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# Book Review of Environment and the Law: A Dictionary

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## ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

514. Patton-Hulce, Vicki R. **Environment and the Law: A Dictionary**. Santa Barbara, Calif., ABC-CLIO, 1995. 361p. index. (Contemporary Legal Issues). \$39.50. ISBN 0-87436-749-2.

The author states, in her preface, that this dictionary “is written for high school, college, and postgraduate students as well as researchers and people interested in environmental studies.” Certainly a wide-ranging group of people; one wonders who is not included in that group (and perhaps “middle school” could be added to the list). That said, Patton-Hulce’s dictionary provides an adequate introduction to environmental law, but really is not designed for those doing sophisticated environmental law research.

Patton-Hulce begins with a 32-page introduction to environmental law, including a snapshot of the legislative, administrative, and judicial processes. She then proceeds to define approximately 200 terms, from *acid rain* to *wetland*. Those make sense in this kind of dictionary, as do nearly all of the other definitions—which range from 40 words to several pages in length. A bit puzzling are the entries for George Herbert Walker Bush and Ronald Reagan, although one may appreciate the well-deserved criticism

of those two presidents' environmental records. The book concludes with a selective bibliography of articles and books, a brief table of federal and state court decisions, a listing of some federal environmental statutes and regulations, and a fairly thorough index.

Because Patton-Hulce's definitions are more thorough than those found in the typical dictionary, her book really is more than a dictionary. (Compare it to Neil Stoloff's more abbreviated *Environmental Law Dictionary* [Oceana, 1993], for example.) Yet it would not be fair to call it encyclopedic, either. For more in-depth treatment of environmental issues, one should look at William Cunningham's *Environmental Encyclopedia* (Gale, 1994), or the more scientific-oriented *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Environmental Science and Engineering* (3d ed.; see ARBA 94, entry 1999). The work under review does fit a niche, however, and it is recommended for school and public libraries, junior college libraries, and university undergraduate libraries. [R: Choice, May 96, p. 1455; LJ, 15 April 96, p. 74; RBB, 1 May 96, pp. 1520-21]

—James S. Heller