

## 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Oregon Water Law Conference

October 22 & 23, 2026 ~ Portland, OR

### Thursday, October 22, 2026

#### 9:00 Introduction and Overview – Day One

**David E. Filippi**, Program Co-Chair  
*Stoel Rives LLP*

**Olivier Jamin**, Program Co-Chair  
*Davis Wright Tremaine LLP*

**Merissa A. Moeller**, Program Co-Chair  
*Stoel Rives LLP*

#### 9:05 Oregon Water Case Law Updates

Survey of key water law case opinions in 2026

**David E. Filippi**  
*Stoel Rives LLP*

#### 9:45 Oregon Governor's Office Special Presentation

Oregon Governor's Office perspectives looking back at 2026 and heading into 2027

**Geoffrey M. Huntington**, Senior Policy Advisor  
*Oregon Governor's Office of Natural Resources*

#### 10:15 Special Presentation - Unfinished Business

Water related legislative issues still in the works & potential next steps

**Representative Ken Helm**  
*District 27, Oregon State Legislature*

**Representative Mark Owens**  
*District 60, Oregon State Legislature*

#### 10:45 *Break*

#### 11:00 Regional Approaches to Water Right Transfers

Public interest review, injury, enlargement, and procedures – perspectives on other Western states' approaches to water right transfers

**Marika F. Sitz**, Moderator  
*Jordan Ramis PC*

**Kelsey Mach**, LG, RG, CWRE, Senior Geologist  
*Geosyntec Consultants, Inc.*

**Hayley K. Siltanen**  
*Stoel Rives LLP*

**Alison K. Toivola**  
*Best Best & Krieger LLP*

#### 12:00 *Midday Break*

**1:15 Key Update from ORWD**

Recently completed rulemakings, responses to drought, and priorities for 2027 and beyond

**Kim Fritz-Ogren**, Administrator

*Oregon Water Resources Department*

**Ivan K. Gall**, Director

*Oregon Water Resources Department*

**1:45 Willamette Basin Project Updates**

BiOp, FEIS/ROD, reallocation, stakeholder coordination, and next steps

**Andrew Martin**

*Intermountain Law PC*

**2:15 OWRD Proposed Rulemaking: Waste, System Bulges, and Exempt Uses**

An overview and statewide perspective on potential rulemaking topics; Case study—A perspective from the Deschutes Basin on the need for rulemaking

**Jeremy T. Austin**, Wild Lands & Water Program Director

*Central Oregon LandWatch*

**Steven L. Shropshire**

*Jordan Ramis PC*

**3:00 Break**

**3:15 Persistent Drought, Short and Long-Term Responses to Diminished Water Supplies**

Revisiting the 2016 Task Force on Drought Emergency Response; Where Are We and What Do We Do Next?

**David E. Filippi**, Moderator

*Stoel Rives LLP*

**Harmony Burright**, Joint Water Caucus Chief of Staff

*Oregon State Legislature*

**J.R. Cook**, Director

*Northeast Oregon Water Association*

**April Snell**, Executive Director

*Oregon Water Resources Congress*

**4:00 Municipal Water Providers 201**

Municipal water rights management, Governor's housing priorities, and key considerations guiding municipal water provider operations

**Mike Buettner**, Public Works Director

*City of Bend*

**Niki J. Iverson**, Water Director

*City of Hillsboro*

**Owen McMurtrey**, Water Resource Consultant

*GSI Water Solutions, Inc.*

**5:00** *Adjourn & Reception ~ Sponsored by:  
Stoel Rives LLP, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, & OTHERS*

**Friday, October 23, 2026**

**8:00** **Water Rights 101**

Overview of water allocation systems, water right limitations, exempt uses of water, instream water rights, and water right transfers

**Joseph C. Matteo**  
*Stoel Rives LLP*

**8:40** *Break*

**8:50** **Introduction and Overview – Day Two**

**David E. Filippi**, Program Co-Chair  
*Stoel Rives LLP*

**Olivier Jamin**, Program Co-Chair  
*Davis Wright Tremaine LLP*

**Merissa A. Moeller**, Program Co-Chair  
*Stoel Rives LLP*

**9:00** **Harney County Groundwater Updates**

Basin planning efforts, OWR Commission actions, and the pros and cons of voluntary agreements

