

# **Environment & Natural Resources Section / Administrative & Regulatory Law Committee**

## **SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES**

*by order of presentation*

### **Professor Josh Eagle**

*University of South Carolina School of Law  
Columbia, SC*

Josh Eagle is the Solomon Blatt Professor of Law and the Director of the Coastal Law Field Lab at the University of South Carolina. He is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins University (B.A.), Colorado State University (M.S., Forest Sciences), and Georgetown University (J.D.), and he began his legal career at the United States Department of Justice. Professor Eagle has published on a wide range of topics, including coastal land use, fisheries, public lands, conservation easements, and endangered species. He has been named an Atlantic Fellow in Public Policy, a Fulbright Scholar, and an international research scholar at the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies.

### **M. McMullen Taylor**

*Mullen Taylor, LLC  
Columbia, SC*

Following graduation from the University of South Carolina with a B.A. in 1989, Mullen Taylor enjoyed a twelve-year career in state and local government, during which time she earned a Master of Arts degree in conflict resolution from Columbia College in 1999. In 2001, she entered the University of South Carolina School of Law. As a law student, Mullen served as Associate Editor of the Southeastern Environmental Law Journal, and served as a law clerk for Governor Hodges, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and for Governor Sanford's Water Law Review Committee. Upon entering private law practice in Columbia, she has represented state and local government, nonprofit corporations, as well as the private sector. Her practice areas include water law, environmental law, constitutional law and appellate advocacy. She was inducted into the 2015 Legal Elite of the Midlands for her practice in environmental law. Mullen has been recognized as one of Best Lawyers in America in the practice area of water law for the

past six years and has attained a Martindale-Hubbell peer-rating of AV Preeminent, the highest level of professional excellence and ethical standing. She is admitted to practice in South Carolina state court, the Federal District Court of South Carolina, and the United States Supreme Court.

**Amelia A. Thompson**  
*S.C. Environmental Law Project*  
*Pawleys Island, SC*

Amelia Thompson is a practicing attorney at the SC Environmental Law Project, where she works mainly on environmental litigation, administrative appeals and environmental policy. Before SCELPA, Amelia completed two successive federal judicial clerkships for Judge Flanagan and Judge Howard, both in the Eastern District of North Carolina. Her experiences also include internships for the Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9, and the Department of Justice's Environmental Enforcement Section. Amelia earned her bachelor's degree in political science from Appalachian State University in only three years. Afterwards, she worked in real estate law before earning her JD with honors from UNC. Amelia resides in Pawleys Island, SC, where she enjoys playing outside with her dog as much as possible.

**Michael S. Traynham**  
*S.C. Department of Health & Environmental Control*  
*Columbia, SC*

Michael is a 2004 graduate of the South Carolina Honors College and a 2007 graduate of the South Carolina School of Law. He has been with SCDHEC since 2014, working first as an Assistant General Counsel with the Bureau of Water, and more recently as Chief Counsel for Environmental Quality Control. In this capacity he works with the agency's environmental attorneys to provide legal counsel to SCDHEC's various environmental programs. Michael has represented the agency's interests in a variety of water quality and water quantity matters, including 401 Water Quality Certifications, NPDES permit challenges, numerous water quality enforcement decisions, and litigation involving both surface water and ground water quantity issues. Additionally, Michael has advised the South Carolina Dam Safety Program since 2014 and serves as the agency's designee on the South Carolina General Assembly's Petroleum Pipeline Study Committee.

Prior to his time with DHEC, he practiced in the areas of tax law, securities regulation, and insurance and government liability defense. He is married with three daughters. Michael is also a board member with Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands, and attends Columbia Crossroads Church. He enjoys hiking, running, craft beer, science fiction (written or on screen, of both good and dubious quality), and spending time with his family.

**Rita B. Barker**  
*Wyche Law Firm*  
*Greenville, SC*

Rita Bolt Barker is a shareholder with Wyche, PA, in Greenville, South Carolina, and is the co-leader of the firm's Real Estate & Environmental Team. Rita is an experienced litigator, with an emphasis on environmental issues. She represents clients in federal and state courts, as well as before the US Environmental Protection Agency and the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control. Her varied experience includes advising clients on matters arising under federal and state environmental statutes. Rita also counsels clients on assessing environmental risks and incentives associated with corporate transactions, including mergers, acquisitions, and real estate deals.

Rita has written and presented on numerous environmental law topics and has been an adjunct professor at Clemson University and Furman University. She maintains a blog, Environmental Matters, and was an editor of Environmental Law in South Carolina (4th ed.). Rita is a member of the American Bar Association's Section of Environment, Energy and Resources and received the Section's Distinguished Environmental Advocate Award in 2013. She is listed in Chambers USA, as a Rising Star in Super Lawyers, Best Lawyers in America, and Legal Elite. In 2017, she was named Environmental Lawyer of the Year in Greenville.

Rita earned her J.D. from Harvard Law School in 2004 and her B.A., summa cum laude, from Clemson University in 2001, where she served as Student Body President.

