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PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE

To preserve the natural world and traditional cultures through creative nonfiction and film

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Centre College

Danville, Kentucky

Self-designed Liberal Arts BA (Anthropology, History, Religion, Government), 1991

Vermont Law School

South Royalton, Vermont

Master's Degree in Environmental Policy, 1994

Vermont Law School

South Royalton, Vermont

Juris Doctorate, 1997

Hollins University

Roanoke, Virginia

Graduate Courses in Film Studies and Screenwriting, 2010

Maine Media Workshops & College

Rockport, Maine

Four-Week Documentary Film Workshop, 2011

WORK EXPERIENCE

Freelance Journalist | Documentary Filmmaker | Environmental Attorney

Based in Staunton, Virginia

September 2009 – Present

- Regularly publishing articles and essays in a wide variety of print and online magazines including *Vice*, *Discover*, *Yale Environment360*, *Aeon*, *Sierra*, *Cosmos*, *Mashable*, *Mongabay*, *Humanities*, *Chesapeake Bay Journal*, *FuturePerfect*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *The Southern Quarterly*, *Grit*, *The Utne Reader*, *African Wildlife News*, *Earth Island Journal*, *Virginia Wildlife*, *Wildlife in North Carolina*, *History Today*, *Blue Ridge Digest*, *Virginia Sportsman*, *Africa Geographic*, *Virginia Business*, *Quest: The Science of Sustainability*, and others.

- Produced, directed, shot, edited and scored a short documentary entitled *Return of the Native* concerning the reintroduction of declining seabirds to the coast of New England.
- After founding a regional chapter of a statewide film advocacy and education group, I directed a crew of 15 in a well-received documentary entitled *The Least of These* about an all-volunteer dog rescue group in rural western Virginia.
- Nine months as a part-time reporter for the *Chesapeake Bay Journal* covering the Shenandoah Valley and its contributions to the Bay, before the Trump administration's unprecedented cancellation of a recurring EPA funding grant led to my departure.

Easement Specialist (later promoted to Staff Writer)

Conservation Partners, LLC, Lexington, Virginia

October 2007 – August 2009

- Provided specialized consultation to conservation easement donors and their attorneys, appraisers, accountants, and other advisors covering all aspects of the easement donation process, necessitating a thorough understanding and application of relevant state and federal law including the Internal Revenue Code.
- Actively managed easement donation for clients, facilitated the drafting of deeds of easement, prepared tax documentation for state agency review, and registered clients' state income tax credits.
- Worked collaboratively with local land trusts to advance conservation throughout Virginia.
- Furthered the mission of Conservation Partners, LLC, by writing dozens of thoughtful op-ed articles on the conservation easement process appropriate to regional newspapers throughout Virginia and by publishing a number of feature articles on natural history, wilderness issues, and the mechanics of land conservation in regional and national magazines.

Contractual Employment

Conservation Partners, LLC, Lexington, Virginia

June 2005 – October 2007

- Provided comprehensive reviews of open-space and historic conservation easements for adherence to state and federal laws requiring that they provide "significant public benefit" through the permanent protection of identified conservation values.
- Evaluated real estate appraisals for qualification under the Code of Virginia and US Treasury regulations relevant to conservation easements.

Law Firm Employment

Vellines, Cobbs, Goodwin & Glass, PLC, Staunton, Virginia

March 2006 – April 2007

- Worked on cases involving wills, trust and estates; real property; land use; domestic relations; criminal defense; contract and lease disputes; corporate law; and personal injury.
- Interviewed clients and drafted pleadings; performed legal research; wrote wills, POAs and AMDs; drafted contracts, leases and liability waivers, articles of incorporation and by-laws, prenuptial agreements and QDROs.

Executive Director

Valley Conservation Council (VCC), Staunton, Virginia

December 2002 – July 2003

- Provided leadership to eleven-county regional land trust by elucidating the finer points of conservation easements before individuals and civic groups; helped propel VCC's land conservation agenda toward a record-breaking year.
- Successfully wrote foundational grants for both general operations and specific projects. Personally solicited major gifts from private donors.

- Secured funding and office space for a satellite office to specifically serve the rapidly developing lower Shenandoah Valley.
- Reorganized the Board of Directors into action committees that better contributed toward VCC's strategic plan.
- Lobbied the state legislature to increase funding for natural resource agencies and to enact priority legislation.
- Supervised three other staff members and professionally interacted with a twenty-member board of directors.
- Regularly represented VCC before governmental agencies, educational organizations and local and national conservation groups, and partnered with these organizations to achieve mutual goals.

