department of the Interior

**Bruce Babbitt (March 17, 2014)**

Former Secretary, United States Department of the Interior

## Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy, and the Environment

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The Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy and the Environment endeavors to serve the people of the American West, the nation, and the world through creative, interdisciplinary research, bold, inclusive teaching and innovative problem solving in order to further true sustainability for our use of the lands, waters, and environment. Major programs and initiatives focus on natural resources, water and public lands issues in Colorado and the West; energy and environmental security in the developing world; electricity regulation and energy policy; climate change law and policy; and native communities and environmental justice. The name comes from the contributions of two iconic figures in the law school's environmental law history, David Getches and Charles Wilkinson.

### Co-sponsors

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### University of Colorado School of Law

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Established in 1892, the University of Colorado Law School is one of the top public law schools in the United States. Colorado Law School's diverse student body is selected from among the statistically best applicants from every corner of the nation representing over 100 undergraduate institutions, and its highly published faculty is dedicated to interacting with students both inside and outside the classroom. The school's state-of-the-art green building is located at the base of the Rocky Mountains in beautiful Boulder, Colorado. With about 500 students and a low student to faculty ratio, Colorado Law School is a thriving academic community where the study of law is embraced to create leaders who recognize the civic responsibilities essential to the legal profession.