**Eugene "Gene" C. McCall, Jr.**  
*McCall Environmental, P.A.*  
*Greenville, SC*

Gene McCall has practiced environmental and water law in Greenville, SC from 1988 through the present. He holds a bachelor's and master's degree in Mechanical Engineering, a Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering and a J.D. in Law. He is a registered professional engineer in South Carolina, a member of the South Carolina Bar, and a Registered Patent Attorney. He practiced as an engineer in nuclear power from 1975-1977 with Black & Veatch consulting engineers and with the Tennessee Valley Authority from 1977-1979. From 1984-1988 Dr. McCall was an Asst. Professor of Civil Engineering, Adj. Asst. Professor in the School of Public Health, and Assoc. System Legal Counsel at the University of South Carolina, where he taught environmental engineering and law courses and assisted with legal issues for the University. He was an Adj. Prof. of Law at the University of SC School of Law from 2006-2007. He holds a patent for a wastewater degreasing formula. Gene was appointed to the 2003-2004 Governor's Water Law Review Committee and served as Chair of the Instate Subcommittee. He has published both technical and legal environmental articles and has given many presentations on environmental and water law. He was a contributing author to South Carolina Environmental Law, 2nd Ed., published by the South Carolina Bar. He was a member of the National Science Foundation 2016 and 2017 Grant Proposal Review Panels for Environmental Engineering. He was a Contributor and Committee Member, Chair of the Development of Regulatory Tools subcommittee and

Corresponding Editor for the final appendices, for the American Society of Civil Engineers, ASCE Standard, Management Practices for Control of Erosion and Sediment from Construction Activities, published in 2017.

**James B. “Blan” Holman, IV**  
*Southern Environmental Law Center*  
*Charleston, SC*

Blan Holman is a Managing Attorney in the Southern Environmental Law Center's Charleston Office, where he concentrates on energy issues. He helped draft South Carolina's 2014 solar bill and has litigated and negotiated that law's implementation before the S.C. Public Service Commission. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and the University of Virginia School of Law.

**Amy E. Armstrong**  
*S.C. Environmental Law Project*  
*Pawleys Island, SC*

**Course Planner**

Amy Armstrong graduated from University of South Carolina in 2002, with law degree and a Master's in Environmental Resource Management. She started working for the South Carolina Environmental Law Project (“SCELP”) in September, 2002, after receiving a competitive two year fellowship from Equal Justice Works. SCELP is a 501(c)(3) public interest environmental law organization. In 2004 Amy transitioned into staff attorney at SCELP, where she remained until the death of SCELP’s President, Jimmy Chandler, in 2010. Upon Mr. Chandler’s death, Amy was elected by the SCELP Board of Directors to fill the role of Executive Director/Chief Counsel. Amy represents environmental and citizens groups before state and federal courts and agencies in their efforts to protect and preserve natural resources. She has litigated cases involving protection of freshwater and saltwater wetlands, endangered species, citizens’ rights, water quality, air quality and coastal management.

Amy grew up in Columbia, SC. She received her B.S. in Biology from the University of Michigan in 1992. Before attending law school, she worked with the S.C. Department of Natural Resources managing a population of federally endangered Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. Amy is the Assistant Judge for the City of Georgetown. In her spare time, Amy enjoys walking her dog on the beach, cooking, traveling, drawing, reading and playing the piano.

**Mary D. Shahid**

*Nexsen Pruet, LLC  
Charleston, SC*

Mary Shahid is a member of the law firm Nexsen Pruet, LLC. Mary has practiced environmental law for more than 25 years, first as counsel for the South Carolina Coastal Council, which became the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management within the Department of Health and Environmental Control as a consequence of State Government Restructuring.

Mary has significant experience in assisting clients with regulation under the Clean Water Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Beachfront Management Act, and all environmental permitting programs administered by the Department of Health and Environmental Control. She represents landowners, developers, local governments, industry and business in obtaining permits and compliance issues.

**F. David Butler**

*S.C. Public Service Commission  
Columbia, SC*

**Course Planner**

David has practiced law for 39 years in both private and governmental settings. For the last 27 years, he has been Staff Counsel, General Counsel, and Senior Counsel, respectively at the Public Service Commission of South Carolina. (The Commission is a quasi-judicial body that considers public utility matters.) David has worked extensively with both the Commission Staff and in an advisory capacity for the Commissioners, and has previously argued cases in the Circuit Court, the U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina, and the South Carolina Supreme Court. He has also argued cases before the South Carolina Court of Appeals and the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. David has also appeared before the DC Court of Appeals in Washington, DC. David has practiced extensively in the area of Administrative Law and has acted both as a Hearing Officer and a Hearing Examiner at the Commission, processing procedural matters and hearing various non-rate cases. He is a graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University and the USC School of Law.

**Additional speakers without submitted biographies:**

**Susan A. Lake**

*S.C. Department of Health & Environmental Control  
Columbia, SC*

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