Legal and Policy Analyst

June 1999 – September 2000

Office of General Counsel, North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Raleigh, North Carolina

- Produced a detailed guidance manual on how to properly consider cumulative and secondary environmental impacts under the North Carolina Environmental Policy Act (NCEPA) permitting process for state government agencies and permit applicants.
- Member of Governor's Chip Mill Advisory Study Team that provided recommendations to the scientists of the Southern Center for Sustainable Forests on impacts to the state's resources resulting from tree plantations, habitat conversion and other aspects of industrial forestry.
- Revised the NCEPA permit system's minimum environmental criteria standards to better meet the needs of permit applicants while ensuring environmental protection.
- Lead contact for DENR in developing and implementing the Governor's Million Acre Initiative, a land-conservation program; facilitated other planning aspects of the administration's Smart Growth campaign.
- Performed litigation preparation and legal research for a variety of major environmental cases in North Carolina and acted as a full-time legal assistant to the Environmental Division, NC Office of the Attorney General, and to the Office of General Counsel, DENR.

Policy and Legislation Associate

January – September 1997

Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund (now Earthjustice), Washington, DC

- Initiated creation of the first all-encompassing review of contractual Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) as negotiated under § 10 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) between the US Fish & Wildlife Service and private landowners. Wrote hundreds of detailed HCP briefs and helped to create a website for their national distribution.
- Analyzed and contributed to statutory initiatives pertaining to the reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act. Effectively lobbied members of Congress for passage of responsible environmental legislation.
- Through extensive review and critique of several pertinent HCPs, launched regional educational and mobilization campaign in the South to make citizens and elected officials aware of the scope and potentialities of ESA § 10.

Legal Externship

August – December 1996

Environmental Semester in Washington Program of the Vermont Law School: Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund (now Earthjustice), Washington, DC

- Gained valuable experience lobbying Congress against anti-environmental clauses in proposed legislation; examined and reported on historical congressional intent concerning the meanings of “jeopardy” and “recovery” within the 1982 Endangered Species Act (ESA) amendments.
- Prepared a comprehensive report on the relations of the Clean Air Act to prescribed silvicultural burning.
- Surveyed leading scientists and prepared the Legal Defense Fund’s comments on a US Fish & Wildlife Service proposal to eliminate ESA prelisting designations, which provided proactive conservation for declining species.

AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS, MEMBERSHIPS AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

- 2018 Post-SEJ Conference Fellowship, Institute for Journalism and Natural Resources
- 2018 St. Lawrence River Institute Fellow, Institute for Journalism and Natural Resources
- 2018 Moderator of the “Freelancers Legal Issues Workshop” at the Society of Environmental Journalists 2018 Annual Conference in Flint, Michigan
- 2018 Excellence in Craft Awards, First and Second Place, Virginia Outdoor Writers Association
- 2017 Speaker’s Fellowship, World Conference of Science Journalists
- 2017 Journalism Fellowship, Society of Wetland Scientists
- 2017 Travel Fellowship for Workshop: “Searching for Truth in the Age of Alternative Facts,” Society of Environmental Journalists
- 2017 Excellence in Craft Award for “Best Conservation Writing,” Appalachian Mountain Advocates and Virginia Outdoor Writers Association
- 2015 Fellow, McCormick Specialized Reporting Institute: Covering Water in a Changing World, The Poynter Institute
- 2015 Travel Fellowship to ScienceWriters2015, National Association of Science Writers
- 2015 Frank Allen Field Reporting Award, Institute for Journalism and Natural Resources
- 2015 Chesapeake Institute Fellow, Institute for Journalism and Natural Resources
- 2015 Keynote Speaker, Annual Conference, Virginia Outdoor Writers Association
- 2014 Rosen Fellow, Society of Environmental Journalists
- 2011 Madson Fellow, Outdoor Writers Association of America
- ◇ Founder and former Chairman, Shenandoah Valley District, Virginia Production Alliance
- ◇ Elected “Best Wildlife Cinematographer,” Maine Media Workshops & College
- ◇ Member, Society of Environmental Journalists
- ◇ Member, National Association of Science Writers
- ◇ Member, DC Science Writers Association
- ◇ Member, Virginia Outdoor Writers Association (Elected to the Board 2019)
- ◇ Member, International League of Conservation Writers
- ◇ 4.0 GPA, Hollins University Graduate Courses in Film Studies and Screenwriting
- ◇ Virginia Bar No. 72573
- ◇ Member, Virginia Bar Association (Environment, Natural Resources and Energy Law Section)

- Volunteering & Associations: The Nature Conservancy, African Wildlife Foundation, Peregrine Fund, Civil War Trust, Wild Virginia, Virginia Society of Ornithologists, Smithsonian Institute
- Interests: Hiking, Literature, Canoeing, Birding, History, Ethnology, Biking, Camping, Theology, Music, Film, Art, Fostering Rescued Pitbulls