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Practice Areas

*Energy Project Development,
Transactions, & Finance*

Energy Regulation & Compliance

*Environment, Natural Resources, &
Public Lands*

*Government Relations & Public Policy
Litigation*

Education

*SMG Certificate, Harvard University,
Kennedy School of Government, 1998*

*J.D., Indiana University School of
Law, 1973*

A.B., Indiana University, 1970

Bar and Court Admissions

District of Columbia

Indiana

D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals

Steven Richardson

Member

Steven Richardson's practice focuses on administrative law and litigation with an emphasis in the fields of land, water, wetlands, hydroelectric, energy, and environmental law.

Mr. Richardson is active in helping energy companies site electric generation facilities and transmission lines, including projects in fast-growing urban areas and environmentally-sensitive locations on federal and private lands. He represents clients throughout the planning, development, consultation, siting, permitting, and defending of permits, siting approvals, rights-of-way, transmission routing and the environmental documentation that support the projects. Mr. Richardson regularly writes and speaks on the legal, environmental, and social barriers to obtaining authority for new generation and transmission facilities.

Mr. Richardson has three decades of public and private experience using sound science, innovative strategies, cutting-edge technology, state of the art environmental documentation techniques, and innovative project management solutions to design, develop, and expedite the approvals that get projects built on time and at lower cost. He teamed with educators and professional planners to develop prototype Geographic Information System (GIS) tools that integrate satellite imagery with GIS data sets to generate alternative routes, thus promoting improved site selections, public participation, and consensus that has become the industry standard and drawn approvals from State Public Utility Commissions and legislatures.

He currently is involved in several major hydroelectric license proceedings before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). His litigation experience includes both appellate litigation before courts of appeal, and agency trial-type proceedings. In his water practice, he represents irrigation districts in compliance and enforcement actions. In pro bono matters, he has represented community groups to obtain legal title, use and possession of formerly federally-owned historic light station properties.

Professional Background

Prior to joining Van Ness Feldman, Mr. Richardson served as the Chief of Staff for the Bureau of Reclamation from 1995 to 2000 and Deputy Director of the Bureau of Land Management from 1993 to 1995. During this seven year period, he was a principal policy advisor to Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt and, among other things, he:

- Directed the interdisciplinary teams of lawyers, scientists and administrators that completed the only two nation-wide Programmatic Environmental Impact Statements ever attempted under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- Led the broad-based, state, federal, Tribal and private efforts that developed the Lower Colorado River Multi-species Conservation Program to establish a 50-year habitat conservation and endangered species recovery plan for approximately 150 listed and endangered species in the lower basin of the Colorado River (Nevada, Arizona, and California).

Government Service

U.S. Department of the Interior, Chief of Staff, Bureau of Reclamation, 1995-2000

U.S. Department of the Interior, Deputy Director, Bureau of Land Management, 1993-1995

U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Environment, Energy & Natural Resources, Committee on Government Operations, 1989-1993

U.S. House of Representatives, Staff Director & Counsel, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 1981-1985

U.S. House of Representatives, Legislative Counsel, Congressman Edward J. Markey, (D-MA), 1981

U.S. Senate, Counsel, Senator Birch E. Bayh, Jr., (D-IN), 1979-1981

Professional and Civic Affiliations

- American Bar Association

Honors & Distinctions

- *Legal 500 USA*; Environment: Transaction & Regulatory; 2011