



Chris Thorne

Partner

555 17th Street, Suite 3200, Denver, CO 80202

P 303.295.8488

cthorne@hollandhart.com

With more than 20 years of experience in Western water law, Chris Thorne effectively assists clients in all types of matters involving water rights.

PRACTICES

Water Law
 Environmental and Natural Resources
 Environmental Compliance and Enforcement
 Project Finance and Strategic Transactions
 Real Estate Development and Finance

EDUCATION

University of Colorado School of Law,
 J.D., 1990

Colorado College, B.A., 1986
 English

BAR ADMISSIONS

Colorado

He represents clients in the state and federal courts, including Colorado's water court, administrative proceedings, water rights acquisitions and transactions involving water rights, and in the development and negotiation of water supply plans and arrangements. Chris' clients include municipal water providers, energy companies, real estate developers, industrial water users, ranchers and farmers, and special districts.

Chris also has specialized experience in adjudicating recreational water rights and in advocating his clients' interests in the Colorado legislative process. In addition, he often counsels clients on environmental compliance matters and environmental litigation under the Clean Water Act and other federal environmental programs.

Chris chaired the firm's Water Practice Group for over ten years. Prior to joining the firm, he practiced in the Denver office of the international law firm of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher for five years.

Chris is a part of the water team and frequently works with [Mark Hamilton](#), [Meghan Winokur](#), [Bill Caile](#), and [Kylie Crandall](#).

EXPERIENCE

Represents clients in water court litigation and related administrative proceedings involving:

- Adjudication of water rights
- Changes of water rights
- Complex plans for augmentation
- Water rights disputes

Extensive experience with project development and permitting for companies developing water supplies for new projects, including:

- Power generation facilities
- Solar energy projects
- Wind turbine projects
- Natural gas production and pipeline facilities

Represents clients in all types of commercial transactions involving water

rights including:

- Water rights sales and acquisitions
- Real estate and resort development
- Water supply agreements and water leases

CLIENT RESULTS

Representative Matters

Represents clients in Water Court cases in all of Colorado's Water Divisions and in numerous appellate proceedings involving water matters before the Colorado Supreme Court, the Federal District Court, and the United States Supreme Court.

Serves as a general counsel to a consortium of municipal water suppliers and state entities working together to enlarge available water storage in a federal project operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Represents client in the acquisition of five commercial fish hatcheries and a domestic fish processing facility in Southern Idaho.

Represented a major Colorado municipality in Water Court and administrative hearings in obtaining confirmation of one of the earliest "recreational in-channel diversion" water rights decreed in the State.

Represented oil and gas industry clients in the administrative proceedings, State Engineer's Office rulemakings, Colorado Supreme Court litigation, and water court adjudications arising from the Vance v. Wolfe decision in 2009.

PUBLICATIONS

"Draft Colorado Water Plan Submitted by Colorado Water Conservation Board," *Holland & Hart News Alert*, Co-Author, 12/12/2014

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

"Chris Thorne is a frequent speaker on water rights related issues at conferences and seminars," Ongoing

RECOGNITION

- *The Best Lawyers in America*© Water Law, 2011-2019

PROFESSIONAL AND CIVIC AFFILIATIONS

- Town of Berthoud Planning & Zoning Commission, Chairman
- American Bar Association, Natural Resources, Energy & Environmental Law Section, Member
- Colorado Bar Association, Water Law Section, Member
- Colorado Water Congress