



SpencerFane®

Sharon T. Shaheen

Partner

Contact

Santa Fe

P 505.986.2678 | F 505.982.4289

sshahen@spencerfane.com



Overview

Sharon assists clients with matters related to oil and gas, water, environment, and property, adeptly navigating intricate regulatory landscapes and tackling complex litigation, including class actions.

Within her expansive oil and gas law practice, Sharon counsels upstream landmen on complex issues pertaining to surface and subsurface rights, mineral interests, state and private royalties, and working interests. She is well-versed in negotiating, drafting, and analyzing all forms of associated legal documents, including surface use agreements, deeds, and other conveyance documents such as leases and easements.

More broadly, Sharon's practice addresses natural resource permitting and compliance, real property, contracts and contract disputes, royalty payments, and title issues. She represents clients before state agencies, at the district court level, and in appellate courts.

Sharon regularly represents clients before the Oil Conservation Division, the Office of the State Engineer, and the State Land Office. By providing comprehensive support for transactions and development and approaching litigation and dispute resolution with vigorous advocacy, Sharon protects her clients' business interests while supporting their growth.

Education

- University of New Mexico School of Law, 2005 (J.D.)
- University of North Texas, 1979 (B.M.)

Bar Admissions

- New Mexico

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit

Distinctions

- *Best Lawyers in America*, 2025–2026
 - Environmental Law
 - Oil and Gas Law

Memberships

- State Bar of New Mexico, Natural Resources, Energy, and Environmental Law Section
- State Bar of New Mexico, Public Law Section
- First Judicial District Access to Justice Committee
- American Bar Association, Environment, Energy, and Resources Section
- First Judicial District Bar Association, Former President
- New Mexico Defense Lawyers Association
- Foundation for Natural Resources and Energy Law
- Oliver Seth American Inn of Court, Barrister

Presentations and Publications

- “A New Day in New Mexico for Third Party Bad Faith Claims,” *FORC Quarterly Journal of Insurance Law Regulation*, Vol. XV, ed. VII, September 1, 2004
- “Understanding Mineral Rights and Surface Issues,” CLE/CE/PDH, Santa Fe, New Mexico, June 18, 2009

Related Experience

- Obtained reversal of district court’s ruling that agency had violated the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act. *Chavez v. N.M. Public Education Department*
- Represented municipality in obtaining reversal of district court’s summary judgment. *City of Rio Rancho v. AMREP Southwest, Inc.*
- Successfully represented insurance company in appeal of district court’s determination that the statute of limitations had run. *Gomez v. Chavarria*
- Represented a land developer before the Office of the State Engineer in a protested application to appropriate water.
- Represented clients in various purchases and sales of water rights and land with appurtenant water rights.
- Represented clients in applications to change the place and purpose of use and point of diversion of water rights before the Office of the State Engineer.
- Evaluated the existence and nature of water rights and advising clients regarding the manner in which such rights can be protected.
- Represented client in negotiating and drafting a contract with a state agency to offset groundwater pumping impacts on the Rio Grande.
- Represented clients in drafting and getting Office of the State Engineer approval of return flow plans, as well as obtaining permits from the Office.

- Represented a mutual domestic water association in obtaining relief from developer who constructed sub-standard water system.
- Drafted briefs and other papers in interstate water cases.
- Litigated royalty payment class actions.
- Litigated title disputes between operators and between operators and mineral owners.
- Represented mineral owners before the New Mexico Oil Conservation Division.
- Evaluated status of mineral rights ownership and advised clients regarding leasing of same.
- Represented a client regarding title dispute on appeal.
- Drafted purchase and sale agreements for unique land transactions.
- Litigated an easement claim between municipality and developer.
- Counseled homeowners regarding right of access over tribal property.
- Drafted easements and easement agreements for conservation and road easements.
- Facilitated settlement of water contamination claims by obtaining restrictive covenants from land owners, inter alia.
- Represented client in reaching settlement with State Land Office after denial of access easement.
- Represented a client with radioactive materials license in enforcement action.
- Advised a client regarding the public water system and compliance with drinking water regulations.
- Defended class actions concerning royalty payments.
- Defended an oil and gas client in numerous simultaneous collection actions.
- Defended an electric cooperative in employee personal injury "Delgado" claim with numerous defendants.
- Represented the defendant in an asbestos lawsuit with more than 50 defendants.
- Represented the defendant in a class action for bad faith insurance practices.