
Along with three other articles focusing on pollution law with respect to air, solid waste and noise pollution, this article on water pollution law is bound together into a single digest that was a project of the Law School of Lewis and Clark College and was created to serve as a resource for Oregon state government as well as the basis of continuing legal education through the state Bar Association. The text is written as if it were something of a condensed, though wide-ranging, legal brief.

The digest surveys relevant federal and state laws and tracks their interpretation through the analysis of numerous court rulings. Covering such a range of topics as jurisdiction, standing, rights, standards of evidence and remedies through the enforcement actions of public agency as well as private parties, it cites and summarizes numerous controlling cases under a number of points of the law.

The digest consists almost entirely of brief summations of case law, organized together so as to convey the function of the law as it relates to various issues of the water pollution. Individual cases are summarized succinctly, often in as little as three sentences. While it does focus on Oregon and Federal law, it also cites relating law from within other states in certain cases. The digest does not draw any comprehensive conclusions or make recommendations for future actions.

Critique

Written as a summary for lawyers and legislators, it does not offer much background for the layperson. The implications of the information found within the digest may at times be lost upon a reader lacking a legal background.

In any case, it should be noted that this product is authored by a number of law students from Lewis and Clark College, and while supervised by Professor Bill Williamson of the College, it was published in this form as a draft and is not, technically speaking, a legal opinion.

This digest is, however, extraordinarily unique as historical snapshot of the state of environmental law in Oregon and would be appreciated by researchers searching for background information on the context of contemporaneous political dynamics or a particular court ruling in the state in this time period.