

NATURAL RESOURCES PARALEGAL

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ALL OF THE BELOW DUTIES ARE ASSUMED, AND MUST BE, UNDER THE DIRECTION AND SUPERVISION OF A LICENSED ATTORNEY.

Although natural resource law is its own specialty, it also encompasses many different areas of the law. The successful practice of natural resource law requires diverse skills from its practitioners, covering all phases of legal analysis and legal representation. Other areas of law relevant to a natural resource law practice include, but are not limited to: administrative law, contract law, construction law, environmental law, health and safety law, finance law, litigation, and real estate law. See these specialty area guidelines for more specific information.

A. DOCUMENT PREPARATION AND MANAGEMENT

1. Assist attorney in preparation of legal instruments pertaining to property interests:
 - a. Ownership, conveyance or leasing of property including mineral deeds, oil & gas leases, assignments, *etc.*
 - b. Encumbering of property, including mortgages or deeds of trust, security agreements, financing statements, *etc.*
 - c. Mineral patents.
2. Preparation, recording and filing annual assessment work/rental fee documents for unpatented mining claims.
3. Assist clients with developing alternative energy forms such as wind, hybrids and fuel cell technology.
4. Calendaring and docketing of permit reports and renewals, contract and lease requirements, submittal dates and hearings, and lease and/or royalty payments.
5. Coordinate document preparation and assembly with clients, consultants and experts.
6. Contract/lease review for particular clauses and monitoring of compliance.

7. Obtain, prepare and review title documents and title requirements, including title opinions, title abstracts, status reports, *etc.*, and draft curative instruments, as necessary, for attorney review.
8. Assist attorneys by maintaining indices of opinions and other work product prepared by firm.
9. Coordinate filings and recordings as required:
 - a. Maintain familiarity with local, state and federal agencies, acts and regulations impacting the natural resource industry, including environmental acts and regulations, and agencies administering the same, including the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Department of Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency, Bureau of Land Management, Minerals Management Services, and State Department of Natural Resources agencies.
 - b. Handle recording of Deeds, Assignments, Mortgages, Releases, *etc.* in real property records. Be familiar with recording fees and requirements, such as deed tax, mineral tax, mortgage registration tax, *etc.* in all the states, counties and Federal jurisdictions where mining and oil and gas activity takes place.
 - c. Prepare and file financing statements and related documents in UCC records of all states and counties where mining and oil and gas interests are located.
10. Maintain familiarity with oil and gas royalty issues and contracts.
11. Negotiate and draft agreements with contractors performing work on sites.
12. Assist with preparing visual aids for trial and hearing presentations on PowerPoint, Trial Director, Sanction, or other graphics software programs.
13. Maintain spreadsheets of active cases or other data requested.
14. Maintain databases of key decisions affecting client operations.
15. Locate responsive documents to document requests from Government agencies or litigation.
16. Draft for attorney review, and assist in negotiations of access and confidentiality agreements, and maintain records concerning accessibility and confidentiality as it pertains to each site.
17. Assist attorneys in litigation, mediation, and arbitration matters including records research, witness interviews, and case management and preparation of the case for resolution.

B. RESEARCH

1. Identify and research proposed and enacted federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies, as they apply or relate to mining/oil and gas properties.
2. Research legislation and rule-making activities and updates to current mining/oil and gas statutes and regulations.
3. Research case law and draft memoranda, for attorney review.
4. Perform stand up review of local, state or federal records and photocopy as appropriate.
5. Maintain familiarity with issues regarding laws, regulations, and policies impacting mining/oil and gas.
6. Assist attorneys by researching information and by handling logistics of presentations or informational seminars, presented by firm members.
7. Set up and maintain databases relating to special research projects.
8. Internet and library research as directed.
9. Prepare title curative instruments pursuant to title opinions and have them recorded.
10. Assist lease, contract, and division order analysts with land and title issues.
11. Assist landmen with lease interpretation and summarize land positions.
12. Identify and maintain knowledge of and distribute requirements and/or information regarding domestic standards such as ASTM and international standards such as ISO.
13. Prepare Freedom of Information Act requests.

C. ACQUISITION, SALE, FINANCING

Many tasks and responsibilities described in the Corporate Paralegal and Corporate Securities Paralegal Guidelines are also performed by natural resources paralegals, substituting oil and gas and other mineral rights for stock and intellectual property rights. The following tasks should also be included:

1. Prepare and/or review for accuracy and completeness, property exhibits.

- a. Perform due diligence review of company records.
 - b. Verify and/or calculate various types of ownership of leasehold interests.
 - c. Prepare exhibits such as asset lists and permit lists.
2. Coordinate data collection and review projects for due diligence between the parties.
 3. Assist with setting up new companies to do business in another state.
 4. Review records and obtain documents from, and prepare documents to file with, various state regulatory agencies and federal agencies such as:
 - d. State public utilities commission.
 - e. State oil and gas board or commission.
 - f. State mining or land reclamation board or commission.
 - g. State land board.
 - h. U. S. Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service.
 - i. State regulatory agency and U.S. Minerals Management Service.
 - j. State and U.S. Geological Survey offices.
 - k. State environmental agency and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
 - l. County clerk and recorder offices.