

## Laura A. Rideout

Associate

Laura is an attorney practicing from Preti Flaherty's Portland, Maine office. She prides herself on implementing a thoughtful yet aggressive approach to find unique ways to resolve legal issues for her clients across industries. Laura's work is litigation-oriented, and she practices with the firm's litigation, environmental, and employment practice groups.

Laura has a broad experience-base, including representing clients in commercial disputes, defending employers in claims brought by employees, and representing clients in environmental litigation or enforcement actions. She is skilled at preparing expert and fact witnesses for deposition and trial, taking and defending depositions, conducting witness interviews, performing legal research and writing, and developing case strategy. In addition to her trial-oriented skill set, Laura is experienced at representing clients in mediation and negotiating settlement agreements on their behalf. She provides counsel to clients in state and federal litigation, and in administrative proceedings and advises clients in connection with a wide range of federal and state statutory and regulatory requirements.

Laura is a member of Preti Flaherty's Recruitment Committee and Professional Development Committee.

A Maine native, Laura resides in the Portland area with her husband, Seth, and two young sons.

### Practice Areas

- Employment Law
- Environmental
- Land Use & Permitting

### Education

- University of Maine School of Law (J.D., with honors)
  - Ocean and Coastal Law Journal, Executive Editor
- University of California Davis (B.A., with honors)

### Admissions

- Maine
- Massachusetts
- U.S. District Court, District of Maine
- U.S. District Court, District of Massachusetts



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## Professional Affiliations

- Maine State Bar Association
  - Environmental and Energy Section Vice Chair
- American Bar Association
- Human Resources Association of Southern Maine
- Environmental & Energy Technology Council of Maine (E2Tech)
- Maine Real Estate Development Association

## Honors & Awards

- *Super Lawyers* Rising Star in Environmental Law (2016-2018)

## Civic Involvement

- Portland Museum of Art Contemporaries, Member

## Representative Matters

### Environmental

Laura's environmental practice includes toxic torts litigation, CERCLA litigation, environmental damage and remediation claims, state environmental enforcement defense, litigation involving emerging contaminants, and citizen suit defense. She has represented clients both locally and nationally in the environmental arena and has worked on the following representative cases:

- Represented client in defense of RCRA citizen suit for injunctive relief associated with contamination of sediments in one of New England's largest river systems and estuary. This multi-phase litigation involved a month-long trial in federal district court in Maine, and testimony from twenty-two witnesses in various technical disciplines related to contaminated sediment such as fate and transport, stable isotope analysis, geochemistry of marsh areas, and remediation engineering.
- Represented client in CERCLA and toxic tort litigation involving the emerging contaminant PFAS and extensive groundwater contamination.
- Oversaw and advised client regarding portfolio of contaminated sites across the country and participated in cooperating parties group allocation negotiations in connection with state-ordered remediation.
- Represented client in toxic tort litigation involving copper exposure in drinking water and obtained favorable pre-trial settlement.
- Advised client during implementation of state-ordered remediation plan and successfully petitioned state for a "contained-out" determination pursuant to EPA guidance.
- Obtained favorable pre-suit resolution of case involving toxic tort claims associated with a home heating oil spill.
- Provide yearly comprehensive summary to Maine client regarding statutory and regulatory environmental requirements applicable to their business operations.

## Land Use and Permitting

- Represented client in defense of town administrative action involving violations of shoreland zoning requirements. This involved advising the client regarding the town's administrative process and negotiating a consent agreement with town officials to obtain favorable resolution of the outstanding violations.
- Represents clients before town administrative bodies in support of and in opposition to various permit applications or projects.
- Represents clients before Maine's Land Use and Planning Commission, including drafting permit application packages and retaining and interfacing with consultants. This has involved interpreting Commission rules and regulations and crafting successful legal arguments to advance the client's objectives in the face of NIMBY opposition.
- Represent clients before town administrative bodies to obtain subdivision approval.

## Litigation

- Represented clients in achieving successful resolution of anti-terrorism case against large producer of bananas brought by family members of citizens kidnapped and killed by guerrillas in Colombia. Lead role in facilitating production of discovery and preparing fact and expert witnesses for depositions and trial as well as taking and defending depositions.
- Represented client in commercial dispute with contractor in case involving remediation in accordance a Nuclear Regulatory Commission-approved decommissioning plan in order to achieve license termination. Negligence claims against the contractor involved escalating change orders and failure to complete the work within the projected timeline and budget and in accordance with the appropriate degree of skill.
- Represents clients in connection with premise liability and other personal injury claims, including successful representation of those claims at trial, or obtaining pre-trial resolution through mediation if appropriate.
- Represents clients in disputes arising out of property transactions.

## Employment

Laura's employment practice is focused on advising employers and HR professionals regarding management of their work force. In the face of allegations of misconduct, she has conducted internal investigations and made recommendations regarding discipline, training, or other remedial measures (if warranted). She also represents clients in connection with Maine Human Rights Commission proceedings and in civil litigation in both state and federal court. She is skilled at preparing cases for trial, representing clients at mediation, and negotiation settlement agreements (when appropriate).

Laura understands the sensitive nature of workplace disputes and employs a thoughtful and pragmatic approach to assist clients in developing effective dispute avoidance and resolution strategies.