

Snell & Wilmer



Jim P. Allen

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Main Bio

Jim Allen is an experienced natural resources lawyer assisting clients with all types of transactions related to mining and mineral rights, including coal, metals, industrial minerals, and oil and gas. He assists with mineral leases, royalty agreements, mining acquisitions, and joint ventures, as well as real-estate transactions where public lands or mineral rights are involved. Whether the client is buying or selling a mineral project, or joining forces with another party, Jim can provide local-counsel assistance to the transaction, and can help with due diligence on permitting, regulatory compliance, mineral title, and other issues.

When land ownership is split between surface owners and mineral owners, Jim helps his clients find practical solutions to anticipate and avoid conflicts so that owners or potential buyers can understand, develop, and enjoy their respective property rights.

Jim provides capable assistance with all issues related to gaining and clearing title to mineral rights, including title examination, title opinions, title curative actions, and royalty disputes. In particular, Jim advises clients on the often arcane rules governing mining claims on public land, and can help miners who are establishing, perfecting, or defending their claims. Jim is experienced in the federal systems for leasing oil and gas, coal, and other minerals on the public lands, and can assist with lease transfers, modifications, and relinquishments, among other administrative actions.

Whether on public or private land, no mineral project can succeed without knowing and complying with the full range of environmental protection laws and permit requirements. Jim assists mine operators and other clients with all phases of this process before government agencies, including permit applications, conferences, hearings, appeals, and litigation. Jim's background as an engineer permits him to interact effectively with state and federal regulators on a variety of technical issues. Jim handles appeals of regulatory decisions before to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), the Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), and the Utah Board of Oil, Gas and Mining, among others.

Prior to joining Snell & Wilmer, Jim served as counsel to the Utah Department of Natural Resources, including the Divisions of Oil, Gas & Mining, Forestry, Fire and State Lands, and Wildlife Resources. He was staff attorney and report editor for the Utah Mine Safety Commission created by Governor Jon Huntsman to assess Utah's role in mine safety after the Crandall Canyon Mine accidents of 2007.

Education

- University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law (J.D., high honors)

- Order of the Coif
- Editor in Chief, Journal of Land, Resources & Environmental Law
- O'Hara Honors Program Fellowship in Natural Resources Law
- University of Utah (B.S., Metallurgical Engineering)

Professional Memberships & Activities

- Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation
- The Society For Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc. (SME)
- Arizona Mining Association
- Utah Mining Association

Representative Presentations & Publications

- "[Mining-Reform Efforts Continue Heading Into 2024](#)," Quoted, Elko Daily Free Press (December 26, 2023)
- "[Tell It to the Judge: Recent developments reveal how the complex permitting process in the U.S. creates opportunities for lawsuits and feeds a crisis of confidence in that process](#)," Quoted, Engineering and Mining Journal (September 2019)
- "[Shocking, 'Blockbuster' Rosemont Mine Ruling has National Implications, Experts Say](#)," Quoted, Arizona Daily Star (August 10, 2019)
- "[Rosemont Project FEIS, ROD and Unpatented Mining Claims Dealt Blow by Arizona District Court](#)," Co-Author, S&W Environmental, Natural Resources, Oil and Gas Law Blog (August 2, 2019)
- "Surface Management Requirements and Emerging Environmental Issues - Limitations on the Lessee's Right to Develop," Co-presenter, Rocky Mt. Min. L. Fdn. Short Course on Fed. Oil and Gas Leasing (2015 and 2017)
- "[Hydraulic Fracturing on Public Land: States Regulate While Feds Contemplate](#)," Co-Author, Public Land and Resources Committee Newsletter, American Bar Association Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources, Volume 11, Issue 1 (August 2014)
- "[Tighter Regulations Amid the Fracking Fray](#)," Co-Author, The National Law Journal (November 4, 2013)
- "Coal Mine Closure, Reclamation, and Financial Assurance Under the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, Mine Closure, Financial Assurance, and Final Reclamation," Co-Author, Paper No. 7, Rocky Mt. Min. L. Fdn. (2009)

Community Involvement

- Ballet Tucson
 - Board of Directors

Previous Professional Experience

- Utah Attorney General's Office, Natural Resources Division, Assistant Attorney General
- United States Bureau of Mines, Department of the Interior, Research Scientist
- EIMCO Process Equipment Company, Process Engineering/Technical Service Manager

Bar Admissions

- Arizona
- Utah
- Wyoming

Court Admissions

- Supreme Court of Arizona
- Supreme Court of Wyoming
- United States Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit
- United States District Court, District of Utah