

VANESSA L. RAY-HODGE

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Experience

Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry LLP

Feb. 2016 to Present

Partner

- Advise tribal clients on Federal Indian and natural resources law, including: federal trust responsibility; Indian water rights; Indian Gaming Regulatory Act; Indian Child Welfare Act; Indian Self Determination Education and Assistance Act; renewable energy projects; oil and gas; and National Environmental Protection Act compliance.
- Assist tribal clients on getting congressional approval of their Indian water rights settlements.
- Draft tribal comments related to proposed federal mining projects and impacts to local tribal communities, subsistence and the environment.
- Advise clients on potential economic development projects, including development of gaming enterprises.
- Present to tribal clients on Administration efforts related to ICWA and develop comments on Health and Human Services proposed ICWA AFCARS Rule.

Office of the Solicitor, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C./Portland, OR June 2010-present

Senior Counselor to the Solicitor

- Advise the Solicitor and senior Department officials on complex legal and policy issues relating to Federal Indian and natural resources law.
- Develop and draft the Department's legal interpretation on Indian law issues, such as *Carcieri v. Salazar*, to allow the Department to continue to take land into trust under the Indian Reorganization Act; and Secretarial Order Nos. 3317 (Tribal Consultation) and 3335 (Trust Responsibility).
- Develop and draft Department's legal position on natural resources issues such as compliance under the National Environmental Policy Act and Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, application of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act; work with other federal agencies on natural resources issues implicating Interior equities, including issues related to the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act.
- Communicate and coordinate with the White House, Congress and other Federal agencies on Indian Affairs matters relating to the Department and its agencies.
- Provide recommendations for participation by the United States in cases pending before the Supreme Court involving Indian interests; strategize with the Solicitor General's Office and the Department of Justice in developing legal positions in cases such as, *Brown v. Rincon*, Case No. 10-330, *cert. denied* on June 27, 2010; *Osage v. Irby*, 131 S. Ct. 3056 (2011); *Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Potawatomi Indians v. Patchak*, 132 S. Ct. 2199 (2012); *Adoptive Couple v. Baby Girl*, 133 S. Ct. 2552 (2013).
- Manage Indian water rights litigation and settlement matters for the Department, including providing legal advice and policy recommendations to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and other senior Department officials; and serve on the Secretary's Indian Water Rights Working Group.
- Manage the rulemaking to revise the regulations governing management and administration of the Osage Mineral Estate (25 C.F.R. Part 226), including working with the White House, Office of Management and Budget, Congress and Office of the Inspector General.
- Address and resolve legal and policy questions relating to the Administrative Procedures Act and the release of information under the Freedom of Information Act.

Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld, LLP, Washington, D.C.

Jan. 2007-June 2010

Counsel

- Managed and participated in complex Indian water rights litigation in Federal and State courts on behalf of tribal clients, including managing and directing the discovery process, resolving evidentiary issues, taking and defending depositions, and general trial preparation and drafting of pre-trial pleadings.
- Negotiated, implemented and enforced comprehensive water rights settlements for Indian tribes.
- Represented tribal clients in litigation and parallel settlement negotiations of tribal claims against the United States, including reaching a successful settlement of a land claim that resulted in the first in-lieu transfer with the Bureau of Land Management in the State of Arizona.
- Advised tribal clients on Federal statutes and regulations involving Indian tribes and tribal programs, such as the Indian Self-Determination Education and Assistance Act, Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, Snyder Act, Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act.

Chambers, Sachse, Endreson, & Perry, Washington, D.C.

Sept. 2003-Dec. 2006

Associate

- Assisted in drafting *amicus curiae* briefs in Wisconsin Supreme Court in *Dairyland v. Doyle* and *Panzer v. Doyle*, cases in which plaintiffs sought to invalidate tribal gaming compacts.
- Assisted in drafting, editing and producing *amicus curiae* brief filed in the U.S. Supreme Court in *City of Sherrill v. Oneida Indian Nation*.
- Drafted pleadings and briefs for tribal clients in suits involving the recovery of contract support costs under the Indian Self-Determination Education & Assistance Act.
- Researched and drafted client memoranda, trial and appellate briefs on various topics of Federal Indian law, such as tribal sovereign immunity, federal trust responsibility, tribal self-government and self-determination, taxation of Indian tribes, tribal water rights and tribal gaming rights.
- Served on the Firm's hiring and summer recruitment committee.

Education

Columbia University School of Law

New York, NY

- Juris Doctorate, May 2003, with Honors as a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar (2L & 3L years).
- Archie O. Dawson Award for contributions to Columbia's Moot Court Program (3L year).
- Human Rights Law Review, Staff Editor (2L year), Notes Editor (3L year).
- Native American Law Students Association (NALSA) Co-Chair (2L & 3L years).
- Columbia NALSA Moot Court Program Founder and Chair (1L, 2L & 3L years).
- Attended the Human Rights Convention in Geneva, Switzerland and successfully lobbied and achieved a change in the U.N. Resolution on Arbitrary Detention to prohibit incommunicado treatment of prisoners.

Wellesley College

Wellesley, MA

- Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, May 2000.
- First Year Distinction, AISES EPA Tribal Lands Scholarship, Severinghaus Community Service Stipend Award, Howard Vollum American Indian Oregon State Scholarship.
- American Indian Students Organization President, Intercultural Awareness Now Dorm Representative, Wellesley Environmental Board.

Activities & Awards

- Native American Youth Association Board, Portland, Oregon **2013 to Present**
- Solicitor's Award for Exceptional Performance, **2011 - 2014**
- National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development "Top 40 under 40," **2011**
- Editor, Federal Indian Law Newsletter, Federal Bar Association, **Jan. 2008-June 2010**
- Co-Chair of D.C. Federal Indian Bar Conference, **Oct. 2008**
- President, Native American Bar Association of D.C., **Sept. 2006-Oct. 2007**