

ELIZA CAVA

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ENVIRONMENTAL & CONSERVATION POLICY EXPERIENCE

Audubon Naturalist Society Chevy Chase, MD

July 2016 – Present

Director of Conservation

- Serve in senior leadership at 34-person regional environmental nonprofit organization (no affiliation with National Audubon Society). Manage up to six full-, part-time, and contract staff, as well as up to four interns.
- Pre-COVID-19, increased budget through successful grant and major donor fundraising 84%, to \$492,000, in 3 years.
- Manage conservation [policy & advocacy](#) work in Washington, DC, and its Virginia and Maryland suburbs, with a focus on four priority areas: Human Health & Access to Nature; Biodiversity & Habitats; Climate Crisis; and Sustainable Land Use.
- Work closely with Executive Director, Board of Directors and extensive coalition and partner colleagues in setting goals, prioritizing campaigns and actions, and strategic use of tactics to achieve conservation results.
- Supervise conservation outreach programming, including:
 - ♦ [Creek Critters® app](#) and associated outreach program which have now reached more than 25,000 people nationwide who have used the app to investigate the health of their streams, and
 - ♦ 26-year old volunteer [water quality monitoring program](#) with 180 highly-trained volunteers and 30 long-term monitoring sites around the Washington, DC region.
- Co-chair biannual [Naturally Latinos® conference](#), which reached 350 attendees in December 2020 in its third iteration. Each conference, nearly doubled number of speakers, sponsorship revenue, and attendance. USFS was lead sponsor for 2020 conference.
- Serve in a leadership role on staff Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility working group, including creating staff learning experiences, advising Executive Director, and advising Board of Directors.

Defenders of Wildlife Washington, DC

August 2011 – July 2016

Policy Analyst, Renewable Energy & Wildlife; Previously Conservation Associate and Independent Contractor

- Wrote and contributed to extensive comment letters on federal NEPA and other policy processes including on the Western Solar Energy Program (BLM), Sage-grouse Conservation Plan (BLM), Land-based Wind Energy Guidelines (FWS), offshore Wind Energy Areas (BOEM), West-Wide Energy Corridors (BLM and DOE), DOI SO 3330 on Improving Mitigation Policies and Practices of the Department of the Interior, and more.
- Researched and analyzed qualitative and quantitative policy issues related to wildlife and land conservation, energy industries and systems, and federal agencies, often on a rapid-response timeline. Recommended strategic direction and tactics based on analysis.
- Engaged with key policymakers and analysts in government and partner organizations, including Congressional staff and contacts at federal agencies (OMB, DOI, FWS, BLM), conservation organizations, and renewable energy industry associations.
- Organized and facilitated meetings and workshops, produced and delivered oral and multimedia presentations
- Managed projects including internal collection of data to support strategic planning and workforce task alignment, technical and policy development of broad-scope GIS projects, contract reports to partners, and a workshop series on conservation planning with cross-departmental staff, external partners, and agency stakeholders.
- Wrote memos and briefed colleagues, including senior management and CEO.
- Wrote blog posts, fact sheets, reports, whitepapers, internal memoranda, talking points, and development materials (including grantwriting).
- Supervised up to four interns at a time.

The Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy New Haven, CT

June 2010 – May 2011

International Environmental Policy Research Assistant

- Researched and edited reports and publications on international environmental policy issues; developed materials for the UNITAR-Yale Conference on Environmental Governance and Democracy.

Greening the Vote Political Engagement Student Interest Group New Haven, CT

May 2010 – May 2011

Volunteer co-leader

- Planned and managed meetings, wrote email newsletters, and budgeted, promoted, and planned events for a student group serving a 300-person student body focused on political engagement for environmental issues.

The Urban Resources Initiative New Haven, CT

September 2009 – August 2010

GIS/Mapping Student Assistant

- Managed and maintained urban forestry GIS and Excel databases; coordinated web integration of data; produced maps and wrote articles for newsletters and presentations; assisted with urban tree-planting activities.

EDUCATION

Yale University School of the Environment (Formerly Forestry & Environmental Studies). New Haven, CT.

