



James H. Colopy

Partner

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Jim Colopy has extensive experience representing private and public entities in environmental and commercial litigation, environmental compliance and alternative dispute resolution proceedings.

Jim's significant complex environmental litigation experience includes representing manufacturers, chemical companies, developers, and governmental institutions in environmental enforcement actions, citizen suit litigation, cost recovery actions, toxic tort cases, and product liability actions and administrative proceedings involving federal, state and local environmental laws.

An efficient and effective trial lawyer, Jim was hired shortly before trial to replace prior counsel for the plaintiff in a complicated groundwater cost recovery lawsuit, where he represented the client through an intense discovery and trial preparation phase culminating in a very favorable settlement. In another matter, he was brought into a case to represent defendants on post-trial motions following a \$100 million punitive damages award, which he reduced by 93 percent. Jim also represented a plaintiff at a five-week jury trial and obtained a substantial award of punitive and compensatory damages.

Jim frequently represents individuals, family-owned businesses, and trust institutions in complex trust, estate, and probate litigation in courts throughout California. He has litigated numerous different types of disputes, including breach of trust claims, beneficiary disputes, will and trust challenges, creditor claims, undue influence and incapacity, and community property claims. Recent successes include the multi-year representation of a trustee in numerous trust litigation and trust administration associated with a large complex trust with over \$150 million of real property, partnership and business assets, the successful defense at trial of an attempt to invade numerous wealthy family trusts through a marital dissolution, and the representation of a client challenging a will and estate plan on the grounds of incapacity.

Jim regularly speaks on environmental litigation and trust and estate litigation. He served as chair of Farella's Environmental Law Department for six years and has served as co-chair of the firm's Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

Distinctions

- *The Best Lawyers in America*, Environmental Law, Litigation—Environmental (2018-2025)
- The Lawdragon Green 500: Leaders in Environmental Law (2021, 2023-2025)
- *Who's Who Legal: Environment* (2017-2023)
- Northern California *Super Lawyers*, Environmental Law (2004-2024)

Memberships and Affiliations

- Member, Board of Directors, Environmental Law Institute
- Member, Leadership Council, Environmental Law Institute
- Associate Editor, Litigation Update Editorial Board, ABA Section of Litigation (2005-2006)
- President, Environmental Section Executive Committee, Bar Association of San Francisco (2006)
- Member, San Francisco La Raza Lawyers Association

Services

- Consumer Products + Manufacturing
- Energy + Infrastructure
- Environmental Law
- Environmental Litigation
- Environmental Regulatory / Compliance
- Family Wealth
- Natural Resource Protection
- Private Client
- Product Liability and Stewardship
- Proposition 65 Counseling and Defense
- Wine Industry Litigation

Education

- Stanford Law School (J.D., 1994)
- Harvard University (A.B., 1990)

Bar Admissions

- California

Court Admissions

- Supreme Court of the United States, 2023

- Former President, Board of Advisors, YMCA of San Francisco (Mission branch)

Publications

7/28/2016

New Ninth Circuit Decision Precluding CERCLA Liability for Airborne Emissions