Readers of this blog probably have some sense of what the environmental law centers at UCLA and here at Berkeley are doing. There are too many environmental law centers to do a a comprehensive nationwide survey, and trying to pick a top-10 list would be completely subjective. To keep this post manageable, I'll only discuss programs in about a half dozen centers. But I hope readers will use the comments section to say more about these programs and the many others doing great work.

Climate change is almost inevitably going to be a focus of an environmental law center these days (and probably for decades to come.) A couple of East Coast centers illustrate the range of activities. Columbia's Sabin Center provides on-line resources such as national and global databases of climate change regulation. A different approach is taken by Georgetown's center on state climate policy. Much of the Georgetown center's work relates to climate change adaptation, providing a clearinghouse for state and local initiatives as well as background information about climate hazards and mitigation measures. The center also works on transportation-related issues, and provides a resources about state energy policies across the country. George Washington is also launching a sustainable energy initiative.

A broader approach to public policy is taken by a center at NYU, the Institute on Policy Integrity. While the institute has a broader portfolio, its primary mission is ensure that government regulations are based on rigorous analysis, including a careful look at costs and benefits.. That may sound like an anti-regulatory agenda, but in fact the Institute takes strongly pro-regulatory stances on issues like climate change and air pollution. It has produced detailed analytic reports sharply critical of the Trump Administration's rollbacks.

Other centers focus on issues that are less in the public limelight. Vermont has a range of centers dealing with issues such as taxation and the environment, environmental law and the "New Economy," and issues concerning water and justice. Pace and Yale both have centers dealing with international environmental law.

This is only a sample of what law schools are doing in the environmental area. There are also a slew of environmental law clinics, which I haven't discussed here. And of course, there's all the work that individual law professors are doing on their own.

Our Centers at UCLA and Berkeley do a different mix of work, though there's obviously some overlap with these East Coast centers. One explanation is that we

have the good fortune to be in California, which remains the national leader on climate change and air pollution. This provides the opportunity to work on cutting edge issues, helping to find solutions that can serve as models in other parts of the country. What the federal government and the other 49 states do remains critically important, and we can all be grateful that the other full range of environmental issues are being addressed nationally.