ENVIRONMENTAL LAW SPECIALIST TO SPEAK AT RMC SEPT.13

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BILLING -- Charles Wilkinson, an environmental law specialist from the University of Colorado, will be the first featured speaker for the environmental speaker series at Rocky Mountain College.

Wilkinson, the Moses Lasky Distinguished Professor of Law at UC, will speak on Thursday evening, Sept. 13, 2012, at 7:30 p.m., at Fortin Center Auditorium.

The topic of Wilkinson’s lecture will be tribal land management on the upper Great Plains. This current area of research for him develops themes from the chapter 'Stewards of the Land' from his 2006 book Blood-Struggle: The Rise of Indian Nations.” He will invite us to consider what Native Americans have done with 60,000,000 acres of tribal land, according to David Strong, Rocky Mountain College professor of philosophy and environmental studies, who organizes the environmental speaker series at the college.

Prior to joining the faculty of Colorado Law School, Wilkinson practiced law with private firms in Phoenix and San Francisco and then with the Native American Rights Fund. In 1975, he became a law professor, teaching at the law schools of the University of Oregon, Michigan and Minnesota before moving to Colorado in 1987.

Wilkinson has received teaching awards from his students at all three law schools where he has taught, and the Universities of Colorado and Oregon have given him their highest awards for leadership, scholarship, and teaching. He has also won acclamation from non-academic organizations. The National Wildlife Federation presented him with its National Conservation Award, and in its 10-year anniversary issue, Outside Magazine named him one of 15 "People to Watch," calling him "the West's leading authority on natural resources law."

Over the years, Wilkinson has taken on many special assignments for the Departments of Interior, Agriculture, and Justice. He was a member of the tribal team that negotiated the 1997 Joint Secretarial Order of the Interior and Commerce Departments concerning tribal rights under the Endangered Species Act. He served as special counsel to the Interior Department for the drafting of the Presidential Proclamation, signed by President Clinton in September, 1996, establishing the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah. In December 1997 Agriculture Secretary Glickman appointed him a member of the Committee of Scientists, charged with reviewing the Forest Service planning regulations. Professor Wilkinson acted as facilitator in negotiations between the National Park Service and the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe concerning a tribal land base in Death
Valley National Park; in 2000 Congress enacted legislation ratifying the resulting agreement. He is currently serving as facilitator in far-ranging negotiations between the City of Seattle and the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe.

His primary specialties are federal public land law and Indian law. In addition to his many articles in law reviews, popular journals, and newspapers, his thirteen books include the standard law texts on public land law and on Indian law. He also served as managing editor of Felix S. Cohen's Handbook of Federal Indian Law, the leading treatise on Indian law. The books he has written in recent years, such as 1992's The Eagle Bird, are aimed for a general audience, and they discuss society, history, and land in the American West. He won the Colorado Book Award for Messages From Frank's Landing, a profile of Billy Frank, Jr. of the Nisqually Tribe of western Washington. In his latest book, Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations, he poses what he calls "the most fundamental question of all: Can the Indian voice endure?"

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