

Gemma Smith

Assistant Professor, School of Government and Public Policy
Assistant Research Professor, Udall Center for Studies of Public Policy

Curriculum Vitae (Updated May 2026)

E: gemmasmith@arizona.edu

EDUCATION

- 2018 – 23 **PhD in Environment & Resources, Minor in Civil & Environmental Engineering, Stanford University**
Dissertation: *Designing Diplomacy: The Use of Collaborative Governance in Transboundary Rivers*
Advisors: Dr Bruce Cain, Department of Political Science; Dr David Freyberg, Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering.
- 2016 – 18 **MIP in International Policy, Stanford University**
Thesis: *Groundwater Governance for Sustainability: Enablers, Constraints, and Solutions on the California Central Coast*
Advisor: Dr Bruce Cain
- 2015 – 16 **Graduate Diploma in Political Science, London School of Economics and Political Science**
- 2009 – 13 **BA in English Literature and Spanish, University of Exeter**
First Class Honours with Distinction

EMPLOYMENT

- 2024 – Present **University of Arizona, School of Government and Public Policy and Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy**
Assistant Professor
- 2021 **Stanford University, School of Earth, Energy, and the Environment**
Instructor of Record
- 2020 – 21 **Stanford University, School of Civil & Environmental Engineering**
Graduate Teaching Assistant
- 2019 – 20 **Stanford University, School of Earth, Energy, and the Environment**
Graduate Research Assistant
- 2018 **Stanford University, Bill Lane Center for the American West**
Graduate Research Fellow
- 2017 – 18 **Stanford University, Master's in International Policy Program**

Graduate Teaching Assistant

- 2017 **Stanford University, Bill Lane Center for the American West**
Graduate Research Fellow
- 2017 **Stanford University, Master's in International Policy Program**
Graduate Research Assistant
- 2013 – 16 **Fidelity International, London, Luxembourg, Tokyo**
Global Program Manager (promoted from Graduate Associate)
- 2011 – 12 **Fidelity International, London, Madrid**
Intern

HONORS & AWARDS

- 2022 Stanford University: Gerald J. Lieberman Fellowship (\$65,088)
- 2021 Stanford University: Woods Institute Rising Environmental Leaders Fellow
- 2021 World Water Week Youth Networking Award
- 2020 California Water Policy Conference Scholarship (\$125)
- 2019 Stanford University: School of Earth, Energy and Environment Research Review, Winner Best Lightning Talk
- 2018 Stanford University: William C. and Jeanne M. Landreth Fellowship (\$325,000)
- 2017 Stanford University: Young Environmental Scholars Conference, Winner Best Poster
- 2016 University of London: Outstanding Academic Achievement Award

SERVICE & OUTREACH

Local/State

- 2024-present Fellow, N-Gen Sonoran Desert Researchers Network
- 2024-2025 Advisory Group Member, *California 5th Climate Assessment Report, Central Coast*

National/International

- 2024-present Organizing Committee Member, 2026 National PFAS Conference
- 2024 Presentation to *Today in International Politics*, National AP Student Association

Departmental (SGPP) Service

- 2025-2026 Undergraduate Honors thesis supervisor
- 2024-present MPP/MPA Committee Member
- 2024-present Director, Graduate Certificate in Collaborative Governance
- 2024 MENTOR Institute Certification
- 2024-present Ad Hoc Student Mentoring and prospective student engagement

Udall Center Service

- 2026-present Organizer, PFAS in Arizona Science-Policy-Community Dialogue
- 2024-present Mo's Policy Scholars Mentor
- 2024-present Postdoc, Graduate, and Undergraduate Student Mentoring
- 2024 Organizer and Panellist, *PFAS Science & Policy Symposium*
- 2024 FY25 Periodic Review Preparation
- 2024 Moderator, Colorado River Symposium

College Service

- 2024 SBS Faculty Awards Review Committee

University Service

- 2025-2026 Working Group Member, Water Strategic Planning Working Group for the Office of the SVPR
- 2025 Dissertation Advisor, Alison Elder (SGDE)
- 2024 Presentation to ASUA Students for Sustainability

Disciplinary Service

- 2025 Panel Organizer and Discussant: American Political Science Association Annual Conference
- 2025-26 Environmental Politics Section Chair
Western Political Science Association
- 2025 Discussant: Western Political Science Association Annual Conference

2020 – present Peer Reviewer:

Journal of Hydrology; Journal of Ecology and Society; International Journal of the Commons; Political Geography; Groundwater for Sustainable Development; Environmental Science & Policy; Discover Sustainability

PUBLICATIONS

*any publication substantially based on work done as a graduate student

° co-authors who are undergraduate and graduate student advisees or postdoctoral mentees.

