



# ENVIRONMENTAL LAW FOUNDATION

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## **For Immediate Release: ELF announces Nat Kane as new Executive Director**

After 30 years at the helm of Environmental Law Foundation, Jim Wheaton has stepped down. ELF's board of directors has named Nat Kane as the new Executive Director.

As a staff attorney at ELF these last six years, Nat has developed the organization's environmental justice practice, working on issues surrounding agricultural pollution of the state's drinking water. His other practice areas include protecting water quality and flows for salmonid restoration, public access to public records and data, and enforcing right to know and consumer protection laws. He joined the organization in 2014 after graduating from NYU School of Law and a two-year fellowship at San Francisco environmental law firm Shute, Mihaly, and Weinberger.

"I am incredibly excited to lead ELF into its next chapter. We have big plans to make significant impacts in water quality, environmental quality, and human health over the coming years," Nat says.

Jim's victories since founding ELF in 1991 are too numerous to list. A few highlights include:

- A 2018 appellate decision establishing that groundwater pumping that dewateres rivers violates California's Public Trust Doctrine.
- Dozens of major actions to keep toxic chemicals out of food and water.
- Litigation establishing that the State's regulation of pollution from industrial dairies violated state law.
- Litigation to prevent children from being exposed to toxic diesel fumes in school buses and to ensure that the school bus companies properly maintain safety standards.
- Relocation and mitigation of environmental justice impacts of the rebuild of Oakland's 880 freeway after the earthquake.

In addition, Jim founded the First Amendment Project, which litigates for free speech and journalistic independence.

"I am thrilled to see Nat as the next generation leadership. I have full confidence he will do great things. I am deeply indebted to all the people who have been staff, advisors and friends to ELF over the years, and take pride in all their accomplishments more than my own."

Calling this Jim's "retirement" would be a misnomer. He could no more retire than sit still. He will continue with ELF for six months into 2021 to assist in the transition;

thereafter remain on the Board as an advisor, mentor, and institutional memory. He will keep teaching at both Berkeley and Stanford, keep an active law license so he can run the legal clinic for staff and students at the Journalism school, and serve as legal advisor to student publications. Plus, he continues leading the Stone Soup, a Burning Man Camp, and will stay active with the New Parkway Theater and Camp Navarro in Mendocino.

At this critical time in ELF's history, we can use your help more than ever. Please donate at the link below to help ensure that ELF can continue to protect our environment and communities long into the future.

<https://www.networkforgood.org/donation/ExpressDonation.aspx?ORGID2=943164862&vlrStratCode=KkPibQbE560yn3pi96VVsdtkfmUHt0Jno3vqqRHwNJgM52SLxX5VylGmk06XLkxJs>