

Brian Bell

Partner

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Minneapolis – 612.492.6178



Brian assists clients in obtaining governmental approvals for controversial energy, natural resources, and development projects. As part of this work, he advocates for companies before local, state, and federal administrative and judicial tribunals.

Brian represents clients in administrative and judicial enforcement matters related to compliance with environmental laws and permits. Brian's environmental enforcement work involves negotiating early resolution of enforcement matters with state and federal regulators. When early resolution is not possible, Brian litigates against regulators to reduce or eliminate penalties and corrective actions.

Brian also represents energy companies in obtaining routing and siting permits for large energy infrastructure projects. Brian's natural resources practice involves helping mining companies with project permitting, investments, and acquisitions. Brian represents developers in obtaining local land use approvals and navigating environmental issues in transactions.

Select Experience

Environmental Law

- Represented clients in negotiating settlements with state and federal environmental protection agencies for alleged violations of environmental laws and permits.
- Negotiated a no-penalty administrative consent order between industrial client and the Environmental Protection Agency after the Agency initially proposed a six-figure settlement.
- Advised client on self-reporting violations of toxic release inventory (TRI) requirements, allowing the company to avoid a penalty.
- *Northern Iron, LLC v. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency*, Court File No. 62-CV-24-3170 (Minn. 2d Jud. Dist): Obtained a preliminary injunction preventing the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency from enforcing provisions of an administrative order that would have led to manufacturer closing.

Education

- University of Minnesota Law School (J.D., 2013)
 - *magna cum laude*
- University of Minnesota (B.A., Political Science, 2008)

Bar Admissions

- Minnesota
- Montana
- Wisconsin

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota
- U.S. District Court for the District of Montana
- U.S. District Court for the District of Nebraska
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Professional Affiliations

- Minnesota Board of Law Examiners (2021-Present)
- Section Council – State Bar Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources Section Council (2017-Present) (Secretary 2021) (Treasurer 2022)
- Board of Directors – Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society (2017-Present)
- Community Board – Douglas Dayton YMCA Community Board (2016-2021)
- Board of Directors – Citizens League (2010-2016)
- Board of Directors – African American Family Services (2010-2013)
- Tubman Safety Project Pro Bono Attorney
- Expungement Clinic Pro Bono Attorney
- Housing Clinic Pro Bono Attorney

Clerkships

- Minnesota Supreme Court, Honorable Alan C. Page, 2013–2014

Accolades

- *Best Lawyers in America*®, 2024-2026
- Dorsey & Whitney – Scales of Justice Team Award (Housing Team), 2025
- *Minnesota Monthly*, “Top Lawyers in Minnesota,” 2024
- MSBA, North Star Lawyer, 2015-2016, 2018-2019, 2022-2023
- National Moot Court Region 14 Best Petitioner Brief, 2012

Select Presentations

- Mineral Development in Minnesota, November 2025
- Changes to Minnesota’s Lobbying Laws, January 2025
- State and Federal Environmental Enforcement Actions, April 2025
- Permitting Aggregate Mines in Minnesota, July 2024
- Rulemaking in Minnesota, March 2024

Insights

January 7, 2026

Minnesota PFAS Reporting Update

October 6, 2025

Energy Law: Month in Review - September 2025

October 24, 2024

Partner Brian Bell Featured in Multiple News Outlets for Insight on SCOTUS Case "San Francisco v. EPA"

June 18, 2024

Legislature Expands the MPCA's Enforcement Authorities

June 5, 2024

Minnesota Energy Infrastructure Permitting Reform

May 6, 2024

Climate Change Disclosures—How Regulatory Compliance Leads to Future Litigation Risks

December 7, 2023

Changes to Lobbying Disclosure in Minnesota

October 11, 2023

Uncertainty Looms: Minneapolis' 2040 Plan Hits (Another) Judicial Roadblock

February 17, 2023

D.C. Circuit Upholds FERC's Broadview of PURPA

November 21, 2022

DIG Magazine - Fourth Quarter 2022

November 4, 2022

FERC Increases Regulatory Oversight of Investors With Officers or Directors on Public Utilities' Boards