- 2026 °Loera Alonso, A., Gerlak, A.K., **Smith, G.** Minute 330 of the US Mexico Water Treaty: A Testament to Transboundary Cooperation Amidst Drought in the Colorado River Basin. *Water*, 18(7): 775
<https://doi.org/10.3390/w18070775>
- 2025 Gerlak, A.K., **Smith, G.**, °Loera Alonso, A.R.J., Mumme, S., Flessa, K., Koebele, E., Cardona, J., Pitt, J., Varady, R., °Gilson, G., Cital Morales, F., Zuniga-Teran, A., Rivera-Torres, M., Heikkila, T., Zamora, F., Ramirez-Hernandez, J., Giner, M.E. Perspectives on US-Mexico Cooperation on the Colorado River. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 68(1): 14–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00139157.2025.2575762>
- 2025 °Brown, A., Gerlak, A.K., **Smith, G.**, Zuniga-Teran, A., °Gilson, G. Governing the Nexus: Lessons from Freshwater Management in the United States. *Environmental Science and Policy*, 172: 104214.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2025.104214>
- 2025 °Brown, A.R., Zuniga-Teran, A., Gerlak, A.K., °Gilson, G., **Smith, G.**, °Elder, A. Beyond regulation: coordinating an environmental federalist response to “Forever Chemicals” in drinking water. *Environmental Policy and Governance*, 0: 1 – 16. <https://doi.org/10.1002/eet.70012>
- 2023 ***Smith, G.** 2023. *Designing Diplomacy: The Use of Collaborative Governance in Transboundary River Basins* [Dissertation, Stanford University]. <https://purl.stanford.edu/fk098rn7158>
- 2022 *Yoder, L., Hammond Wagner, C., Sullivan-Wiley, K., **Smith, G.** 2022. The promise of collective action for large-scale commons dilemmas: reflections on common-pool resource theory. *International Journal of the Commons*, 16(1): 47 – 63. <http://doi.org/10.5334/ijc.1163>
- 2021 *Hui, I., and **Smith, G.** 2021. Private Citizens, Stakeholder Groups, or Governments? Perceived Legitimacy and Preferred Representation in Water Collaborative Governance. *Policy Studies Journal*, 50(1): 241 – 265.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/psj.12453>
- 2021 *Santana, F.N., Hammond Wagner, C., Berlin Rubin, N., Bloomfield, L., Bower, E.R., Fischer, S.L., Santos, B.S., **Smith, G.**, Muraida, C.T., Wong-Parodi, G. 2021. A Path Forward for Qualitative Research on Sustainability in the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Sustainability Science*, 16: 1061 – 1067.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-020-00894-8>

- 2020 ***Smith, G.**, Bayldon Block, L., Ajami, N., Pombo, A., Velasco Aulcy, L. 2020. Trade-offs Across the Water-Energy-Food Nexus: A Triple Bottom Line Sustainability Assessment of Desalination for Agriculture in the San Quintin Valley, Mexico. *Environmental Science and Policy*, 114: 445 – 452. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2020.08.008>
- 2019 *Hui, I., **Smith, G.**, and Kimmel, C. 2019. Think Globally, Act Locally: Adoption of Climate Action Plans in California. *Climatic Change*, 155: 489 – 509. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-019-02505-7>

OTHER SCHOLARSHIP

Policy Briefs and Applied Research

- 2026 °Kline, C., **Smith, G.**, Gerlak, A. “*Building Responsive and Effective Regulatory Programs: Lessons from Collaborative Case Studies*,” US Army Corps of Engineers and the John S. McCain III National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution. [Internal Document]
- 2022 **Smith, G.** “*Monitoring water quality in the transboundary rivers of Bangladesh*,” The World Bank. [Internal Document]
- 2017 **Smith, G.** “*California’s water-energy relationship: the energy intensity of water supply to Southern California during drought, 2014-15*”, California Energy Commission. Advised by Dr Christine Jojarth. [Internal Document]
- 2017 Christian-Smith, J., Moran, T., Persad, G., **Smith, G.**, Szeptycki, L. “*Navigating a Flood of Information: Evaluating and Integrating Climate Science into Groundwater Planning in California.*” Union of Concerned Scientists.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

