



# Hong N. Huynh

## Special Counsel

☎ 503.205.2356    📍 Portland Office  
✉ hong.huynh@millernash.com

Hong Huynh is a seasoned attorney focused on providing legal counsel to public entities, with a particular focus on state and local government law, environmental law, and regulatory matters. With a career spanning over two decades, she has developed a reputation as a trusted advisor to governmental organizations, navigating complex legal challenges in regulatory compliance, litigation, and business matters. Her practice includes a broad range of issues affecting public sector clients, from local government governance, land use, contract negotiation, transportation, and environmental compliance.

Hong's career at Miller Nash began in 2000, where she initially advised public entities at the state, county, and special district levels. In 2018, she expanded her expertise by spending seven years as in-house counsel, including serving as general counsel to Oregon's largest urban flood control district and as senior assistant county counsel for Clackamas County. This in-house experience has provided her with invaluable insight into the unique legal needs and challenges faced by governmental organizations, allowing her to deliver tailored, effective solutions in both routine and high stakes matters.

In addition to her public sector work, Hong has a robust background in environmental law, including environmental investigation and remediation, hazardous substances and hazardous wastes, and water quality compliance. She has represented clients in both environmental litigation and transactional matters, advising on cost allocation, hazardous waste management, natural resource damage assessments, and compliance with federal and state regulations. Hong is known for her ability to balance the unique needs of public entities with the practical demands of environmental compliance and regulatory frameworks.

Before joining Miller Nash, Hong began her legal career as an honors attorney and attorney-adviser at the Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C., where she provided legal counsel to federal agencies on complex issues involving water, energy, and natural resources.

### Education

J.D., University of Oregon  
School of Law, 1998

- Co-Executive  
Editor, *Journal of  
Environmental Law  
and Litigation*

B.S., Pacific University,  
biology and literature,  
1995

### Bar Admissions

Oregon, 1998  
Washington, 2012

### Court Admissions

U.S. District Court, District  
of Oregon, 2000

### Languages

Vietnamese

## Professional Activities

- Multnomah Bar Association, Member
- Oregon State Bar, Member
  - Environmental and Natural Resources Section
    - Chair, 2012
    - Executive Committee Member, 2005-2013
    - Member, 2005-2013
  - House of Delegates, Region 5 Delegate, 2004-2006
  - Affirmative Action Committee, Member, 2003-2006
- Oregon Asian Pacific American Bar Association, Member, 2010-2018
- Oregon Minority Lawyers Association, Member
- American Bar Association
  - Environment, Energy, and Resources Section, Member, 2000-2018
  - Natural Resources & Environment Magazine, Editorial Board Member, 2005-2016

## Civic Activities

- Northwest Environmental Conference, Steering Committee, Member, 2004-2006
- Oregon Vietnamese Community Association, Executive Committee

## Representative Experience

### Public Entities and Local Government

- Over a decade of combined experience in leading and managing a legal department, including leading a firm's environmental practice department that managed and directed the workload of over ten attorneys, and then starting, growing, and supervising the day-to-day operations of the legal department at a special district, including managing outsourced legal work as well as render oral and written legal opinions to the board of directors, the executive directors, department directors, and staff.
- Over five years of experience of directly reporting to the governing body of a special district and providing legal opinions and advice on public meeting, records, and ethics, the parliamentary processes of the board of directors and contemplate actions of executive directors, and potential legislation under consideration by the board of directors. Led executive sessions with the board. Participant at board meetings, committee meetings, public hearings, and staff meetings to provide legal advice on parliamentary procedure, on proposed courses of action or policy questions.
- Over a decade of combined experience in serving as a general counsel and a chief legal officer to the governing bodies of special districts and a county, and their executive directors and administrators, departments directors, and staff on all legal aspects of public infrastructure planning, development, financing, construction, operation, and maintenance, and closure including flood control and drainage works, transportation facilities, and public right of ways.
- Produced, managed, and reviewed board documents (by-laws, resolutions, orders, ordinances, policies and procedures), and other legal documents to support a municipal operation, such as intergovernmental agreements, legislation, real estate documents (easements, right of way, purchase and sale, development), service agreements, state and federal cooperative funding agreement, memorandums of understanding, local contract review board rules, executive orders, and emergency declarations.
- Significant working knowledge in Oregon municipal law (public meetings and record, public ethics, public procurement and local contract review board; jurisdictional boundaries; public finance; revenue development; service fees and charges; administrative law; judicial validation proceedings; Oregon Tort Claims Act; municipal

dissolution and merger); joint contracting authority; real estate; land use; human resources; emergency response; emergency response; insurance coverage; health and safety, public drainage; Flood Control Act, and National Flood Insurance.

