

# Midpoint Updates

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I'm officially at the midpoint of my internship at ELAW, which brings feelings of excitement about everything I have experienced, and a little disappointment that I am nearing the end of my time here.

Being 5 weeks in, I am at a point where I can begin to truly reflect on all that I have learned and accomplished. As much as I tried to keep my heart open and away from assumptions at the beginning of my time at ELAW, I can't help but be pleasantly surprised at what I have experienced. One of the goals I had at the beginning of the

summer was to learn more about how a non-profit functions. Not only have I been exposed to fundraising, grant-seeking, and everyday office functioning, I am also learning a lot about the technological needs of our international network of grassroots advocates.

One of the main goals of ELAW is to help environmental advocates connect and share scientific and legal [resources](#) to promote grassroots efforts to build a sustainable, just future. I have been working on finding a new collaborative platform for our partners to connect through. This project is not what I expected when I walked into the office at the beginning of June, but has proven to be one of my favorite projects. It has shown me how to identify and meet the specific needs of our non-profit including pricing, necessary capabilities, and catering to a geographically diverse network of people that all have different devices, internet access, and technological expertise.

I am also researching the use of science in environmental [decision making](#). making. As opposed to the copious amount of literature explaining how the current administration is cutting funding and ignoring science, this project will speak about cases where science is valued and being used to make important decisions regarding environmental protection. I have been reading through many court cases, which used our staff scientists as expert witnesses, and I am drawing out the pertinent information regarding their scientific expertise and how it was used to inform the final decision of the court. This has been a really interesting project that has allowed me to learn more about law, policy, and how pivotal science can be in a court room.

Personally, I have made a point to take more time to appreciate the natural beauty of Oregon that I don't normally have access to. I am so lucky to be able to intern in a state that has some of the best environmental protection laws and most beautiful [national parks](#). By making this effort to go experience the places I want to protect, I have found a renewed passion for environmental conservation.

One of the best things about this internship is being surrounded by so many intelligent and dedicated women who are working to make a difference in the way we interact with, and protect our environment. These women are truly respected in their fields and have had to overcome many obstacles to get here. Many of our international female partners face a disproportionate amount of threats to their lives and livelihoods. Watching these women continue to fight for environmental protection despite these obstacles is truly inspiring. I hope to take that inspiration

not only back to Tulane, but to also carry it with me throughout my life.