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Phelps Receives AALA Award for Scholarship

Jess R. Phelps of Dinse P.C. received a writing award from the American Agricultural Law Association on Oct. 26 during the association's annual conference in Portland, Oregon.

"The AALA recognizes both a student and professional member for excellence in scholarly writing, relevance to agriculture, and the impact of the topic on agricultural law," said Jennifer Zwagerman, AALA president.

Phelps, an attorney with the firm's real estate practice group in Burlington, Vermont, received the AALA Professional Scholarship Award. He was recognized for excellence in scholarly writing for his 2017 Ecology Law Quarterly article, "Defining the Role of Conservation in Agricultural Conservation Easements."

"Jess' article provides a thorough examination of the tension between conservation interests and the demands of evolving farm uses on lands encumbered by agricultural conservation easements," Zwagerman said. "Jess' reputation as an excellent writer and scholar is known by all who have worked with him over the years. This well-deserved honor recognizes his work and skill on a national level."

Phelps specializes in agricultural land/conservation transactions. A Drake law graduate, he spent several years as in-house counsel with Historic New England, the nation's oldest and largest regional heritage organization, where he negotiated more than 20 preservation easements across the New England region. After Historic New England, he joined the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of General Counsel, Natural Resources and Environment Division in Washington, D.C., where he provided legal support for both NRCS and Forest Service easement programs. He writes and lectures extensively on land conservation and historic preservation-related law issues.

Established in 1980, the American Agricultural Law Association is a national professional association serving as the premier association for agricultural law and policy professionals. Its mission is informing and engaging the law and policy professionals who serve all facets of the agricultural and food communities. For more information, visit aglaw-assn.org.

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