Sarah M. Stevenson Shareholder

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OVERVIEW

Sarah Stevenson is a shareholder in the Natural Resources Department and a litigator representing public entities and private businesses. Her natural resources experience focuses on water law, including water adjudications and interstate water compacts, and Native American law, including natural resource development projects on Native American land. She has advised clients developing projects on Native American land on issues regarding indigenous rights, jurisdiction, and contract formation. Sarah has litigated business disputes and employment and First Amendment cases.

Sarah graduated *magna cum laude* from Fordham University School of Law, and received a joint J.D./M.A. in International Political Economics and Development from Fordham University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. While at Fordham, she was chosen as a Crowley Scholar in International Human Rights, participated in the Leitner Human Rights Clinic, and was a research assistant for Professor Russell Pearce. She clerked for the Honorable Patricio M. Serna of the New Mexico Supreme Court from 2009 to 2011. Her B.A. is from Scripps College. Sarah served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Niger.

Chambers USA Directories of America's Leading Lawyers for Business has recognized Sarah in both Native American Law and Water Law in New Mexico. She is also listed as a Litigation Star by *Benchmark Litigation*, as is recognized by *Best Lawyers in America©* for her work in Environmental Law and Native American Law. *Best Lawyers* has named Sarah the "Lawyer of the Year" for 2026 in Environmental Law in Santa Fe.

Sarah is the Managing Director of Modrall Sperling's Santa Fe office and Chair of the firm's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.

Education

Fordham University School of Law, J.D., 2009, *magna cum laude*, Order of the Coif, Dean's List 2007-2009

Fordham University, M.A., International Political Economy and Development, 2009

Scripps College, B.A., American Studies, 2001, with honors

Bar Admissions

New Mexico

New York

United States Supreme Court

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit

U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico

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ACTIVITIES

Professional Activities

- Fellow, American Bar Foundation
- Ex Officio Member, New Mexico Supreme Court Commission on Equity and Justice, 2021-present
- Member, Oliver Seth American Inn of Court
- Chair, Modrall Sperling Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
- Board of Directors, New Mexico Women's Bar Association, 2021-2024
- Board of Directors, Indian Law Section, State Bar of New Mexico, 2016-2018
- Member, Foundation for Natural Resources and Energy Law, 2011-present; Young Professionals Committee, 2012-2016; Human Rights and the Extractive Industries Conference Steering Committee, 2016; Chair of Public Lands and Indian Law Section, Annual Institute, 2024

Clerkships

- Law Clerk, Justice Patricio M. Serna, New Mexico Supreme Court, 2009-2011

Public Service

- U. S. Peace Corps, Niger, West Africa; HIV/AIDS Program Coordinator, 2004-2005; Community Health Agent, 2002-2004
- Volunteer Soccer Coach, Northern Soccer Club

DISCOURSE

Presentations

- Indigenous Peoples' Rights to Sacred Sites and the Role of Consultation and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent, *Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation, Int'l Mining and Oil & Gas Law, Development, and Investment,* April 22-24, 2013, Cartagena, Colombia

Articles

- **Don't Let the Well Run Dry: Management and Use of Groundwater in Times of Scarcity**
  Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation Annual Institute Proceedings 2015,
  Vol. 61, ch. 23, Maria O'Brien and Sarah M. Stevenson, October 7, 2015
  By Maria O'Brien and Sarah M. Stevenson
- **Indigenous Peoples' Rights to Sacred Sites and Traditional Cultural Properties and the Role of Consultation and Free, Prior and Informed Consent**
  32 J. Energy & Nat. Resources L., No. 3, 297, July 22, 2014
  By Stuart R. Butzier and Sarah M. Stevenson
- **Maori Land Rights & the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**
  32 Fordham Int'l L. J., 298, October 7, 2008
  By Sarah M. Stevenson

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HONORS

- *Chambers USA Directories of America's Leading Lawyers for Business* in Native American Law and Water Law, 2023-present
- *Best Lawyers*® Environmental Law "Lawyer of the Year" in Santa Fe, 2026
- *Best Lawyers in America©* in Environmental Law and Native American Law, 2021-present
- *Southwest Super Lawyers*®, selected as a Southwest Rising Star, 2014-2021
- *Benchmark Litigation, The Definitive Guide to America's Leading Litigation Firms and Attorneys*, Litigation Star

RELATED PRACTICES

Energy, Environment and Natural Resources
- Environment
- Water Rights and Water Quality

Litigation
- Appellate
- Commercial

Native American Law
- Economic Development
- Energy and Resources
- Tribal Law and Courts

RELATED INDUSTRIES

Business in Indian Country

Energy

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