**Elizabeth Howard**  
*Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt PC*  
**Representative Mark Owens**  
*District 60, Oregon State Legislature*

**9:45** **Emerging Water Conflicts**

Rising tensions around data centers and renewable energy projects

**Bobby Cochran**, Senior Lead – Strategy, Policy & Delivery  
*Cities4Forests Initiative, World Resources Institute*

**Olivier Jamin**  
*Davis Wright Tremaine LLP*

**10:30** *Break*

**10:45** **Updated Contested Cases Processes**

**Will D. Davidson**, Protest Program Coordinator  
*Oregon Water Resources Department*

**11:30 Klamath Basin Legal Updates**

Tribal and Water User perspectives on Ninth Circuit decision in *Yurok Tribe v. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation*

**Brittany K. Johnson**  
*Somach Simmons & Dunn*

**12:00 Midday Break**

**1:15 Columbia River Basin Legal Updates**

Tribal and Water User perspectives on US District of Oregon decision in *National Wildlife Federation v. National Marine Fisheries Service*

**Lawson E. Fite**  
*Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt PC*  
**Brent H. Hall**  
*Hall Law PLLC*

**2:15 Break**

**2:30 Case Studies – Mitigation for New Water Rights and Transfers**

**Elizabeth E. Howard**, Moderator  
*Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt PC*  
**Katie Fitzpatrick**, Executive Director  
*Deschutes River Conservancy*

**3:30 Common Ethical Issues and the Practice of Water Law**

Ethical Issues Arising in Attorney-Consultant Relationships and the Use of AI

**Rebecca Salwin**  
*Legal Little LLLC*

**4:30 Adjourn**

## 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Oregon Water Law Conference

October 22 & 23, 2026 ~ Portland, OR

**David E. Filippi**, Program Co-Chair, is a partner at Stoel Rives LLP who practices in the areas of natural resources, environmental and land use law. He concentrates his practice on water rights and water quality, fish and wildlife law, and project facility siting and permitting.

**Olivier Jamin**, Program Co-Chair, is an attorney at Davis Wright Tremaine LLP who provides legal advice to clients on environmental, energy, land use, and litigation matters. He advises clients on federal and state environmental compliance issues and conducts due diligence reviews.

**Merissa A. Moeller**, Program Co-Chair, is a partner at Stoel Rives LLP who advises clients on the use and development of water and land. She brings over a decade of experience working with individual landowners and developers, businesses, and local governments.

**Jeremy T. Austin** is the Wild Lands & Water Program Director at Central Oregon LandWatch. He manages LandWatch's work related to federal land management, water management in the Deschutes Basin, and safe passage for wildlife.

**Mike Buettner** is the Public Works Director for the City of Bend, focusing on water services, transportation and mobility, and fleet management. Mike has expertise in water resources, water conservation, water reuse, green space management, and continuous improvement.

**Harmony Burright** serves as Joint Water Caucus Chief of Staff at the Oregon State Legislature. She supports Water Caucus operations and helps keep members connected to each other and to stakeholders working on myriad water-related issues across the state.

**Bobby Cochran** is the Senior Lead of Strategy, Policy and Delivery for World Resources Institute's Cities4Forests Initiative. He focuses on project delivery in the Western U.S. to conserve, restore and sustainably manage nature in ways where all communities have what they need to thrive.

**J.R. Cook** is Founder & Director of the Northeast Oregon Water Association. Over the past 23 years, he has worked to restore alluvial and basalt aquifers in the Umatilla Basin while ensuring adequate water supplies for existing water rights holders, economic growth and environmental needs.

**Will D. Davidson** is the Protest Program Coordinator with the Oregon Water Resources Department. He previously served as a Colorado Assistant Attorney General, was in private practice, and Clerked for the Honorable James F. Hartmann, Colorado Water Court.

**Lawson E. Fite** is a shareholder at Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt PC. For over 15 years he has supported clients in the natural resource and agricultural industry as they manage the complexities of environmental regulation, compliance, and permitting, as well as related litigation.

**Kate Fitzpatrick** assumed the Executive Director position at Deschutes River Conservancy in 2021 after 16 years of experience at the organization managing and directing programs to collaboratively restore streamflow in the basin.

**Kim Fritz-Ogren** serves as Field Services Division Administrator with the Oregon Water Resources Department. She has helped shape water policy through years of drought and helped form a new section of the department focused on innovative solutions to water management challenges.

