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11th Marine Law Symposium: Legal Strategies For Climate Adaptation In Coastal New England 2018

Roger Williams University School of Law

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Legal Strategies for Climate Adaptation in Coastal New England

Friday, November, 16 2018
9:00am - 4:00pm
Roger Williams University School of Law
Has Cost
Registration Required

This symposium will focus on how state and local governments in coastal New England can overcome legal barriers to climate adaptation. Speakers will discuss the opportunities for state and municipal governments to proactively include adaptation into their planning, such as by incorporating climate risks into local laws, ordinances, regulations, and policies.

Speakers will also address some of the potential legal conflicts related to climate adaptation, including constitutional conflicts, state and federal law conflicts, and potential liability for acting or failing to act on climate risks.
A portion of the day will include small workshops where attendees can share their concerns and questions related to barriers to climate change adaptation. The day will conclude with a discussion of adaptation planning opportunities for state and local governments.

This symposium is co-sponsored by the Marine Affairs Institute at Roger Williams University School of Law and the Georgetown Climate Center.

The Rhode Island M.C.L.E. Commission has granted this program 6.5 Rhode Island C.L.E. credits including zero legal ethics credit.

The Association of State Floodplain Managers has pre-approved this program for 5.5 CECs for CFMs.

Part of the 2018-2019 Roger Williams University Theme, *Ocean State/State of the Ocean: The challenge of sea level rise over the coming century*

There is no fee for students to attend. If you are a Roger Williams University student, please register as a RWU Student. If you are a student at another institution, please register under General Public and use “StudentMLS” as the coupon code.

Questions may be directed to marineaffairs@rwu.edu or 401-254-5392.

Dear Roger Williams University community,

The 11th Marine Law Symposium will bring top experts to the Roger Williams University School of Law on Friday, Nov. 16, to address legal strategies for climate adaptation in coastal New England.

Co-hosted by the Marine Affairs Institute, Rhode Island Sea Grant and the Georgetown Climate Center, the symposium is part of a yearlong RWU series titled “Ocean State/State of the Ocean: The Challenge of Sea-Level Rise Over the Coming Century.”

“Communities across New England are facing a different climate than they had a decade ago,” said Julia Wyman, director of the Marine Affairs Institute, a partnership of RWU Law, Rhode Island Sea Grant and the University of Rhode Island. “Some of the changes they are seeing are an increase in flooding roads during regular rain events, more frequent and stronger storm events, and an increase in sea-level rise and coastal erosion. State and local governments are being presented with complex challenges on how to adapt existing laws, policies and regulations to the changing environment. This daylong event will present both practical and innovative ways for state and local governments to address current and future climate risks in their planning.”

Shaun O’Rourke, Director of Stormwater and Resiliency for the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank and the State of Rhode Island’s Chief Resilience Officer, will kick off the symposium with an overview of the physical problems facing states and municipalities related to climate change.
The program will include a presentation, “Adapting to the Deluge: Emerging Legal Issues from Recent Hurricane Seasons,” by Dena Adler, a Climate Law Fellow at Columbia Law School. It will include a discussion, “Are State and Local Governments Liable for a Failure to Adapt to a Changing Climate?” by Elena Mihaly and Deanna Moran of the Conservation Law Foundation. And it will include a presentation, “Infrastructure & Sea-Level Rise: Legal Challenges for Local Government Maintenance of Infrastructure,” by Thomas Ruppert, Coastal Planning Specialist for the Florida Sea Grant.

In the afternoon, attendees will be able to participate in break-out sessions with the speakers, allowing them to share their experiences with the issues.

“This symposium is a great example of what the Marine Affairs Institute at RWU Law does best,” RWU Law Dean Michael J. Yelnosky said. “As the world comes to grips with the threats posed by climate change, the symposium will drill down into the legal and policy issues presented by steps that coastal communities can and should take to become more resilient. Unfortunately, the necessary steps pose complex legal issues, not to mention formidable technological challenges. Fortunately, the symposium will bring together legal and policy experts to talk in detail about how those legal issues can be overcome. These are some of the most consequential legal challenges of our time.”

The symposium will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nov. 16 in the Honorable Bruce M. Selya Appellate Courtroom (Room 283) at RWU Law. The public is invited to attend. The cost is $20 per person. Students may attend for free, and RWU undergraduate students are welcome to attend a special screening in the RWU Law bistro. The event offers 6.5 continuing legal education credits and 5.5 certified flood plain manager credits.
8:30 AM Registration and Refreshments

9:00 AM Welcome to Roger Williams University

9:05 AM Welcome from the Marine Affairs Institute, Introduction to the Day and Overview of Program
Julia Wyman, Esq., Director, Marine Affairs Institute/Rhode Island Sea Grant Legal Program, Roger Williams University School of Law

9:10 AM Overview of Physical Problem to Set Context for Legal Discussion
Shaun O’Rourke, Director, Stormwater and Resiliency, Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank, and Chief Resilience Officer, State of Rhode Island

