



Deborah E. Nelson

Partner (Executive Committee Member)

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(208) 388-1215

Practice Areas

- Administrative and Regulatory Law
- Environmental Law
- Natural Resources
- Real Estate and Land Use

Industries

- Agriculture
- Energy and Utilities
- Food Processing and Manufacturing
- Real Estate Development, Construction and Investment
- State and Local Government

Deborah is a respected regulatory and land use attorney. She helps businesses get the permits and incentives they need to site, expand and operate.

Deborah is a managing partner and land use attorney at Givens Pursley. With over 20 years of land use experience, she helps clients navigate the land use process from start to finish, performing due diligence, preparing applications, negotiating with agency staff, presenting projects at hearings, and handling any challenges. She frequently helps large companies obtain the legal entitlements required for the siting or expansion of a business or development. These entitlements include land use and zoning permits, transportation approvals, tax and workforce incentives, tax increment financing, real estate acquisition, and water and environmental permits. She has experience with a broad range of projects including food processing, distribution/fulfillment centers, data centers, manufacturing/industrial, wind and solar energy, mining, lifestyle centers, mixed use/commercial, master planned communities, multi-family, and student housing, residential subdivisions, and historic properties. Deborah is a strategic thinker and a problem solver. She handles negotiations, agency and court hearings, contracting, and disputes.

Deborah is active in professional and community organizations, including:

- Executive Committee of Givens Pursley, managing firm operations (2016-current)
- Boise Valley Economic Partnership, Board of Directors and Past Chair (2016-current)
- Urban Land Institute Idaho, Advisory Board (2021-2023)
- Boise Metro Chamber Board of Directors (2019-2020)
- Boise Mayor McLean Transition Team, Economic Development Committee Chair (2020)
- Andrus Center for Public Policy, Board of Directors (2013-2016)
- Family Advocates, Board of Directors (2011-2015)
- Idaho Women Lawyers, Board of Directors and Past President (2003-2013)
- COMPASS Public Participation Committee (Past Chair) (2010-2012)
- Leadership Boise (2007-2008)

Idaho Business Review lists Deborah as a "Power 25" Influencer in Commercial Real Estate in Idaho. Chambers USA recognizes Deborah as an Expert in Zoning/Land Use and Natural Resources & Environment law. Best Lawyers recognizes Deborah as a Land Use Litigation Expert. Martindale-Hubbell has awarded her the highest ranking (AV). Mountain States Super

Lawyers recognizes Deborah as a Super Lawyer in Land Use. She is a recipient of the Tribute to Women and Industry (TWIN) award (2009), Idaho Business Review's Women of the Year award (2008), Idaho Women Lawyers' distinguished Kate Feltham award (2008), and Idaho Business Review's Accomplished 40 Under 40 award (2003).

Deborah received her law degree from Northwestern School of Law with a Certificate in Environmental and Natural Resources Law. She graduated from Rhodes College with a degree in International Studies. Prior to joining Givens Pursley, she served as a Deputy Attorney General for the State of Idaho, where she specialized in administrative law.

Deborah lives in Boise with her husband and spends her free time traveling, reading and mountain biking, skiing, and running in Idaho's beautiful outdoors.

Recognition

- Idaho Business Review Power List: Commercial Development (2021-2023)
- Best Lawyers in America (Real Estate: Zoning/Land Use)
- Chambers USA, America's Leading Lawyers for Business (Real Estate: Zoning/Land Use)
- Martindale-Hubbell - Highest Ranking (AV)
- Mountain States Super Lawyers - Land Use/Zoning
- Tribute to Women in Industry Award from Women's and Children's Alliance
- Woman of the Year Award from Idaho Business Review
- Kate Feltham Award from Idaho Women Lawyers
- Accomplished 40 Under 40 Award from Idaho Business Review

Education

- J.D. Northwestern School of Law of Lewis and Clark College, Certificate in Environmental and Natural Resources Law (Honors Moot Court Award; Law Review)
- B.A. Rhodes College (Bobby Doughty Memorial Award for Excellence in International Studies; President, International Studies National Honor Society)

Admissions

- Idaho
- U.S. District Court (Idaho)
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Memberships & Affiliations

- Executive Committee, Givens Pursley
- Board of Directors, Boise Valley Economic Partnership
- Past member, Board of Governors, Andrus Center for Public Policy
- Past member, Board of Directors, Family Advocates
- Alumna, Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Boise
- Past Chair, COMPASS Public Participation Committee
- Past President, Idaho Women Lawyers



Publications

- Brownfields Law and Practice (Idaho Chapter), Matthew Bender & Co., Inc. (2004-2013)
- Land Use Handbook: The Law of Planning, Zoning and Property Rights in Idaho (2023), Givens Pursley LLP (co- author)
- "Land Use Considerations for Siting an Energy Facility in Idaho", The Advocate (2011) (co-author)
- Numerous publications associated with speaking engagements