



Center for Biological Diversity Fellowship

The Center for Biological Diversity offers a fellowship in public interest environmental law, and is happy to participate in the Lawyers for America program.

At the Center for Biological Diversity, we believe that the welfare of human beings is deeply linked to nature — to the existence in our world of a vast diversity of wild animals and plants. Because diversity has intrinsic value, and because its loss impoverishes society, we work to secure a future for all species, great and small, hovering on the brink of extinction. We do so through science, law and creative media, with a focus on protecting the lands, waters and climate that species need to survive.

Fellows are likely to work on projects concerning endangered species, ocean protection, climate change, public lands, environmental health and water resources. Fellows will assist with the preparation of litigation, administrative advocacy and policy development. Our fellows approximate the work of attorneys at the Center while gaining experience and honing legal skills under strong supervision. It's also a fun place to work where the staff has a strong dedication to conservation and building a cohesive team.

Organization and Workplace

The Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with offices in several states including California, Arizona, Oregon, Washington DC, and New Mexico. We have approximately 100 employees total, roughly a third being attorneys. Our largest concentration of program staff is in our Oakland office, with a total of 25 full-time staff members, most of whom are attorneys. The San Francisco office also houses about six externs, interns, and volunteers, divided between law students, science interns, and organizers. More information about the Center, its history, and its staff, can be found at <http://www.biologicaldiversity.org>.

Supervision

We believe that we are a good fit for the Lawyers for America Program based on our proven track record with our existing legal intern/extern program. Many of our interns and externs have received academic credit for their experience at the Center and we consistently satisfy all requirements of participating law schools and universities for such credit. We provide interns and externs with an immersive experience in our office and our organization, including them as part of our litigation teams and organizational programs from the start.

We anticipate the Lawyers for America fellows to be similarly immersed in the office and the organization, working directly with program directors, staff and senior attorneys, and paralegals on all aspects of our litigation docket. Fellows will be assigned to a program area, reporting to and supervised by senior attorney or program director while working alongside a legal team as well as with scientists and organizers to some extent.

First year fellows will mostly produce work-product for use by the attorneys, although they may occasionally be directly responsible for comment letters or participating in public hearings that do not require membership of the bar. First year fellows will be responsible for legal research and writing and will observe, but not likely directly participate in, oral arguments and settlement negotiations. Second-year fellows, after becoming members of the bar, will continue legal research and writing as well as produce litigation documents. They will be responsible for some case management and will occasionally have opportunities to give presentations.

Work

The bulk of our litigation work, like most environmental law, revolves around legal research and writing, with most cases decided at the summary judgment (or similar) phase. We do work with partner organizations and represent outside clients, so many of our cases involve some degree of client contact, like working with clients during pre-litigation administrative hearings and advising clients on their rights and available options. For the Lawyers for America fellows, we anticipate a rough breakdown of work to be as follows: 80% legal research and writing (preparing comment letters to agencies, drafting legal briefs, developing litigation memoranda); 15% litigation development and management (managing cases, working with clients, experts, and outside counsel); 5% oral advocacy (presenting at public hearings and lectures, administrative hearings, and court appearances).

Training

Fellows, to the extent possible, will approximate working as attorneys at the Center with enhanced supervision and feedback. An initial orientation will provide the fellow with an introduction to the Center's staff, programs and mission as well as administrative matters and ethical obligations. The supervisor will work with the fellow to establish work-product expectations, annual goals, and professional development objectives.

Substantive legal training will then take place throughout the fellowship, touching all facets of environmental litigation, including agency and court procedures, training and education in specific laws, and participation in the tactical and strategic decision-making process of an environmental advocacy organization. Specific areas for development will include: legal research and writing, analytical thinking, organization and time management, familiarity with key environmental laws, professional responsibilities, and oral advocacy. Training and education will become more complex and more nuanced as the fellowship progresses and the fellow gains experience and knowledge. Similar to our training of our first-year attorneys, training for fellows will be ongoing and contextual, but will also take place during weekly meetings with the fellow's supervising senior attorney. Fellows will receive feedback on their assignments throughout their fellowship, and they will also receive a more extensive performance review on a quarterly or semi-annual basis.

Fellows will also participate in continuing legal education opportunities with Center attorneys, attending legal conferences and seminars. Fellows will also attend educational seminars that are periodically conducted within our office for the benefit of all staff (and occasionally are eligible for CLE credit), and will be encouraged to assist in conducting some of these seminars, as well, reporting on new legal developments, particular research projects, and/or ongoing litigation issues.

Recommended courses

Fellows are encouraged to have completed the following courses:

- Administrative Law
- Environmental Law (first year statutory course)

Other courses or seminars that are germane to the work being done at the Center include:

- Biodiversity Law
- California Water Resources
- Land Use Regulation
- Public Land & Natural Resources Law
- Climate Change: Law, Policy & Business Seminar
- Environmental Law Seminar
- International Environmental Law
- Public Lands & Natural Resources Seminar
- Water Law

Applicants with a background in environmental science or other relevant environmental experience are encouraged to apply.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

The Center for Biological Diversity deeply values, and is committed to sustaining and promoting, both biological and cultural diversity. We welcome, embrace and respect diversity of people, identities and cultures. We are committed to fostering an organizational culture of diversity and inclusion. The Center believes staff and board diversity is critical to saving life on Earth.

It is the policy of the Center to promote diversity in recruitment and hiring. The Center will provide an equal opportunity in recruitment and employment to all individuals and will consider candidates without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation and identity, national origin, age, military or veteran status, disability or any other legally protected status; and without discrimination based on socioeconomic, marital, parental or caregiving status, or any of the previously listed characteristics or statuses.

The Center values the diversity of its job candidates, staff and board. It rejects any form of harassment, discrimination, retaliation or oppression. We encourage and require respectful communication and cooperation. Our organization is dedicated to sustaining and promoting diversity with respect to recruitment, hiring, placement, promotion, training, provision of compensation and benefits, management of organizational activities and general treatment during employment.