Master of Environmental Science focused on federal environmental policy and water resources management, 2011.

Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA.

Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Education (special major), High Honors, 2006.

University of Massachusetts. Amherst, MA.

Non-degree graduate studies in Wetlands Ecology and Economics, Fall 2008 - Spring 2009.

The National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS). Western Australia semester course.

Expedition focusing on logistics, risk management, decision-making, wilderness skills, and leadership, Spring 2004.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

- [Audubon Naturalist Society blog posts](#) (2016-2020) on conservation, land use planning, stormwater management, and climate change impacts at the local and regional scales.
 - [Defenders of Wildlife blog posts](#) (2012-2016) on renewable energy & wildlife planning and policy.
 - Cava, E. and N. Dubois (2015). [Building a Roadmap for Successful Regional Mitigation](#). Defenders of Wildlife, Washington, DC.
 - Lyons, J. and E. Cava (December 2012). *Landscape-Level Planning for Renewable Energy and Conservation*. Paper presented at Renewable Energy World North America Conference, Orlando, FL.
 - Cava, E. (October 2011). [Arresting Fear With Hope: Protesting the Keystone XL Pipeline](#). SAGE Magazine.
 - Cava, E. (2011). [The Evolution of an Idea and an Institution: Assessing the Progress of the Army Corps of Engineers in Large-Scale Ecosystem Restoration](#). Master's thesis on the progress of Everglades restoration. Presented at [National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration](#), Aug. 2011.
 - Cava, E. (April 2011). [The Arctic Irony: Protecting Areas We May Never See](#). SAGE Magazine.
 - Cava, E. et al (2006). *Mapping Environmental Justice in Delaware County, PA*. Environmental Studies Capstone project, Swarthmore College. Nominated for NITLE's Churchill Award for student scholarship in GIS.
 - Cava, E. (2006). *Environmental Education and Political Engagement: Teaching for Sustainability*. Honors thesis, Swarthmore College.
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SKILLS / AWARDS / ACTIVITIES

- *Awards, Honors, and Fellowships:*
 - ~ **Defenders of Wildlife 2015 Exceptional Service Award as a member of a team.** Awarded for demonstrating teamwork, problem-solving skills, and leadership amongst peer organizations in the conservation community.
 - ~ **Defenders of Wildlife 2014 Exceptional Service Award for a Non-Supervisor.** Awarded for demonstrating exceptional leadership and a multifaceted approach in mentoring and supervising interns. March 2015.
 - ~ **Senior Fellow, Environmental Leadership Program (ELP),** Chesapeake Regional Network 2013.
 - ~ **Strachan Donnelley Award** for groundbreaking research aimed at understanding how governmental agencies are adapting to meet the complex challenges of large-scale ecosystem restoration. Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. May 2011.
 - ~ **Elected Commencement co-speaker by classmates.** Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. May 2011. Speech "Not Just Visiting" available at tinyurl.com/cavaFES.
 - ~ **Teresa Heinz Scholar for Environmental Research.** June 2010 summer research funding award.
- *Software:* Extremely proficient in a wide variety of tools and platforms, including ArcGIS, Microsoft Office (including Sharepoint and Microsoft Teams), Adobe Photoshop, Zoom, basic website development, virtual conference platforms, iMovie, Movie Maker. A fast learner of software and programs.
- *Languages:* Fluent Spanish speaker, functional Spanish writer, a slow translator of biblical Hebrew.
- *Activities:* Enjoy backpacking, bicycling, rock climbing, whitewater kayaking, coastal and river canoeing, camping, and carpentry. Hiked 400+ miles on the Appalachian Trail. In 2014, my family and I took the acting Superintendent of Everglades National Park on a 4-day, 80-mile canoe journey across the heart of the River of Grass where few NPS staff have ever visited. He survived.
- *Previous work experience:* environmental and outdoor educator; substitute teacher; collegiate rugby coach; trail maintenance crew leader with the Student Conservation Association on the Natchez Trace Parkway (NPS, Tennessee) and in the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest (USFS, Oregon).