

31st meeting of the New England Association of Environmental Biologists
Plenary Session: It's too late to be a pessimist
PRESENTERS' BIOGRAPHIES

'Mediated Modeling as a Tool to Integrate Science and Democracy'

Marjan van den Belt, Mediated Modeling Partners LLC.

Marjan van den Belt's mission is sustainable development and she finds the daily drive for this mission in the smiles of her two children. She is an ecological economist with a Masters in Business Economics and a Ph.D. in Environmental Sciences. She is an entrepreneurial consultant and researcher who founded Mediated Modeling Partners, LLC in 2000. She has initiated and led multi-stakeholder participatory processes in industrial, policy and community settings; the most recently completed Mediated Modeling project was commissioned by the VT Department of Public Service on Energy Planning. Dr. van den Belt's international experience started in the Netherlands, included several European countries and 5 years in Sweden as well as projects in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Trinidad Tobago, Australia and Argentina. A detour through Maryland, to pick up a Ph.D. in Marine Estuarine Environmental Sciences landed her in Vermont in 2003. Dr. van den Belt "walks the talk" and is a partner in a community-based development company to build an eco-friendly co-housing community. The village is currently under construction in Charlotte, Vermont. She teaches Mediated Modeling at the University of Vermont.

'Science and Anti-Science in America: Belief and Knowing'

Elizabeth Sherman, Bennington College

Elizabeth Sherman is interested in how animals work. She teaches courses in animal behavior, animal physiology, neurobiology, and evolution. Her research is devoted to the study of physiological and behavioral ecology of amphibians with particular emphasis on the responses of amphibians to environmental stresses. She has also been active in science education in elementary, middle, and high schools. Her students have been involved in her scholarly research as well as her work in local schools. Dr. Sherman's research has been supported by grants from the National Science Foundation, the American Wildlife Research Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation, and the Grass Foundation. Her publications have appeared in The Journal of Comparative Physiology, The Journal of Thermal Biology, American Zoologist, and Comparative Physiology and Biochemistry. Sherman is an avid Scuba diver and active in community theater. And unlike her children, she wishes that the Red Sox would trade Manny Ramirez.

'Legal Opportunities: Pushing the Boundaries'

David K. Mears, Vermont Law School

Vermont Law School Professor David Mears teaches courses in property law and environmental federalism and is Assistant Director of the law school's Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic. Professor Mears received his B.S. degree in environmental engineering technology from Cornell University in 1985. Following graduation, he served as an Enforcement Coordinator in the Water Quality Division of the Texas Water commission. Professor Mears obtained his J.D. degree and Master of Studies in Environmental Law degree from Vermont Law School in 1991. Following graduation from law school, he worked as an Assistant Attorney General in the Texas Office of the Attorney General and then as a Senior Attorney with the Texas Natural

Resource Conservation Commission. He left Texas to serve as the Energy and Environmental Policy Director with the Texas Office for State-Federal Relations in Washington, DC, then served both as a Trial Attorney and Counselor for State and Local affairs with the U.S. Department of Justice, Environment and Natural Resources Division. In 1998, he was appointed Senior Assistant Attorney General in the Washington Office of the Attorney General, Ecology Division. Professor Mears joined the Vermont Law School faculty in 2005.