9:25 AM Are State and Local Governments Liable for a Failure to Adapt to a Changing Climate?
Elena Mihaly, Esq., Staff Attorney, Conservation Law Foundation
Deanna Moran, MPP, MCRP, Director of Environmental Planning, Conservation Law Foundation
10:35 AM **Break**

10:50 AM **Adapting to the Deluge: Emerging Legal Issues from Recent Hurricane Seasons**  
Dena Adler, J.D., M.E.M., Climate Law Fellow, Sabin Center for Climate Change Law, Columbia Law School

11:30 AM **Infrastructure & Sea-Level Rise: Legal Challenges for Local Government Maintenance of Infrastructure**  
Thomas Ruppert, Esq., Coastal Planning Specialist, Florida Sea Grant

12:30 PM **Lunch**

1:30 PM **Opportunities for Institutionalizing Resilience Approaches in Local Laws, Ordinances, Regulations and Policies and a Focus on Strategies for Facilitating Retreat**  
Jessica Grannis, Esq., Adaptation Program Director, Georgetown Climate Center, Georgetown Law School  
Katie Spidalieri, Esq., Institute Associate, Georgetown Climate Center

2:20 PM **Facilitated Discussions:** Attendees Select the Discussion Group They Would Like to Learn More About/Share Their Work On

   i. **Integrating Adaptation into State and Local Plans: How States and Local Governments are Using Planning to Establish Public Interests and Legal Justifications for Future Regulatory Actions or Investment Decisions**  
   Led by Jessica Grannis, Esq., and Katie Spidalieri, Esq.

   ii. **Institutionalizing Resilience Into Ordinances and Codes**  
   Led by Read Porter, Esq., Senior Staff Attorney, Marine Affairs Institute/Rhode Island Sea Grant Legal Program, and Elena Mihaly, Esq.

   iii. **Legal Aspects of Adapting Infrastructure**  
   This facilitated discussion will engage participants on topics about legal challenges they foresee for maintenance of local government infrastructure and discuss ideas for how to address these challenges.  
   Led by Thomas Ruppert, Esq., and Melissa Chalek, Esq., Policy Analyst, Marine Affairs Institute/Rhode Island Sea Grant Legal Program

3:30 PM **Panel Discussion: Options for State and Local Governments to Proactively Include Adaptation into Planning, and Resources to Assist that Work**
Marine Law Symposium at RWU Law to Focus on Legal Strategies for Climate Adaptation

Nov. 16 event will be part of RWU’s yearlong series, “Ocean State/State of the Ocean: The Challenge of Sea-Level Rise Over the Coming Century”
BRISTOL, R.I. – The 11th Marine Law Symposium will bring top experts to the Roger Williams University School of Law on Friday, Nov. 16, to address legal strategies for climate adaptation in coastal New England.

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LEGAL STRATEGIES FOR CLIMATE ADAPTATION IN COASTAL NEW ENGLAND

11TH MARINE LAW SYMPOSIUM
Roger Williams University School of Law
November 16, 2018

Sponsored by:

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Dena Adler is a Climate Law Fellow at the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law at Columbia Law School. Dena’s work at the Sabin Center includes tracking U.S. and international trends in climate change litigation and developing legal and regulatory tools to advance the efforts of governments and private actors to adapt to a changing climate and to mitigate the effects of climate change. During the first year of her fellowship, she has worked on projects related to the growing impacts of coastal flooding and hurricanes in the U.S., including new avenues for litigation and reforms for the National Flood Insurance Program. Before starting at the Sabin Center, she completed a J.D. at Yale Law School and a Masters of Environmental Management at Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies. While at Yale, Dena worked with the Yale Climate Change Dialogue and City of Paris to expand global action on climate change by designing legal mechanisms that could link climate commitments from cities, regional governments, and corporate actors to the international treaty regime. She has completed legal internships at the Environmental Defense Fund, Earthjustice, and the White House Council on Environmental Quality.
Melissa Chalek is a Policy Analyst with the Marine Affairs Institute at Roger Williams University School of Law/Rhode Island Sea Grant Legal Program. Her research is focused on adaptation responses to coastal hazards throughout New England. Ms. Chalek previously worked as a research assistant for Rhode Island Sea Grant on shellfish management issues, including authoring the legal framework chapter of the Rhode Island Shellfish Management Plan. She also clerked for the Rhode Island Superior Court. Prior to entering the legal profession, Ms. Chalek had a career as a zoo keeper, focusing on aquatic animals. She received her J.D. from Roger Williams University School of Law and a B.S. in Marine Biology and a Master of Marine Affairs, both from the University of Rhode Island.

Jessica Grannis is the Adaptation Program Director for the Georgetown Climate Center and is a Staff Attorney and Adjunct Professor at the Harrison Institute for Public Law, at Georgetown University Law Center. Ms. Grannis oversees staff and student research and analysis of federal, state and local adaptation efforts. Her publications include an Adaptation Tool Kit for Sea Level Rise (2012) and a book chapter on Coastal Retreat in The Law of Adaptation to Climate Change: U.S. and International Aspects (2012, with Peter Byrne). Prior to joining the Harrison Institute, she was staff counsel for the California State Coastal Conservancy and the Ocean Protection Council. She holds a B.A. in history from the University of Chicago; a J.D., Cum Laude, from University of California Hastings College of the Law; and a L.L.M, with honors, from Georgetown Law.

