



Craig Stahl

Partner

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PRACTICES Litigation, Energy, Power and Natural Resources, Energy Litigation, Oil and Gas Litigation, Oil and Gas

Craig Stahl has more than three decades of experience handling complex, high-end commercial litigation and finding ways to win high-stakes cases. He has the know-how to navigate intricate legal issues, and he frequently is hired to help turn around and/or try cases that suffered setbacks before he came on board. He routinely represents major national and international corporations, as well as small independents involved in significant, "bet-the-company" cases.

Craig is a partner in Haynes Boone's Litigation Practice Group, and he splits time between the firm's Houston office and The Woodlands office, which he manages. He handles matters not only in Texas but across the United States, including most of the oil-producing states between the Gulf of Mexico and the Canadian border.

He has been lead counsel for numerous oil and gas producers in multiparty and multidistrict litigation, as well as class actions with multimillions, and sometimes billions, of dollars at stake. He has been especially successful in defeating class certification efforts in suits involving royalty owners, and he has achieved favorable outcomes for defendants in class suits that previously had been certified against prior counsel.

As a veteran litigator, Craig has deep experience in the courtroom, but he also understands how to serve clients' best interests without trial by effectively arguing dispositive motions through well-crafted briefs. He has particular experience handling disputes over joint operating agreements and has tried multiple cases to verdict involving conflicts over areas of mutual interest and/or "pref" rights.

Craig has worked on many of the major cases in the United States impacting the oil and gas industry, including the some of the largest qui tam – or whistleblower – cases, as well as significant cases involving natural gas flaring, alleged environmental contamination and indemnities. He has represented a broad range of clients, including major energy producers, pipelines, marketers, royalty trustees and financial institutions. He also has served as an arbitrator and expert witness in energy-related matters.

While his practice has had a heavy emphasis on energy disputes, he also has considerable experience in breach of contract and business tort cases in other commercial litigation contexts. For example, Craig has had primary responsibility for numerous multimillion-dollar lawsuits and appeals in state and federal courts and has personally argued and won cases before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

and the Texas Supreme Court. He even once won a case at the Fifth Circuit to obtain a payout for a lottery winner that the Texas Lottery Commission had refused to pay.

Craig has been recognized for his energy law experience by *Chambers USA* (2020-2023), *Chambers and Partners*; *Texas Super Lawyers* (2016-2023), Thomson Reuters; *Best Lawyers* (2022-2024), Woodward/White, Inc.; the *Houston Business Journal* (2015), American City Business Journals; and the U.S. edition of *The Legal 500* (2015-2020), Legalease.

QUALIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- J.D., Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law, 1984
- B.A., Princeton University, 1981, *cum laude*

ADMISSIONS

- Colorado
- Texas

COURT ADMISSIONS

- United States Supreme Court
 - U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
 - U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
 - U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit
 - U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit
 - U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas
 - U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado
 - U.S. District Court for the District of North Dakota
 - U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma
 - U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma
 - U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas
 - U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas
 - U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas
 - U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas
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PUBLICATIONS AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- "When Being on Top is not the Best," 12th Annual TJOCEL Symposium, speaker, Austin, TX, February 10, 2017.
 - "Lease Maintenance and Title Issues Across the Shale Basins: Eagle Ford and Barnett Shales," speaker, Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation Special Institute on Developments in Major Shale Plays, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, May 1, 2014.
 - "Keeping Leases Alive: The Evolving Law of Lease Termination in Today's Unconventional Shale Plays," speaker, 59th Annual Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Institute in Spokane, Washington, July 20, 2013.
 - "Current Issues in Oil and Gas Lease Termination Litigation," speaker, The Institute for Energy Law's 11th Energy Litigation Conference in Houston, Texas, November 15, 2012.
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PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND ENGAGEMENTS

- Texas Bar Foundation, Sustaining Life Fellow
 - Houston Bar Foundation
 - Montgomery County Bar Association, Board Member (2019-2020)
 - The Institute for Energy Law, Advisory Board Member
 - Foundation for Natural Resources and Energy Law
 - Former Adjunct Professor for six years at the University of Houston Law Center
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SELECTED CLIENT REPRESENTATIONS