### **Business Transactions**

- Assisted public- and private-entity clients in the due diligence of buying, selling, and foreclosing on real property and businesses that involve contaminated property and pollution control systems. Drafted, reviewed and negotiated contracts, leases, purchase and sale agreements, and access agreements to minimize clients' environmental liability as buyers and sellers of businesses and real property, or as operators of pollution control systems. Also evaluated tools to mitigate liabilities, ranging from Phase I and II environmental investigations, pollution legal liability policies, prospective purchaser agreements, and agency assurance letters.

### **Clean Water Act Litigation**

- Defended a variety of clients, including food processors, confined animal feeding operations, and sewer, recycling, manufacturing, chemical, energy, and property management companies, against federal Clean Water Act claims of EPA, the Oregon DEQ, and citizen groups in Oregon and Washington that led to a favorable bench-trial verdict on civil penalties and to favorable out-of-court settlements.

#### Sample Litigation Experience

- *Northwest Environmental Defense Council v. Coast Seafoods Co.*, No. 3:16-cv-05906 (W.D. Wash. 2016)
- *OSPIRG v. Pacific Coast Seafoods*, No. 02-924-HA, 374 F. Supp. 2d 902; 341 F. Supp. 2d 1170; 361 F. Supp. 2d 1232 (D. Or. 2004-2005)
- *United States v. The New Portland Meadows, Inc.*, No. 00-507-AS, 2002 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 19132; 2002 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 19153 (D. Or. 2002)

### **Clean Water Act Regulatory Compliance**

- Advised numerous commercial and industrial entities, including seafood processors, agricultural growers, juice and alcoholic beverage producers, confined animal feeding operations, and heavy equipment and metal manufacturers, on water quality issues. Examples are the impact of facility remodeling, construction, and expansion efforts to permitting status as old source or new source under the Clean Water Act, operational compliance with NPDES permits and Oregon's WPCF permits (including holding pond and land-application requirements), and the impact of proposed rulemaking or permitting changes by agencies.

### **Environmental Insurance Recovery Counseling and Litigation**

- Assist clients in searching for historical insurance documents, filing of claims, and seeking coverage for environmental costs from insurance companies at legacy contaminated sites. Also advised them in the purchase of pollution legal liability policies to minimize environmental risks associated with transactions involving contaminated properties.
- Aggressively pursued and litigated against insurance companies on behalf of a ship-repair company, a seafood processor, an industrial property owner, and a community college that lead to coverage for the cost of investigation and cleanup of contaminated sites (including a Superfund site) and assessment and remediation of Natural Resource Damages under historical comprehensive general liability or excess liability policies, as well as environmental impairment liability policies.

#### Sample Litigation Experience

- *GE Property & Casualty Insurance Co., v. Portland Community College*, No. CV 04-727-HU, 2005 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 40188; 2005 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 401189 (D. Or. 2005)

### **Toxic Tort Defense**

- Advised and defended school districts, colleges, and heavy equipment and metal manufacturers against toxic tort claims, including lead in paint and drinking water, mold, PCBs, radon, and vapor intrusion conditions, leading to dismissal of claims or favorable out-of-court resolutions.

Sample Litigation Experience

- *Wilhite et al. v. University of Oregon*, No. 16CV29281 (Or, Lane County, Or. Cir. Ct. 2016)

**Flood Control and Natural Resources Management**

- Acted as counsel to local flood-control agencies on environmental, natural resources, and natural disaster issues, including assessing impacts of real property interests and encroachments, and drafting and negotiating intergovernmental agency agreements. Also advised on compliance with flood-control regulations and programs of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Rivers and Harbors Act (including Section 408 permitting), and Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014.

