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Symposium—Growing, Growing, Gone: Innovative Ideas in Resource Management for a Growing Population: Introduction

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*Symposium—Growing, Growing, Gone:
Innovative Ideas in Resource Management for a Growing
Population*

Introduction

Rachael E. Salcido*

During the course of the 2014 McGeorge Law Review (MLR) Symposium, experts on the state of resource consumption in the growing state of California and elsewhere discussed possibilities for improvements to the status quo. As the title of the program and themes of the panels emphasized, there is still an opportunity to pivot away from the unsustainable practices that could exhaust our limited resources. Though inspired by the California context, the solutions discussed by participants could be gleaned from and translatable to other locations.

California is blessed with an abundance of natural riches—beautiful mountains, forests, coastline, fisheries, wildlife, fertile soil, minerals, oil and gas. A barrage of forces is impacting management of natural resources in California. Population growth has a magnifying effect on disputes over exhaustible resources, such as land and water. The impacts of drought on the state have raised questions about the sustainability of water use and conservation efforts. Climate change is an even more threatening challenge that complicates resource management efforts.

We designed the program to focus specifically on how we currently utilize and can in the future improve sustainability of land, water, and energy resources. MLR symposium participants discussed ways to address the need to conserve and in some instances restore the land base—for rural, urban, industrial, agricultural and wildlife uses. Climate change, transportation, and sustainable housing initiatives emphasize that the California legislature is moving forward with ways to accommodate growth. Both the public and private sectors will need to address the unsustainable demand on over-allocated water resources. Energy resources must be stewarded to meet the growing demand at a time of transition from carbon sources to renewables like wind and solar. California has been and can continue to be at the forefront of these sustainability initiatives.

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The opening keynote reminded us that as Californians we are stronger working together. We must endeavor to connect regions of the state and provide the opportunities for self-fulfillment that all segments of society yearn to achieve. It will not be possible to accomplish this vision with one or two small steps. It will require bold and sustained initiatives—the types of which are discussed in the forthcoming essays.