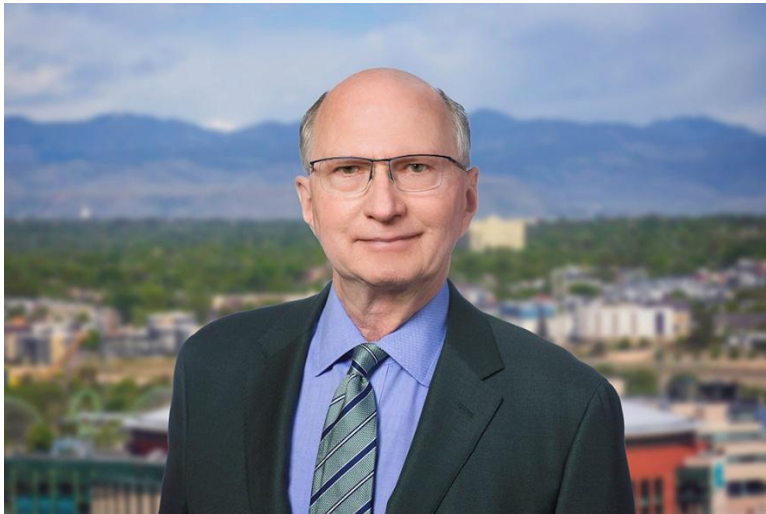




James Sanderson

Shareholder

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Licensed in Colorado, District of
Columbia

Overview

Jim practices in the areas of environmental law, water resources development, public lands, mined land reclamation, and public policy government affairs. His background includes ten years of federal government service in the United States Senate staff and the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Jim gained first-hand insight into the origins and underlying philosophies of today's environmental programs as a result of his tenure as Legislative Assistant to U.S. Senator Gordon Allott (R-Colo), the co-author of the National Environmental Policy Act. He also served as Regional EPA Counsel in Denver in the 1970s and later worked as a policy consultant in Washington, D.C. to the Administrator of the EPA during the Reagan Administration.

As one of the first practitioners of environmental law in the Rocky Mountain region, Jim has been ranked as a leading environmental lawyer by Chambers USA (2008-2024). Law Week Colorado's "Barrister's Best" named Jim "Best Environmental Lawyer" in 2013 and again in 2017. He has been listed in Colorado Super Lawyers. In January 2008, Jim was named "Lawyer of the Year" by Law Week Colorado for negotiating the electric utility industry's 2007 landmark consensus with environmental groups, local governments, and the Colorado state agency reducing mercury emissions from Colorado's 22 coal-fired power plants. Jim served on Colorado Governor Polis' taskforce on WOTUS – which laid the groundwork for the 2024 passage of a State stream and wetlands protection program.

Jim's work focuses on air and water quality, wildlife and endangered species, land use, BLM and Forest Service public lands issues, floating and river use and access issues, wetlands, waste disposal, and underground contamination. Jim possesses extensive experience in lobbying, EIS/NEPA compliance, permitting, negotiating with both government agencies and adversary groups, litigation in State and Federal Courts involving environmental issues, supporting agency decisions, seeking to overturn them and in defending enforcement actions. He is experienced in expert witness selection and coordination.

Overview (cont'd)

In governmental policy development, Jim has represented clients in federal and state rulemaking, permitting, and policy development concerning air and water quality, Wild & Scenic River designation, waste disposal, groundwater cleanup standards, and electric transmission line siting. In the permitting arena, Jim's experience extends to air permits, water discharge permits, MS4 stormwater permits, Section 404 permits, and federal rights-of-way.