**Environmental Cleanup**

- Advised clients, ranging from heavy equipment and metal manufacturers, pulp and paper, seafood processors, lumber, chemical, investment, fuel, and property development and management companies, to financial institutions, tribes, and public entities (such as educational institutions and local governments), as well as nonprofit organizations, on the investigation and remediation of single-party and multiparty sites, including Superfund sites listed on the National Priority List, with the goal of obtaining a no-further-action determination, and defended them in allocation process and enforcement actions to minimize environmental liability. Extensive experience includes conducting investigation and remediation in remote, rural settings, including remote Alaska locations, and mitigating potential claims of VOC groundwater contamination and vapor intrusion concerns.

**General Hazardous and Solid Waste Regulation**

- Advised multinational pulp and paper, metal manufacturing, lumber, and chemical companies and fuel station operators on compliance with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and related regulations, such as on financial assurance requirements, storage, transporting, and disposing of hazardous waste, including transportation through international boundaries, hazardous and solid waste characterization determinations, generator requirements to avoid TSD status, storage containment requirements, and sale of contaminated properties.

**Clean Air and Climate Change**

- Advised multinational pulp and paper, manufacturing, food processing, and investment companies on complex Clean Air Act issues, including global climate change, new source review requirements, new source performance standards, routine maintenance exemptions under the prevention of significant deterioration regulations, the national emissions standards for hazardous air pollutants, determination of appropriate control technology, and odor-control regulation.

**Permitting—Facility Siting and Development**

- Acted as lead counsel on environmental and natural resources permitting requirements for the siting, construction, and operation of large infrastructure projects or facilities, including a NASCAR racetrack, windmill farms, a liquid natural gas marine terminal and the associated pipeline project, federally authorized water resources projects, metal anodizing facilities, fuel stations, and a marine shipping terminal. Successfully analyzed the transfer of, developed permitting schedule and strategy for, and advocated through the progression of permitting or approval processes under the CWA, CAA, RCRA (including solid/hazardous waste and UST regulations), NEPA, ESA, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Rivers and Harbors Act Sections 10 and 408, and Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014.

### **RCRA Cleanup of Metal Manufacturer**

- Lead counsel to a multinational manufacturer of metal-handling equipment company in a state RCRA remediation of soil and groundwater contaminated with hydrocarbons and volatile organic compounds; provided strategic advice to avoid potential classaction RCRA/toxic tort claims, to mitigate liability arising from potential vapor intrusion, to access residential neighborhood homes to sample and install mitigation system, and to manage potential claims of diminution of property value.

### **RCRA Cleanup of Hops Farm**

- Defended, and then advised on the closure of, a hops farm of more than 120 acres that had a former creosote facility with PCP, petroleum, and dioxin contamination in federal RCRA corrective-action cleanup.

### **Corps Regulatory Permitting**

- Counsel to an agricultural operation on a water reservoir siting and development that implicates jurisdictional questions under the 2015 Clean Water Rule, the reasonableness of the impact analysis and mitigation measures, and Section 401 certification under the CWA. Advised and reviewed an offsite wetlands mitigation plan and conservation covenants.

### **School Environmental Quality**

- Advised public and private school entities and institutions on environmental conditions, such as contaminants in drinking water and radon and mold levels in indoor air; experienced in assessing regulatory requirements and agency guidance standards, developing strategy compliance and implementation plan, and advising on parent and community outreach and communication efforts.

### **Drainage Law**

- Counseled property owners and drainage districts on common and statutory drainage law and impacts from development.

### **Creditors' Rights**

- Guided institutional and individual creditors on issues concerning environmental liabilities, such as state and federal lender liability exemptions, environmental due diligence before foreclosure, and safe-harbor activities of lenders.

### **Indoor Environmental Quality and Worker Safety**

- Advised public entities, including school districts and public colleges, on issues affecting indoor air quality (radon), water quality (lead and metals), OSHA requirements, and other environmental conditions (PCBs, lead paint).

### **Energy Compliance**

- Advised an electric utility on complying with the Renewable Portfolio Standard and net metering regulations, and mitigating liability resulting from a power line fire.

