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The West Firm, PLLC

Creative Legal Solutions for Complex Regulatory Challenges

For many years, oil and gas production companies operating in New York State were stymied by an outdated regulatory program that was inconsistent with technological advancements in the industry. Further, conflicts between landowners, energy producers and state agencies were becoming more frequent and costly. Fixing the system would require a multidisciplinary approach. Columbia Natural Resources LLC – now known as Chesapeake Appalachia, L.L.C. – turned to Tom West for help.

“We represented them in precedent-setting litigation, administrative proceedings and before the New York State Legislature, all at the same time,” says Tom West, managing partner of The West Firm. “We worked with the legislature to change how gas and oil wells are permitted and how property owners can participate in the production of oil and gas from units that affect their property. This promotes economic development in New York State by facilitating the production of indigenous resources, benefiting landowners, municipalities and the state.”

“Tom’s extraordinary ability to simplify complex issues, and his view of the comprehensive ‘big picture,’ were essential to the successful results our company achieved,” adds Jo Ellen Diehl Yeary, former general counsel for Columbia Natural Resources.

The West Firm’s experience with novel issues in the oil and gas industry is emblematic of its handling of other complex regulatory matters. Based in Albany, The West Firm enjoys solid relationships with political leaders, state and federal regulators, and the business community. Whether through negotiation, legislation or litigation, the firm seeks creative solutions to complex regulatory challenges on behalf of companies and individuals doing business throughout New York State. In addition to environmental

and regulatory issues, The West Firm also represents clients in commercial litigation matters.

Tom West has twice been selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*® in the field of environmental law. He spent 17 years as a

partner at the prestigious international law firm of LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae LLP, which is now Dewey & LeBoeuf LLP. In 2006, he founded The West Firm, combining the experience of a large firm with the cost-effectiveness of a small one.

“Our firm has a very high intellectual base,” West says. “Two of our attorneys have clerked for judges with the New York State Court of Appeals, another one clerked for a United States District Court judge, and several have advanced technical degrees. There are very few firms with that level and breadth of experience on staff.”

As a result, The West Firm has yielded creative, positive results for its clients. For example, with West’s help, Casella Waste Systems, Inc. succeeded in expanding three existing landfills in Upstate New York, despite the potential for significant community opposition.

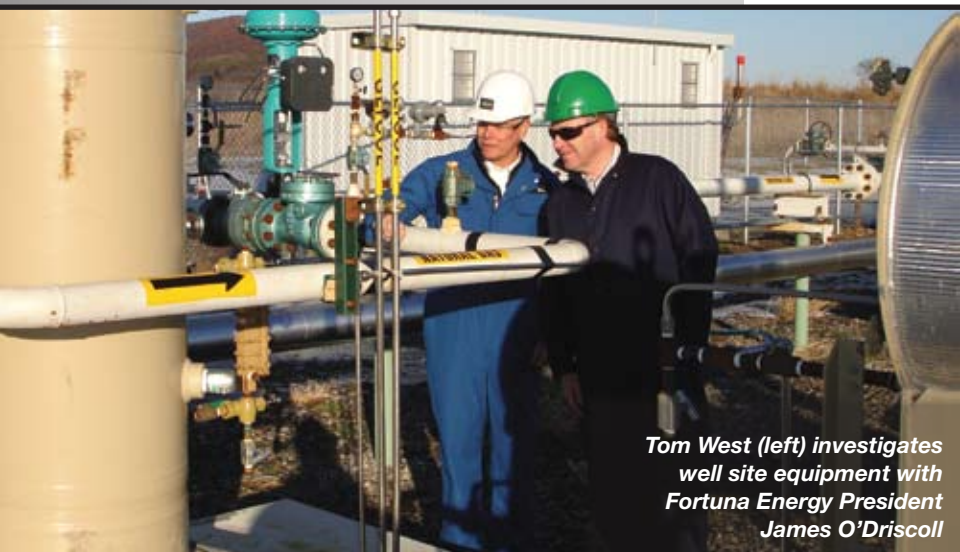
“It was a matter of understanding and, where possible, interweaving our client’s needs and the communities’ concerns,” West explains. “We were able to work with each community to identify a zone that would be used for landfill development, and we negotiated innovative programs that helped the client get through the process without going through extended adjudicatory proceedings. We pride ourselves on knowing our clients’ business and understanding their environmental issues as well as they do, so that we can help them find positive solutions.”

Practice Groups

- Environmental
- Oil & Gas/Energy
- Litigation/Dispute Resolution
- Public Integrity

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– Tom West, Managing Partner



Tom West (left) investigates well site equipment with Fortuna Energy President James O’Driscoll



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