Elena Mihaly is a Staff Attorney at Conservation Law Foundation (CLF), a New England-wide environmental advocacy non-profit. Elena works in CLF’s Resilient Communities Program, where she focuses on developing and implementing law and policy solutions to enhance community climate preparedness. Elena’s recent publications include a CLF Report titled Climate Adaptation and Legal Liability: A Legal Primer and Workshop Summary Report (2018), and an article titled Avoiding Septic Shock: How Climate Change can cause Septic System Failure and whether New England States are Prepared, 23 Ocean & Coastal L.J. 1 (2018). She has presented on the topic of climate adaptation liability at regional and national conferences. Elena received her J.D., summa cum laude, and Masters in Environmental Law and Policy from Vermont Law School.
Deanna Moran is the Director of Environmental Planning at Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) where she focuses on climate adaptation and the built environment through planning, development, and regulation. She is the co-author of the CLF Report, *Climate Adaptation and Legal Liability: A Legal Primer and Workshop Summary Report*. Deanna holds a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Design from the University at Buffalo and a Master's in Public Policy and a Master's in City and Regional Planning from Rutgers University.

Shaun O’Rourke is Director of Stormwater and Resiliency at Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank (RIIB) and Chief Resilience Officer for the State of Rhode Island. Prior to joining RIIB, Shaun served as the National Green Infrastructure Director at The Trust for Public Land and was Director of Sustainable Design at the Boston Architectural College, where he continues to serve as a member of the faculty. He has also worked at AECOM in New York City as an Ecological Designer focusing on public sector infrastructure projects. Shaun holds a Master of Landscape Architecture degree from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and a B.S from the University of Vermont.

Read Porter is the Senior Staff Attorney with the Marine Affairs Institute at Roger Williams University School of Law/Rhode Island Sea Grant Legal Program. Prior to joining the Institute in 2016, Mr. Porter was a senior attorney and directed the Invasive Species Program at the Environmental Law Institute, a non-profit environmental policy research and education organization based in Washington, DC. He also served as a judicial law clerk for the Honorable Julia Smith Gibbons on the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in Memphis, Tennessee. Mr. Porter has extensive experience in a wide range of ocean and coastal law and policy topics, including fisheries and aquaculture, compliance and enforcement, marine protected areas, offshore energy, invasive species, and other topics. Read earned a J.D., cum laude from Harvard Law School, where he was editor in chief of the *Harvard Environmental Law Review*, and a B.A., summa cum laude in Geology from Amherst College.
Thomas Ruppert leads the Florida Sea Grant College Program’s Coastal Planning Program. Through this program Mr. Ruppert, a licensed attorney, works with partners to develop legal and policy analysis for local governments on planning for sea-level rise, community resilience, and associated long-term challenges and opportunities for Florida’s coastal communities. He has worked with over a dozen partners to organize and host legal workshops on coastal issues and flood insurance around the state. Mr. Ruppert is currently involved with several initiatives within Florida communities planning for sea-level rise and maintains a website of original resources at www.fseagrant.org/climatechange/coastalplanning/. Mr. Ruppert has authored and co-authored numerous legal articles and frequently serves as an invited presenter at events in Florida and in other coastal states.

Katie Spidalieri, an Institute Associate at the Georgetown Climate Center, provides legal and policy analysis on adaptation projects at the federal, state, and local levels. Her work focuses on adaptation in the coastal sector, including evaluating land use and other tools and strategies, such as managed retreat, to adapt to rising seas and flooding. Prior to joining the Climate Center, Katie worked for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and state environmental agencies in Maryland and North Carolina in permitting, environmental compliance, offshore energy and infrastructure development, land use, and community engagement and outreach in the place-based management of national marine sanctuaries and marine national monuments. Katie graduated magna cum laude with a J.D. from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law and the University of Virginia where she received two degrees, with distinction, in history and an interdisciplinary Environmental Thought and Practice Program.

Julia Wyman is the Director of the Marine Affairs Institute at Roger Williams University School of Law/Rhode Island Sea Grant Legal Program. Ms. Wyman has extensive state and national ocean and coastal law and policy experience. Ms. Wyman most recently served as Ocean and Environmental Counsel for Senator Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island. Prior to that, Ms. Wyman served as the Staff Attorney at the Marine Affairs Institute, and the Policy Analyst for the Coastal States Organization in Washington, DC, an organization that represents the interests of the Governors of the thirty-five coastal states, commonwealths, and territories. Much of Ms. Wyman’s work has focused on coastal adaptation to climate change. Ms. Wyman serves as an Adjunct Faculty member at RWU School of Law, where she teaches courses related to ocean and coastal law and policy. Ms. Wyman received her J.D. from the University of Maine School of Law and her B.A. from Trinity College.

Special thanks to: