

**Oregon State Bar
Sustainable Future Section**

Photo: J. Michael Mattingly

The Long View



Green With Envy?- Your Bar Should Be.

By Rod Wegener

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This was the title of a program presented at the National Association of Bar Executives' (NABE) mid-year meeting on February 1st in New Orleans. NABE is the association of state and local bar association executive directors, senior managers, and program directors who meet twice a year in educational and networking conferences prior to the ABA annual and mid-year meetings.

The idea for this program surfaced at an executive committee meeting of the Oregon State Bar's Sustainable Future Section and developed into a program promoting the sustainable policies and practices of the section and bar. Three panelists provided three prospects of how any bar association can integrate sustainable policies into its bar and for its members.

Sylvia Stevens, the OSB's Executive Director, explained how the concept of sustainability became incorporated into the bar's bylaws and practices by explaining the history and the 2009 report of the task force that led to the formation of the section, and adoption of the bylaw and other policies. Michelle Slater, the current chair of the section, spoke about the section's mission, its Partners in Sustainability program and Sustainable Law Firm Leadership award, the primary objectives and activities of the section, and how other bar associations could develop their own sustainability section. The third panelist, Jennifer Berg, is an attorney and Sustainable Practice Leader at an environmental engineering firm in Oakland, California. Jennifer spoke about the research she did with other bar associations on their sustainable practices and plans. Finally, Rod Wegener, the section's liaison from the bar staff, who acted as moderator of the panel, addressed some of the sustainable and recycling practices and results at the bar center.

Although no formal evaluations are available for the program, the informal word from the conference Program Committee was the session was very informative and well-received by the audience. Another comment was that Oregon was ahead of so many other bar associations on the topic and the information shared was new to the attendees. Understanding that, the panelists made available 109 pages of support material from their presentations to all attendees of the conference. Of course, these materials were available only in electronic format through NABE's website and no paper was distributed.

Rod Wegener is the Chief Financial Officer of the Oregon State Bar and the Bar's liaison to the Sustainable Future Section.