- 2026 Zuniga-Teran, A., °Kline, C., Gerlak, A.K., Smith, G. A Roadmap to Address Community Impacts of Emergent Contaminants at the Planetary Scale. *Under review at Environmental Research.*
- 2026 °Brown, A., Gerlak, A.K., **Smith, G.**, Zuniga-Teran, A., °Kline, C. Tracking State Action on PFAS in the United States. *Under review at Global Environmental Change.*
- 2026 °Brown, A., Gerlak, A.K., **Smith, G.**, Heikkila, T., °Kline, C., Zuniga-Teran, A., Keith, L. Rethinking “Value” in Environmental Collaboration: Considerations for Evaluation. *Under review at Society and Natural Resources.*
- 2026 ***Smith, G.** Global Trends in Designing Collaboration for International Watersheds. *Under review at International Environmental Agreements.*

2025 Vammen, K., °Gilson, G., **Smith, G.**, Zuniga-Teran, A., Gerlak, A.K. Transboundary Water Governance in Central America: Examining Institutional Capacity and Environmental Change. *Under review at Water International*.

Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Regulatory Frameworks for Microplastics in Roadside Environments. °Gibbs, H., **Smith, G.**

*Transboundary Collaboration in Macro Context: A Global Logistic Regression Study. **Smith, G.**

State Partisanship and Responses to PFAS “Forever Chemicals” in the US. **Smith, G.;** °Gilson, G.; °Kline, C.; °Brown, A.; Zuniga-Teran, A.; Gerlak, A.

Designing for Legitimacy: How Process Design Shapes the Emergence of Legitimacy in Collaborative Transboundary Policy Settings. **Smith, G.;** °Loera Alonso, A.; Gerlak.

Understanding Local Dynamics of PFAS Governance. **Smith, G.;** Zuniga-Teran, A.; Gerlak, A.; °Casado, T.; °Clerihue, L.; °Green, R.; °Samorano, I.

What Drives PFAS Regulation? Evidence from U.S. States. **Smith, G.;** °Taylor, E.

Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement in Shifting Regulatory Contexts. °Kline, C.; **Smith, G.;** Gerlak, A.

MEDIA

2026 **Water Resources Research Center**
Other, [“New Research Group at U of A Studies PFAS Regulation”](#)

2024 **Arizona Daily Star**
Op-Ed, [“The Air Force’s Disturbing PFAS Decision”](#)

2024 **NVDems.com**
Other, [“Lombardo’s Lowlights: Lombardo Continues to be Unserious About Climate Crisis”](#)

2024 **Las Vegas Review-Journal**
Other, [“After Scrapping Sisolak’s Climate Plan, Lombardo Releases His Own”](#)

CONFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS

2026 **Research Presentation: Global Environmental Justice Conference.** Fort Collins, Colorado.
“The Unequal Burden of 'Forever Chemicals': A Comprehensive Review of PFAS and Environmental Justice” (co-authored with Adriana Zuniga-Teran, Curtis Kline, Andrea Gerlak, and Gemma Smith; presented by Curtis Kline).

- 2026 **Research Presentation: Western Political Science Association Annual Conference.** San Diego, California.
 “Who Governs the Forever Chemicals? Centering the Local Level in US Environmental Federalism” (co-authored by Gemma Smith, Adriana Zuniga-Teran, Andrea K. Gerlak, Tiziano Manuel Casado Manco, Lauren Clerihue, Ryan Green, and Illiana Samorano; presented by Ryan Green and Illiana Samorano).
- 2026 **Research Presentation: Western Political Science Association Annual Conference.** San Diego, California.
 “Streamlining for Efficiency? Reframing Environmental Permitting Through a Collaborative Governance Lens” (co-authored by Curtis Kline, Gemma Smith, and Andrea K. Gerlak; presented by Curtis Kline).
- 2026 **Research Presentation: Western Political Science Association Annual Conference.** San Diego, California.
 “Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Regulatory Frameworks for Microplastics in Roadside Environments.” (Co-authored by Hunter Gibbs and Gemma Smith; presented by Hunter Gibbs).
- 2026 **Panel Organizer and Discussant: Western Political Science Association Annual Conference.** San Diego, California.
 “Designing Solutions-Oriented Environmental Policy: New Approaches to Advance Research and Practice.” Co-organized with Elizabeth Baldwin.
- 2026 **Invited Research Presentation: January in Tucson Annual Workshop, Native Nations Institute.** Tucson, Arizona.
 “Collaborative Approaches to Environmental Management.”
- 2025 **Workshop participant: Third Annual Women and Water Convening.** Tuba City, Arizona.
- 2025 **Invited Research Presentation: PFAS Project Lab, Northeastern University.** Virtual.
 “Research in Pollutant Policy for Environment and Society.”
- 2025 **Invited Research Presentation: Berkeley Energy and Resources Collaborative Annual Resources Symposium, UC Berkeley.** Berkeley, California.
 Panellist, “*Collaborative Water Governance: Cooperation and Conflict over Shared Water Resources.*”
- 2025 **Invited Research Presentation: US Army Corps of Engineers Collaboration and Public Participation Center of Expertise Webinar Series.** Virtual.
 “Building Responsive and Effective Regulatory Programs: Lessons from Collaborative Case Studies” (co-authored by Curtis Kline, Gemma Smith, and Andrea Gerlak. Presented by Gemma Smith and Curtis Kline).