- In the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas; Won motion to dismiss all claims by multiple plaintiffs against major oil and gas producer.
- In the United States District Court for the District of Colorado; Obtained summary judgment for defendant oil and gas clients on area of mutual interest claim.
- In the United States District Court for the District of North Dakota; Defense of producer in putative class action over ownership of property flooded after creation of Lake Sakakawea. Motion to dismiss granted in favor of client.
- In the 189th District Court of Harris County, Texas; Defense of producer in environmental indemnity suit. Obtained favorable confidential settlement at trial.
- In the District Court of Fremont County, Wyoming; Defense of producer in class action suit over escrowed royalty payments. Obtained favorable settlement.
- In the District Court of Arapahoe County, Colorado; Defense of producer in lease termination dispute. Obtained favorable confidential settlement.
- In the United States District Court for the District of North Dakota; Defense of producer in putative class action over royalties allegedly due for flared natural gas. Motion to dismiss granted for client.
- In the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas. Defense of shale gas producer in putative class action in Arkansas federal court over alleged groundwater contamination caused by fracking. Obtained favorable confidential settlement.
- In the District Court of Sante Fe County, New Mexico; Defense of producer in statewide royalty dispute. Case dismissed without any payment by client.
- In the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas. Representation of GOM operator in successful suit to compel arbitration and obtain payment of idle drillship charges and related joint account expenses caused by Federal offshore drilling moratorium.
- In the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, Beaufort Division. Defended producer in royalty owner check-stub litigation over Wyoming properties. Obtained dismissal of claims without any payment by client.
- In the 26th Judicial District Court of Stevens County, Kansas. Defense of midstream clients in putative class action in Kansas state court alleging mismeasurement of natural gas. Client was dismissed without any payment after trial court twice denied class certification.
- In the 48th Judicial District Court, Tarrant County, Texas. Suit by non-operator client to enforce AMI and PRP claims for properties in Texas and Louisiana. Obtained favorable confidential settlement and conveyance of properties at trial.
- In the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming. Represented six midstream defendants in industry-wide qui tam suit alleging that pipelines and gatherers mismeasured natural gas. U.S. Supreme Court refused cert after 10th Circuit affirmance of summary judgment for our clients.
- In the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, Texarkana Division. Defended producer in False Claims Act case over federal benchmark royalty payments. Although DOJ sued

for \$300 million in actuals and \$900 million in punitive damages, we obtained favorable settlement for less than 1/3 of the actual damages without any FCA punitives.

- In the 157th Judicial District Court of Harris County, Texas. Suit for declaratory judgment that producer client had no duty to pay seismic licensing fees as a result of corporate reorganization. Obtained dismissal without any payment by client.
- In the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas, Houston Division. Defended several producer clients in \$5 million unit dispute over entitlement to oil and gas royalty payments. All claims against clients dismissed on summary judgment.
- In the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma. Defended qui tam suit against producer clients over alleged failure to pay interest on past royalty obligations. Won summary judgment dismissal.
- In the 71st Judicial District Court of Harrison County, Texas. Defended producer client in class action alleging failure to develop. Settled favorably with agreed drilling program without any cash consideration.
- In the 17th Judicial District Court of Tarrant County, Texas. Prosecuted AMI claim for producer clients. Case settled for significant multi-million payment to our clients after successful bifurcated trial on liability.
- In Dept. No. VIII of the District Court of Clark County, Nevada. Multi-week trial in Nevada State Court for producer client to enforce \$30 million long-term contract to provide natural gas to Las Vegas cogeneration plant. Judgment for client awarding specific performance plus fees and expenses. Affirmed by Nevada Supreme Court.

Some of the matters were handled prior to joining Haynes and Boone.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

- Recognized in *Chambers USA*, Chambers and Partners, Band One, for Oil and Gas Litigation (Nationwide), 2020-2023
- Recognized in *The Best Lawyers in America*, Woodward/White, Inc., in Commercial Litigation, 2022-2024, Oil and Gas Law, 2023
- Recognized in *Texas Super Lawyers*, Thomson Reuters, in Energy and Natural Resources, 2016-2023
- Recognized in “Who’s Who in Energy” by the *Houston Business Journal*, American City Business Journals, 2015
- Profiled as one of the leading Energy Litigation lawyers in the United States, *Legal 500*, 2015-2022
- Listed as AV Preeminent by the *Martindale Hubbell Law Directory*