



Sean M. McGovern

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Area of Emphasis

Sean McGovern is a shareholder and co-chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Group of Babst Calland. He is also a member of the Firm's Environmental Group. Mr. McGovern's practice involves counseling a wide variety of energy clients on a variety of federal, state, and local regulatory and compliance issues related to mining, renewable, and oil and natural gas development, production, transmission, storage, plugging and restoration in the Appalachian Basin. He counsels these energy clients on a range of environmental compliance, regulatory and enforcement matters spanning from initial site planning to site reclamation/restoration, routinely dealing with various permitting, water, waste, radiation protection, transportation, storage, and other land use matters (including issues related to pooling, unitization, and spacing and setback requirements under Pennsylvania's Conservation Law). Mr. McGovern regularly handles energy asset transactions, stray gas investigations, as well as site remediation matters, including those that involve PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances). He also has experience with environmental due diligence activities; environmental justice considerations and requirements; and river basin commissions. In addition, Mr. McGovern has counseled clients pertaining to investigations by the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General and the U.S. Department of Justice.

Background

Mr. McGovern graduated *cum laude* from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2001, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Health in Environmental Science and Engineering with a focus in mathematical modeling and was selected for membership in Phi Beta Kappa. For the two years prior to attending law school, he was an environmental scientist at a consulting firm located in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, assisting with environmental risk assessments and exposure modeling, as well as drafting federal environmental regulations.

In 2006, Mr. McGovern graduated from the University of North Carolina School of Law at Chapel Hill, earning his J.D. While in law school, Mr. McGovern was a member of the Holderness Moot Court's Environmental Negotiation Team that won the Robert R. Merhige, Jr. National Environmental Negotiation Competition in 2006. In addition, he was an Articles Editor for the law school's *Journal of International Law and Commercial Regulation*, as well as a Dean's Fellow Counselor and the Chair of the Student Body Association Leadership Speaker Series.

Memberships and Affiliations

Mr. McGovern is admitted to practice in Pennsylvania and the United States District Courts for the Western and Middle Districts of Pennsylvania. He is a member of the Allegheny County, Pennsylvania and American Bar associations. Mr. McGovern is also a member of the Allegheny County Bar Association's Environmental Law Section. He is also a member of the Marcellus Shale Coalition, the Pennsylvania Independent Oil and Gas Association (PIOGA), Ohio Oil and Gas Association (OOGA), Pennsylvania Coal Alliance, Pennsylvania Aggregates & Concrete Association, the Energy & Mineral Law Foundation, and the Foundation for Natural Resources and Energy Law (fka Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation).

In 2025, Mr. McGovern was invited to become a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation. He was recognized in *The Best Lawyers in America*® in the Environmental Law Section for 2025 by BL Rankings. He is a 2022-23 Leadership Pittsburgh XXXIX alumnus. Leadership Pittsburgh Inc. is the local independent nonprofit that is best known for serving as the region's premier community leadership, identification, connection and development organization. In 2012, Mr. McGovern was selected by *The Legal Intelligencer* as one of only 35

“Lawyers on the Fast Track” in Pennsylvania. This recognition is given to attorneys under the age of 40 who have demonstrated excellence in four categories: development of the law, advocacy and community contributions, service to the bar and peer/public recognition. He was also selected to the 2012-2013 and 2015-2016 *Pennsylvania Rising Stars* lists (Thomson Reuters).

Publications/Presentations

Co-Author, “EQB Tables Petition for Study to Increase Required Minimum Setbacks from Unconventional Oil and Gas Wells,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (2025).

Co-Author, “PADEP to Rescind and Revise Water Supply Replacement Technical Guidance Documents Due to Changes to Coal and Noncoal Regulations,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (2025).

Co-Author, “Environmental Quality Board to Consider Proposed Notification Rules for Unauthorized Spills into Waters of the Commonwealth,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (2025).

Co-Author, “Environmental Groups’ Petition to Amend Regulations to Increase Setbacks from Oil and Gas Wells Clears Initial Regulatory Requirements,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (2025).

Co-Author, “PADEP Presents Update on the OOOOc Rulemaking to the Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (2024).

Co-Author, “OSMRE Approves Amendment to the Pennsylvania Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Plan,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (2024).

Co-Author, “Pennsylvania PUC Approves Joint Motion to Implement Comprehensive Review to Reduce Application Processing Times,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (2024).

Co-Author, “PADEP Issues Request for Information Regarding Clean Energy Campus Projects on Commonwealth’s Abandoned Mine Lands,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (2024).

Co-Author, “Pennsylvania’s Carbon Capture and Sequestration Act of 2024,” [The PIOGA Press](#), August 2024.

Co-Author, “Shapiro Administration Revises PPC Plan Policy to Require Operators to Disclose Drilling Chemicals,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2024).

Co-Author, “PACER and PRESS Are Introduced in the Pennsylvania General Assembly,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2024).

Co-Author, “Governor Shapiro Awards \$101.1 Million in Grants for Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Projects,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (2024).

Co-Author, “Environmental Justice,” [The PIOGA Press](#), November 2023.

Co-Author, “University of Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania Department of Health Release Studies Exploring the Relationships Between Unconventional Natural Gas Development and Specific Health Issues in Southwestern Pennsylvania,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (2023).

Co-Author, “Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court Holds RGGI Rule Unconstitutional,” FRNEL’s *Mineral and Energy Law Newsletter*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (2023).

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