**Ivan K. Gall** is the Director of the Oregon Water Resources Department, addressing the complex challenges to Oregon's water supplies through responsible allocation, conservation, and protection. He has more than 30 years of experience in water science, policy and administration.

**Brent H. Hall** is a Member of Hall Law PLLC. His practice focuses on Native American treaty rights, environmental, natural resource, real estate & land use, and water rights. Mr. Hall represents tribes in federal, state and tribal courts in cases involving treaty reserved rights and resources.

**Rep. Ken Helm** is the State Representative for Oregon House District 27. Among his duties, he serves as Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water, as well as a member of the House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment.

**Elizabeth E. Howard** is a shareholder at Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt PC and heads its Real Estate, Land Use, Natural Resources and Environmental Law Department. Ms. Howard focuses her practice on water rights, wetlands, water quality, public lands, and wildlife/E&T species.

**Geoffrey M. Huntington** serves as Senior Policy Advisor for the Oregon Governor's Office of Natural Resources. He has over 24 years of natural resource experience in both public and private sectors, including time as a trial attorney where he litigated environmental cases for the state of Oregon.

**Niki J. Iverson** is the Water Director for the City of Hillsboro overseeing water supply, water delivery, and utility operations. She manages the Water Treatment, Water Distribution and Operations, Engineering and Development Services, Water Resources, and Business Operations Divisions.

**Brittany K. Johnson** is a shareholder at Somach Simmons & Dunn who helps clients comply with regulations affecting operations and facilities. She advises public wastewater treatment plants and private companies on compliance with waste discharge permits & avoidance of violations.

**Kelsey Mach, RG, CWRE**, is a senior geologist, certified water rights examiner and drone pilot with Aspect Consulting (a Geosyntec Company). She has worked in environmental consulting for the last 7 years, providing technical support for a range of complex water rights, GIS and hydrogeology projects.

**Andrew G. Martin** is a partner at Intermountain Law PC. He focuses on Agricultural, Real Estate, Water Law, Business Sales and Reorganizations, and Family / Business Succession Planning, offering a broad range of business services. His experience and connection with farming and ranching provides a unique understanding of agricultural issues.

**Joseph C. Matteo** is an attorney in Stoel Rives LLP's Environment, Land Use & Natural Resources group. Joe's rural background, work experience on a blueberry farm, and his coursework at OSU led him to pursue a legal career serving the natural resource industries.

**Owen McMurtrey** is a Managing Water Resources Consultant at GSI Water Solutions, Inc. where he specializes in water rights and resource planning. He is knowledgeable about Oregon water policy and works with clients to project water demand and understand constraints on water availability.

**Rep. Mark Owens** is the Republican state representative for Oregon's House District 60. He is a local farmer, small business owner, and former Harney County Commissioner. He is Co-Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water.

**Rebecca M. Salwin** is an ethics lawyer at Legal Little LLC, practicing in Hawaii and Oregon. She is focused on state bar defense, advising attorneys on the rules of professional responsibility, and risk mitigation. She previously worked on the regulatory side of disciplinary cases.

**Steven L. Shropshire** is a shareholder at Jordan Ramis PC who focuses on water rights & water law, natural resources, environmental, real estate, and land use matters. He advises clients in a wide variety of contexts, including transactions, administrative proceedings, and legislation.

**Hayley K. Siltanen** is a land and natural resources attorney at Stoel Rives LLP, with a practice focused on land use, permitting, and water rights law. She helps commercial, industrial, and residential clients entitle their projects and defend their land use entitlements.

**Marika E. Sitz** is a water and natural resources attorney at Jordan Ramis PC, where she helps clients evaluate, obtain, and protect water rights. She provides counsel on conducting water right diligence, responding to water right regulation, and evaluating water acquisition options.

**April Snell** is the Executive Director of the Oregon Water Resources Congress, a nonprofit that represents irrigation districts, water control districts, drainage districts, and other agricultural water suppliers around the state who deliver water to roughly 1/3 of all irrigated land in Oregon.

**Alison K. Toivola** is a partner at Best Best & Krieger LLP where she practices water rights, water supply, and natural resources litigation. She focuses on surface and groundwater issues throughout California and Oregon representing public, private, and tribal clients.