Experience & Results

- Served as NEPA counsel for EIS processes for the SunZia Electric Transmission Project in New Mexico and Arizona and the BLM's proposed Blue Valley Land Exchange in Colorado
- Challenged EPA's regulatory actions under the Clean Air Act in the U.S. Court of Appeals
- Served as NEPA and environmental counsel for the proponent of a 500-mile renewable energy transmission line
- Protected mining claims under the federal mining laws
- Obtained BLM and U.S. Forest Service land use approvals
- Served as environmental counsel for permitting a cutting-edge waste tire recycling facility
- Secured MS4 storm water permitting for municipalities
- Secured BLM land exchanges with associated NEPA compliance and environmental contractor oversight
- Obtained new source air permitting for manufacturing facilities and mines
- Represented clients in federal and state rulemaking and policy development concerning air and water quality
- Demonstrated ability to build consensus and coalition, as exemplified by regional energy development (oil shale and power plants), area-wide water supply solutions, securing adoption of air quality solutions to control mercury emissions and reduce air pollution impacts to National Parks and wilderness areas, and Wild & Scenic River protection
- Appointed as a member of the Colorado Visibility & Air Quality Related Values Task Force, which led to the 1996 enactment of the first state law to protect wilderness areas and national parks from the effects of air pollution and acid rain
- Co-authored a major revision of Colorado's air quality law, which received unanimous endorsement from both business and environmental groups
- Negotiated a comprehensive consensus approach among utilities, environmental groups and local governments to regulating mercury emissions from power plants, with the consensus rules being unanimously adopted by the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission
- Assisted legislative sponsors in drafting and testifying on several amendments regarding Colorado's air and water quality laws and reclamation law
- Participated in Colorado Governor Lamm's Metropolitan Denver Water Roundtable (sought a consensus solution to the area's water supply needs)
- Served as member of the Management Committee of the Colorado Water Congress Special Project on Endangered Species to develop solutions to the conflict between water use and development and recovery of endangered species

Experience & Results (cont'd)

- Served as member of the Colorado Association of Commerce Industry Committees on Air Quality and Water Quality

Practice Areas

- Environmental Law and Litigation
- Natural Resources
- Public Lands
- Mining Law
- Water Law

Honors

- Listed by Lawdragon as one of the "500 Leading U.S. Energy Lawyers", 2023
- Selected for Inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® in the fields of Energy Law, Environmental Law, and Natural Resources Law, 2023, 2025–2027; Water Law, 2024–2027; and Utilities Law, 2025–2027
- Ranked as a leading environmental lawyer by *Chambers USA* (2008–2025)
- Law Week Colorado, *Barrister's Best*, Best Environmental Lawyer (2013 and 2017)
- Colorado Super Lawyers®, Environmental Law
- AV Preeminent Rating by *Martindale-Hubbell*
- *Law Week Colorado* Lawyer of the Year (2008)

Insights

- Interviewed, January 2020, by *Denver 7* (ABC News affiliate) in connection with [President Trump's announcement](#) that his Administration was revising the regulations on the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements in order to streamline bringing infrastructure projects online.
- "Environmental Shareholder Jim Sanderson Quoted in Law Week Colorado Article: SunZia Project Takes Time, Energy," Feature Quote Source, February 2015
- "EPA Reinforces Standards to Use 'Representative Data' in *Sierra Club*," *Natural Gas and Electricity Journal*, Co-Author, September 2014
- "Recent Happenings Regarding EPA's Exception Event Rule," *Energy & Utility Environmental Conference*, Co-Author, January 2013
- "A Review of Regulatory Takings after *Lucas*," *Denver University Law Review Symposium Issue*, 1993
- "Overview of Regulation Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act," *Wetland Issues in Resource Development in the Western U.S.*, *Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation*, V, 1993
- "Section 404: Federal Interference with Local Land Use?," *57 Natural Resources and Environmental Journal*, P.X., Summer 1992

Education

- J.D., University of Denver
- Graduate Studies in Tax Law, Georgetown University
- B.A., University of Nebraska

Bar Admissions/Qualifications

- Colorado, 1969
- U.S. District Court, District of Colorado
- U.S. Tax Court
- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, District of Columbia

Professional & Community Involvement

- Colorado Mining Association, Chair (2020), Member (1994–present), Board of Directors (2002–present), Vice Chair for Governmental Affairs (2004–2024), Chair Governmental Affairs Committee and Vice Chair of the Board of Directors (2024–present)
- American Bar Association, Section of Environment, Energy and Resources (1977–present)
- Colorado Bar Association, Member of Sections on Environmental Law and Water Law (1977–present), Ethics Committee (1984–1992)
- University of Denver, Sturm College of Law, Natural Resources Law Practitioner in Residence (2005)
- University of Denver, Master’s Program in Environmental Policy, Adjunct Professor (1992 and 1993)
- Frequent speaker on environmental, ethical, and administrative policy issues