### **Energy Legislation**

- Counseled an electric utility on legislative issues including the implications of, and revising, proposed legislation concerning greenhouse gas emissions performance standards, stranded cost recovery in retiring outdated generating facilities, and the development of solar energy systems to meet the Renewable Portfolio Standard.

### **Publications**

- "Lead in Drinking Water: What Schools Need to Know," Miller Nash Graham & Dunn (June 2016)
- "BiOp on the Oregon National Flood Insurance Program: A Case for Levee Accreditation," Miller Nash Graham & Dunn (May 2016)
- "Plan Now So That Excess Water Isn't Trouble Later," *Daily Journal of Commerce* (Mar. 2016)

- “Environmental Considerations,” Oregon State Bar, *Oregon Real Estate Deskbook: Volume 4* (Fall 2015)
- “Heading Into Muddied Waters,” Miller Nash Graham & Dunn, *News You Can Use* (Aug. 2015)
- “Proposed Option for All Appropriate Inquiries to Mitigate Environmental Liabilities in Flux,” Miller Nash, *GroundBreaking News* (Dec. 2013)
- “Managing the Risks of Ashley II to Protect CERCLA Defense,” American Bar Association, *Natural Resources & Environment* (Fall 2013)
- “PCS Nitrogen Inc. v. Ashley II of Charleston: Prospective Purchasers Beware,” Oregon State Bar, Environmental & Natural Resources Section, *E-Outlook* (Apr. 2013)
- “New Environmental Mitigation Tools in a Revived Economy,” Miller Nash, *GroundBreaking News* (Apr. 2013)
- “Managing Environmental Compliance Information,” *Vancouver Business Journal* (Mar. 2013)
- “The U.S. Race to Export LNG,” American Bar Association, *Natural Resources & Environment* (Fall 2012)
- “Managing Environmental Compliance Information,” Miller Nash (Dec. 2012)
- “March 31 Stormwater Permitting Deadline is Fast Approaching for Oregon Facilities,” Miller Nash (Jan. 2012)

## Presentations

- “Toxin in Schools: What are the Next Steps?” Oregon School Boards Association, 70th Annual Convention (Nov. 2016)
- “So You Think You Can Network!” Oregon Asian Pacific American Bar Association (Oct. 2016)
- “Reaching NOAA’s Ark – Implementing ESA BiOp Requirements in Oregon Floodplains,” Oregon State Bar Real Estate & Land Use Section, Annual Summer Conference (Aug. 2016)
- “Local Approaches to Flood Protection and Floodplain Development,” The Seminar Group, Floodplain Development Regulation Under FEMA and ESA (May 2016)
- “Environmental Aspects of Property Transactions,” Northwest Environmental Conference & Tradeshow (Dec. 2015)
- “Funding as a Necessary Starting Point for Doing NRD Assessments,” Law Seminars International, Tribal Natural Resource Damage Assessment seminar (Dec. 2015)
- “Environmental Transactions 101,” Multnomah Bar Association, CLE Presentation (Dec. 2015)
- “Federal, State and Local Responses - From Efforts to Slow Change to New Regulations, Charges and Taxes to Adapt to It,” The Seminar Group, Preparing For Climate Change—New Regulations and New Litigation CLE seminar (Nov. 2014)
- “Integrating Floodplain Management & Salmon Conservation,” Oregon Law Institute of Lewis & Clark Law School, panelist (Nov. 2014)
- “Flood Control,” Oregon State Bar, Annual Environmental Law Year in Review CLE (Oct. 2014)
- “Audits: Voluntary and Regulatory,” Northwest Environmental Conference & Tradeshow (Dec. 2012)
- Opening Remarks, Oregon State Bar, 2012 Annual Environmental and Natural Resources CLE (Oct. 2012)

## Recognition & Honors

- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® (Portland, OR)
  - Environmental Law, 2018
- Selected for inclusion as an Oregon Super Lawyer—Rising Star, 2012, 2013
- Named to Portland Business Journal’s 40 Under 40 list, 2008

## Personal Activities

Hong enjoys an active lifestyle with her husband, daughter, and twin sons. Her commitment to promoting a sustainable environment began early in life, including organizing her college’s first recycling program.