

Jan G. Laitos

Joe T. Juhan Endowed Professorship in Property Rights and Policy
University of Denver Sturm College of Law

B.A., 1968, Yale University
J.D., 1971, University of Colorado
S.J.D., 1975, University of Wisconsin

Jan Laitos holds the Joe T. Juhan Endowed Professorship in Property Rights and Policy at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law. Previously he held the John A. Carver, Jr. Chair in Natural Resources and Environmental Law. He is the author of the leading treatise on the “Law of Property Rights Protection 4th ed,” published by Wolters Kluwer. He is a regional board member of the Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute; and from 1982 to 2022 was a Trustee of the Foundation for Natural Resources and Energy Law.

He was Vice Chair of the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission. He was also the Director of the nationally ranked Environmental and Natural Resources Law Program at the University of Denver Law School from 1981 until 2004. In 1996, he was given the University of Denver’s distinguished Teaching Award, and in 2005, he was selected a “DU Law Star.” Prior to joining the faculty at the Law school, he was the law clerk to the Chief Justice for the Colorado Supreme Court, and then an attorney with the Office of Legal Counsel within the United States Department of Justice, where he worked under Assistant Attorney General Antonin Scalia during the Watergate Era.

He is the author of several textbooks and treatises and casebooks, published by Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, West Academic, Foundation Press, Aspen Publishing, Wolters Kluwer, Duke University Press, and Edward Elgar Publishing. He is also the author of over 56 published law review articles. He has worked as a consultant on several cases decided by the 9th Circuit Court of Federal appeals, the Montana Supreme Court, the Nevada Supreme Court, the Idaho Supreme court, and the Colorado Supreme Court, and on several cert. petitions before the United States Supreme Court.

He has lectured or taught classes at Austral University Law School in Buenos Aires, Argentina, at the European Network for Housing Research Institute in Istanbul, Turkey, at the Central European University, Budapest, Hungary, the National University of Ireland at Galway, Ireland, the University of Oslo, Norway, the University of Tarragona, Spain, the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, and the University of Western Sydney, Australia.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

TEXTBOOKS

- Why Environmental Laws Fail (Cambridge University Press 2018)
- The Right of Nonuse (Oxford University Press 2013)
- Earth Law: Emerging Ecocentric Law (Wolters Kluwer 2020) (contributing author)
- Rethinking Environmental Law: Why Environmental Laws Should Conform to the Laws of Nature (Edward Elgar Publishing 2021)
- Pioneers of Environmental Law (12 Tables Press 2020) (J. Laitos editor)
- Rethinking Private Property Rights (Edward Elgar Publishing 2025) (J. Laitos editor)

TREATISES

- Law of Property Rights Protection: Constitutional and Equitable Limitations on Government Powers 4th ed. (Wolters Kluwer 2025)
- The Law of Toxic Substances and Hazardous Waste (Foundation Press University Treatise Series 2019)
- Principles of Natural Resources Law 2d ed. (West Academic 2020)
- Hornbook on Natural Resources Law (West Academic 2015)

MONOGRAPHS

The Property Paradox: The Making of a “New” Fundamental Constitutional Right (Rehnquist Center National Conference of Constitutional Law Scholars 2023)

LAW REVIEW ARTICLES

- Property and the Police Power without Judicial Review: Three Truths, 52 Florida State University Law Review _____ (2025)
- Replacing the Standard Algorithm for Environmental Law, 13 George Washington Journal of Energy and Environmental Law 19 (2022).
- How Science Has Influenced, and Should Now Determine, Environmental Policy, 43 William and Mary Envtl. Law and Policy 759 (2019).

- The Paralysis Paradox and the Untapped Role of Science in Solving “Big” “Environmental Problems, 30 Georgetown Env’tl. Law Review 409 (2018).
- The Strange Career of Private Takings of Private Property for Private Use, 5 William & Mary Property Rights Journal 125 (2016)
- The Gardener and the Sick Garden: How Not to Address the Planet’s Environmental Issues, 45 E.L.I. Env’tl. L. Rptr. 10391 (2015).

CASEBOOKS

- Natural Resources Law 4th ed. (West Academic 2026).
- Regulation of Toxic Substances and Hazardous Waste 3d ed. (Foundation Press 2019)

BOOK CHAPTERS

- Towards “Meaningful” Judicial Review of Private Property Rights, in *Rethinking Private Property* (Edward Elgar Publishing 2025)
- Takings Law in Colorado, in *Environmental Regulation of Colorado Real Property 3d ed.* (Colorado Bar Association 2020)

CONFERENCES

Hosted and Organized “Private Property and the Police Power,” April, 2024. Two Day Conference at the Sturm College of Law, with Nine Law Professor Speakers, and multiple Property Owners, Property Attorneys, and Regulators participants.