



**University of Florida Levin College of Law**  
**29<sup>th</sup> Annual Public Interest Environmental Conference**  
**February 2–3, 2023**

<b>February 2, 2023 — Bailey Event Space at UF Law</b>	
<b>5:30 PM – 6:00 PM</b>	<b>Arrival &amp; Registration:</b> Guests can park in any orange or green lot surrounding the law school that has its restrictions lifted at the time. We will have a table set up at the Bailey Event Space (Bruton Greer Hall 136) at the UF Levin College of Law campus to check in guests, speakers, and UF students.
<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>Refreshments:</b> We will be serving a variety of hors d'oeuvres and drinks.
<b>6:30 PM – 7:00 PM</b>	<p><b>Keynote Speaker:</b> Nikki Fried</p> <p><i>Received her B.A., M.A., and J.D. from the University of Florida. Experience practicing various forms of law, including corporate law, foreclosure defense, and public defense. Served as the 12th Florida Commissioner of Agriculture from 2019 to 2023.</i></p>
<b>7:15 PM – 7:45 PM</b>	<p><b>Keynote Speaker:</b> Jeff VanderMeer</p> <p><i>Novelist Jeff VanderMeer's NYT-bestselling Southern Reach trilogy has been translated into over 35 languages. The first novel, Annihilation, won the Nebula Award and Shirley Jackson Award. His nonfiction essay "The Annihilation of Florida: An Overlooked National Tragedy" appeared in Current Affairs in 2022.</i></p>
<b>7:45 PM – 8:00 PM</b>	<b>Closing Remarks</b>

**February 3, 2023 — Martin Levin Advocacy Center at UF Law**

**9:00 AM – 9:40 AM**

***Conference & Law School Welcome:*** Faculty Advisor, Professor Annie Brett & PIEC 29 Co-Chairs, Luke Haber, Julian Spiro, Zoe Weiser-Dalton

**9:45 AM – 11:05 AM**

***Land Use and Infrastructure Issues Impacting Florida***

- **Alex Erwin**

*Assistant Professor of Law at Florida International College of Law. Prof. Erwin's research is situated at the intersection of environmental law and conservation biology. His work focuses on better incorporating principles from ecology and evolutionary biology into law and policy. He has a J.D. and a Ph.D. in wildlife conservation genetics, and his work has appeared in both peer-reviewed scientific journals and law reviews, including Cornell Law Review, Ecology Law Quarterly, and the Environmental Law Reporter.*

- **Tom Kay**

*Executive Director, Alachua Conservation Trust; Chair, Board of Directors, Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation. A non-profit leader and attorney with more than a decade and half of experience in project management, land acquisition, corporate strategy, complex negotiations, fundraising, and community engagement.*

- **Galen Treuer**

*Climate Tech and Economic Innovation lead at Miami Dade County. Helps develop climate strategies that work by combining technical expertise on climate risk, psychology, and policy change with experience in community organizing and public finance.*

**11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

***Liquid Gold: From Supply & Quality of Drinking Water to Flood Management***

- **Jaclyn Lopez**

*Professor Lopez directs Stetson University's Jacobs Law Clinic for Democracy and the Environment. Prior to that she was the Florida director for the Center for Biological Diversity for over a decade. She holds a master of law degree in environmental and land-use law from the University of Florida, a J.D. from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law, and a master of science degree from the University of Arizona. She has written, taught, and presented extensively on environmental topics, but enjoys being outside exploring nature with her kids the most of all.*

- **Robert Angus Williams**

*Lewis, Longman and Walker, Shareholder; Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of the General Counsel, General Counsel, 2017-2019; Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Senior Attorney; Pepple Johnson Cantu & Schmidt PLLC; Fowler White Boggs; Pinellas County State Attorney's Office, Assistant*

*State Attorney; Stetson University College of Law; University of Florida.*

- **Cynthia Barnett**

*Water and climate journalist whose work appears in National Geographic, Politico, the Atlantic and many other publications. Author of the award-winning water books Mirage, Blue Revolution, Rain, and The Sound of the Sea. Environmental Journalist in Residence at UF's College of Journalism and Communications, where she is helping train the next generation of environmental storytellers. Cynthia recently started her latest book project, on the global groundwater crisis. The working title, The Sea Beneath Us, pays homage to Rachel Carson's The Sea Around Us.*