- 2025 **Workshop participant: Arizona Water Research Collaboratory.** Tucson, Arizona.
- 2025 **Research Presentation: University Network on Collaborative Governance Annual Conference.** Virtual.
 “Process Design and Legitimacy in International Collaborative Governance.” (co-authored with Angel Loera and Andrea Gerlak. Presented by Gemma Smith)
- 2025 **Workshop participant: People’s Environmental Justice Advisory Council, People’s Hearing.** Tucson, Arizona.
- 2025 **Panel Organizer and Discussant: American Political Science Association.** Vancouver, Canada.
 “Water Politics Across Boundaries.” Co-organized with Elizabeth Koebele.
- 2025 **Research Presentation: American Political Science Association.** Vancouver, Canada.
 “Process Design and Legitimacy in International Collaborative Governance.” (co-authored by Gemma Smith, Angel Loera Alonso and Andrea Gerlak; presented by Gemma Smith)
- 2025 **Research Presentation: International Symposium of the *Laboratoire d'Excellence (Laboratory of Excellence, Labex) Dispositif de Recherche Interdisciplinaire sur les Interactions Hommes-Milieux (Interdisciplinary Research Device on Human-Environment Interactions, DRIIHM).*** Brest, France.
 “Remediation of drinking water contamination: Coordinating an institutional response to federal regulations to “forever chemicals” in Tucson, AZ.” (co-authored by Adriana Zuniga-Teran, Adrienne Brown, Gemma Smith, Adriana Zuniga-Teran, Gina Gilson, and Alison Elder; presented by Adriana Zuniga-Teran)
- 2025 **Workshop Participant: Shared Borders Shared Waters, Water Resources Research Center Annual Conference.** Tucson, Arizona.
- 2025 **Research Presentation: Western Political Science Association Annual Conference.** Seattle, USA.
 “We Can’t Wait Forever: State Responses to “Forever Chemicals” in the US.”
- 2025 **Invited Research Presentation: International Rosenberg Water Forum.** Madrid, Spain.
 “Forever Chemicals and Wastewater Challenges in the United States: A Look at Tucson, Arizona.” Facing the Next Generation of Urban Wastewater Treatment: Policy Approaches from the USA, Chile and Spain. (co-authored by Adrienne Brown, Gemma Smith, Adriana Zuniga-Teran, Gina Gilson, and Alison Elder; presented by Andrea K. Gerlak)

