



Robert J. Saperstein

Shareholder

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Santa Barbara, California

Rob Saperstein's practice is focused on water law and policy issues, primarily representing public entity water suppliers.

Rob counsels and advocates in both transactional and litigation settings. He provides strategic and legal guidance on matters pending before local agencies, the California State Water Resources Control Board, various regional water quality control boards, the California Public Utilities Commission and state and federal courts.

Rob is an expert on optimizing clients' rights in groundwater, surface water and recycled water development and management. Whether in litigation, transactions or on setting of public policy, his objective is creative, practical-minded solutions that maximize client interests.

For several years, Rob was a member of the Brownstein Executive Committee, co-chair of the Natural Resources Department, and California offices Managing Partner. Prior to its merger with Brownstein, Rob served as the Managing Partner of Hatch & Parent.

Practices

Energy & Natural Resources, NEPA/CEQA, Public Lands, Renewable Energy, Water

Representative Matters

- Protected Bottling Plant from interference by City Council resulting from pressure by non-profit groups adverse to bottled water industry.
- Trial counsel for one of California's largest shareholder-owned public water suppliers in complex litigation to adjudicate and control the water resources in the Santa Maria groundwater basin. The case involved more than 1,000 parties who rely on local water resources and two federally-owned reservoirs. After eight years of litigation, the case was resolved through a settlement stipulation among the vast majority of the parties, thereby providing legal certainty with respect to the use and management of the resource.
- Defended CEQA challenge to Spring Water agreement in trial and appellate courts. Provided NEPA, CEQA and land use compliance advice for project development including construction of bottling facility and construction of pipelines in federal forest land.
- Defended CEQA challenge to the City's renewal of its long-term Central Valley Project water supply contract in trial and appellate courts.
- Successfully settled reimbursement claim by water company against four major oil companies with no direct evidence of whose MTBE impacted the well.

Community

Nature Conservancy, pro bono legal work

Board Member, Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District Hearing Board

Board of Directors, Channel Islands YMCA

Board of Directors, Youth & Family Services Branch, Channel Islands YMCA

Publications & Presentations

- Brownstein Water: Current Trends in Water Law & Policy, Contributor
- Life in Adjudicated Basins, Panelist, 2017 Groundwater Law Workshop, Sacramento, CA, October 2, 2017
- Are Groundwater Extraction Fees Property Related or Regulatory Fees? It Depends, *Brownstein Client Alert*, April 7, 2015
- Groundwater Sustainability Act - Water Rights Paradigm and Friendly Adjudication, Speaker, CoLAB Ventura County Circle the Wagon Educational Series, Camarillo, CA, April, 15, 2015
- Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014, Speaker, 2015 BlueTechValley Water Conference, Fresno, CA, March 05, 2015
- Grapes of Wrath: Paso Robles Adjudication, Panelist, Groundwater Law, American Ground Water Trust Conference, Los Angeles, CA, May 20-21, 2014
- 5th Annual Best Practices for Owning & Operating a Winery, The Seminar Group, Sonoma, CA, March 10-11, 2011
- The Impact of Climate Change and Pending Legislation on Water Use, The Seminar Group, Owning & Operating an Urban Winery or Brewery, November 10, 2010
- Groundwater and Water Rights, Speaker, Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance, Paso Robles, CA, October 21, 2010
- Handling Water Rights Disputes: Adjudication Procedures and Litigation Tips, Speaker, Water Rights in California, National Business Institute, January 21, 2015

Education

- J.D., 1993, with highest honors, University of Washington School of Law, Order of the Coif
- B.A., 1980, University of California at San Diego

Admissions

- California, 1993
- Arizona, 2005
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of California

Recognition

Best Lawyers in America, 2010-2019

AV Preeminent Rated: Martindale Hubbell

Member of the Year, Association of Water Agencies of Ventura County, 2003

Who's Who in Professional Services

Membership

Association of California Water Agencies

Association of Water Agencies, Ventura County, Water Issues Committee

Santa Barbara County Bar Association

Water Reuse Association

Groundwater Resources Association of California