**12:30 PM – 1:15 PM**

**LUNCH BREAK**

**1:15 PM – 2:40 PM**

**The Future Moral and Legal Status of Florida's Wildlife and Natural Resources**

- **Kristin Andrews**

*York Research Chair in Animal Minds and Professor of Philosophy at York University (Toronto), where she also helps coordinate the Cognitive Science program and the Greater Toronto Area Animal Cognition Discussion Group. Kristin is on the board of directors of the Borneo Orangutan Society Canada, a member of the College of the Royal Society of Canada, and the author of several books on social minds, animal minds, and ethics.*

- **Chuck O'Neal**

*Chuck O'Neal is a founding member of the Florida Rights of Nature Network and President of the environmental organization Speak Up Wekiva, Inc.. Mr. O'Neal wrote an early draft of the Florida Springs and Aquifer Protection Act. He served as Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee and as First Vice President of the League of Women Voters of Florida. Mr. O'Neal brought legal action to stop the ill-conceived hunting of the Florida Black Bear and has fought to protect Florida's springs and aquifers from all sources of pollution.*

- **Erin Ryan**

*Erin Ryan is the Atkinson Professor and Associate Dean for Environmental Programs at Florida State University College of Law. She specializes in environmental and natural resources law, property and land use law, water, negotiation, and collaborative governance. She presents widely in the United States, Europe, and Asia, and appears regularly in news media. A former editor of the Harvard Law Review and Fellow at the Harvard Negotiation Research Project, she clerked on the Ninth Circuit before practicing land use law in San Francisco. Before law school, she was a U.S Forest Service ranger east of Yosemite National Park.*

- **Amber Polk**

*Professor at FIU. Prior to joining FIU Law, Professor Polk was the Teaching Fellow for the Environmental Law and Policy LLM program at Stanford Law School. Professor Polk has clerked for the Honorable Robert W. Trumble in the Northern District of West Virginia and*

*the Honorable Joseph R. Goodwin in the Southern District of West Virginia. She was an adjunct professor at the University of Illinois College of Law in 2019.*

**2:50 PM – 4:10 PM**

**Florida’s Coastal Response to Climate Change**

● **Dominique Burkhardt**

*Senior Attorney at Earthjustice Florida Regional Office; Works alongside advocacy groups and communities to achieve environmental justice and promote healthy communities, with a focus on clean air, protection from toxic contaminants, community resilience, and public participation and access to decision-making processes.*

● **Dr. Tiffany Troxler**

*Research Scientist and Associate Professor at FIU and Director for Science of the Sea Level Solutions Center; Studies wetland ecosystems ecology and informs management and restoration of coastal and freshwater wetland ecosystems. She is also the project collaborator and working group co-lead in the Florida Coastal Everglades LTER program.*

● **Richard Grosso**

*Richard Grosso, President of Richard Grosso, P.A., in Plantation, Fla., is a widely recognized environmental public interest lawyer and advocate, with 36 years of experience as a litigator, appellate lawyer, advocate and counselor in the areas of federal and Florida environmental, land use, constitutional, property rights and related governmental and administrative law. Much of his work has focused on the protection and restoration of the Everglades and the Florida Keys. Mr. Grosso has served as a Law Professor at Nova Southeastern University, Executive Director and General Counsel of the Everglades Law Center, Inc., Legal Director for 1000 Friends of Florida, and attorney for the Florida departments of Community Affairs and Environmental Regulation.*

● **Thomas Ruppert**

*Coastal Planning Specialist at Sea Grant Florida; A licensed attorney, Ruppert focuses his work on hazard mitigation, post-disaster recovery planning, environmental protection, marine spatial planning, and associated long-term challenges and opportunities in Florida’s coastal communities. He assists agents and local governments served by Florida Sea Grant.*

**4:15 PM – 5:00 PM**

**Closing Conversation**

● **Professor Annie Brett**

Additional Speakers TBA