- 2024 **Invited Research Presentation: University of Arizona, School of Geography, Development, and Environment Colloquium.** Tucson, Arizona.
“Beyond Regulation: Understanding Responses to PFAS Contamination Under Environmental Federalism”
- 2024 **Workshop Participant: Second Annual Women and Water Convening.** Tohono O’odham Nation.
- 2024 **Invited Research Presentation: University of Arizona, ASUA Students for Sustainability.** Tucson, Arizona.
“Sustainability in Governance & Policy: Through the Lens of PFAS Chemicals”
- 2024 **Symposium: University of Arizona, Tackling PFAS for a Sustainable Future: Advances in Science & Policy.** Tucson, Arizona.
Panellist, “Future Directions in PFAS Governance”
- 2024 **Research Presentation: University of Arizona, College of Public Health.** Tucson, Arizona.
“Promoting Collaborations in PFAS and Health Research”
- 2024 **Workshop Participant: Inaugural Arizona Water for All Network Meeting.** Tucson, Arizona.
- 2024 **Invited Research Presentation: Water Governance Working Group.** Virtual.
“Designing Diplomacy: Collaborative Governance in Transboundary Rivers”
- 2024 **Research Presentation: 43rd WEDC International Conference on Water and Climate Resilience.** Virtual.
“Smart Implementation of Wastewater Reuse for Climate Resilience in Middle-Income Nations.”
- 2024 **Research Poster: 2024 PFAS National Conference.** Ann Arbor, Michigan.
“PFAS Responses Across the Political Spectrum in US States.”
- 2024 **Workshop Participant: Binational Research Collaboration Workshop.** Tucson, Arizona
- 2024 **Research Presentation: Tenth Annual Eccles Family Rural West Conference.** Phoenix, Arizona.
“Institutions for Innovation in the US-Mexico Border Region”
- 2024 **Symposium: “Navigating the Rapids: Colorado River Governance in the 21st Century”.** Tucson, Arizona.
Moderator
- 2024 **Workshop Participant: Colorado River Governance in the 21st Century.** Tucson, Arizona

AWARDED GRANTS & CONTRACTS

- 2025 **Udall Foundation**, co-PI with Dr Andrea Gerlak and Dr Adriana Zuniga-Teran. *PFAS Policy Research and Outreach*, (\$85,909). 2026. **Awarded.**
- 2025 **University of Arizona SBSRI Faculty Seed Grants**, PI. Understanding the Local Dynamics of PFAS Governance, (\$4,800). 2026. **Awarded.**
- 2025 **Udall Foundation and US Army Corps of Engineers**, co-PI with Dr Andrea Gerlak, *Collaborative approaches in USACE permitting processes*, (\$15,000). 2025-26. **Awarded.**
- 2024 **Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC)**, unfunded collaborator, *Desafíos en la Gestión del Agua Subterránea: Una Visión Hacia la Sostenibilidad Hídrica en el Municipio de Mexicali, Baja California*, (in-kind). 2025-27. **Awarded.**

SUBMITTED GRANTS & CONTRACTS

- 2026 **University of Arizona, AIR Annual Resilience Theme**, PI Gemma Smith (co-PIs Bo Guo, Vasiliki Karanikola, Nathan Lothrop, Amanda Wilson; other personnel Paloma Beamer, Mark Brusseau, Jon Chorover, Andrea K. Gerlak, Jonathan Keats, Curtis Kline, Andrew Martinez, Ian Pepper, Monica Ramirez-Andreotta, Stephanie Russo Carroll, Suchol Savagatrup, Adriana Zuniga-Teran), *DESERT-PFAS: Developing Engagement, Sustainability, Education, Research and Technology for PFAS in Arizona*, (\$100,000). **Pending.**
- 2026 **Water Research Foundation Unsolicited Research Program**, PI Gemma Smith (co-PIs Paloma Beamer, Stephanie Russo Carroll, Melissa Furlong, Amanda Wilson, Vasiliki Karanikola, Adriana Zuniga-Teran; other personnel Andrea K. Gerlak, Andrew Martinez), *One Water in the Arid West: PFAS Sustainability Tradeoffs and Solutions*, (\$200,000). **Pending.**
- 2024 **National Science Foundation's Sustainable Regional Systems Research Networks**, co-PI (with Dr Andrea Gerlak, Dr Tanya Heikkila, Dr Tammy Albrecht, Dr Barlow, Dr Drew Bennett, Dr Cherie DeVore, Dr Margaret Garcia, Dr Gina Gilson, Dr Elizabeth Koebele), *Assessing Trade-offs Towards Equitable and Sustainable Transformations in the Colorado River Basin (ATTEST)*, (\$7,481,578). **Un awarded.**
- 2024 **USGS Southwest Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC)**, PI, *Investigating Water-Related Climate Change Adaptation Efforts in Small-to-Mid-Sized Communities in the Colorado River Basin*, (\$390,027). **Un awarded.**
- 2024 **Geneva Water Hub Science Policy Incubator Grant on Water Diplomacy**, PI, *Designing Diplomacy: How to Incorporate Sub-National and Non-State Actors into Transboundary Water Diplomacy in Ways That Are Equitable and Effective*, (\$16,824). **Un awarded.**