SCOTT DOUGLASS McCONNICO

Mark W. Hanna

PARTNER

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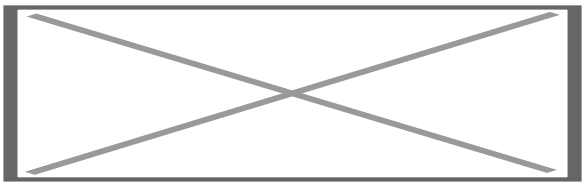
Overview

Mark Hanna Chambers USA Guide 2026Mark works as an advisor, advocate, and problem solver for clients in the Texas energy industry. Mark helps energy companies navigate complex legal and regulatory issues, with a practice that focuses on energy companies of all sizes, from private-equity backed startups to members of the Fortune 500. Mark is known for offering clients sound legal advice, guiding them to the right-sized solution for any problem, whether that means a phone call or a lawsuit.

Mark's work in the energy field has included issues related to oil and gas, lithium extraction, carbon storage, renewables and pipelines. Mark has extensive experience practicing before administrative agencies, including the Texas Railroad Commission and the Texas General Land Office. Mark has also appeared in state and federal courts across Texas in a variety of lawsuits, including claims related to energy, business, environmental, surface use, and title disputes. When the stakes are high, clients turn to Mark for dependable and actionable guidance.

Mark has been recognized as one of the leading lawyers in his field, repeatedly selected for The Best Lawyers in America and Texas Rising Stars. His clients count on his solid legal advice and deep knowledge of the energy industry. Mark has a degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Texas and has been working with energy clients for two decades.

Mark is an Austin native and an active member of the community, having served on the boards of directors for The Contemporary Austin and Arthouse at the Jones Center. Mark is currently a member of the SMU Dedman School of Law's Emerging Leader Board of Directors.



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Experience

Energy Advice & Transactions

- Advised multiple publicly traded and private companies on regulatory and legal issues related to the development of their oil and gas assets in the Eagle Ford Shale, Permian and Delaware basins, including advice on drilling permits, lease amendments, pooling authority, title issues and operating agreements
- Advised clients in the renewable and green energy spheres, including projects related to carbon sequestration, solar-, wind- and geothermal-power generation, and lithium mining
- Advised clients on negotiating and complying with joint operating agreement (JOA) provisions, including well proposals, operator removal and non-consent issues
- Advised clients on issues related to brine mining and storage caverns, including issues related to surface use, storage lease terms, and regulatory compliance
- Advised clients on oil and gas pooled unit formation, drafting production sharing agreements, and drilling allocation wells
- Advised clients on oil and gas lease drafting and interpretation issues, including retained-acreage provisions, continuous-development issues, and lease-termination questions

Energy Litigation

- Represented an Eagle Ford operator in a AAA Arbitration on drainage and royalty claims
- Represented numerous operator clients in title litigation, working-interest owner disputes, and lessor disputes
- Won summary judgment on behalf of a Permian operator on retained acreage claims
- Won summary judgment on a title claim in Reagan County, Texas
- Represented an oil and gas operator in title litigation filed in East Texas, securing a favorable settlement that cleared the way for the client to develop its leases
- Represented a client in a title-defect arbitration related to lease acquired under a purchase and sale agreement, obtaining a favorable final arbitration award
- Defended a publicly traded oil and gas company in defending lease termination and failure to develop claims on a several-thousand-acre lease in South Texas

Royalty Litigation and Advice

- Represented multiple operators in royalty litigation, related to post-production costs, non-participating royalties, market value issues, and allocation issues throughout Texas courts
- Advised multiple operators on fieldwide review of oil and gas lease royalty provisions
- Assisted numerous oil and gas companies in responding to royalty audits
- Advised clients in response to royalty demand letters
- Represented clients in connection with General Land Office audits of royalty payments

Texas Railroad Commission Practice

- First-chaired numerous administrative trials to final orders
- Advised clients on permitting of horizontal and vertical oil and gas wells, including issues related to Rule 37 exceptions, allocation wells, PSA wells, and no-perf zones
- Represented clients in obtaining new and amended field rules
- Represented clients in enforcement and complaint proceedings
- Represented clients in forced pooling (MIPA) applications
- Represented clients related to pipeline permitting issues
- Represented clients related to brine mining issues
- Represented clients related to cavern storage issues
- Represented clients related to carbon injection issues

Commercial Litigation

- Represented an Austin company in business-divorce and fiduciary-duty litigation, obtaining a temporary restraining order and settlement
- Represented a service company in claims of stolen corporate opportunity and trade secrets
- Represented an Austin engineering firm in recovering fees for work performed and defending counter-allegations

Awards

- Chambers USA Band 2 in Energy: State Regulatory & Litigation (Oil & Gas) in Texas. 2025, 2026
- The Best Lawyers in America®, “Lawyer of the Year” for Oil and Gas Law, Austin, 2026
- The Best Lawyers in America®, Commercial Litigation and Oil & Gas Law, by BL Rankings, 2022-2027
- Recognized as one of the Top 25 Energy & Natural Resources Attorneys of 2025 by Attorney Intel
- Texas Super Lawyer, a Thomson Reuters business, Energy & Resources, 2025, 2026
- Texas Rising Star, a Thomson Reuters business, Energy & Natural Resources, 2013 – 2015, 2017-2020
- Articles Editor, Southern Methodist Law Review Association
- Order of the Coif, Southern Methodist University

Articles & Presentations

- "Above and Below: Legal Disputes Between Surface and Mineral Owners," panel moderator at 23rd Annual Energy Litigation Conference hosted by the Institute for Energy Law, November 2024
- “Hot Topics at the Texas Railroad Commission,” presented at the 49th Annual Ernest E. Smith Oil, Gas and Mineral Law Institute, Spring 2023

- “Retained Acreage and Depths Issues in Oil & Gas Leases: the Courthouse and Regulatory Perspective,” co-authored for the State Bar of Texas Oil & Gas Disputes Course, January 2018
- “Railroad Commission Regulation of Production and Commingling of Production,” written and presented at the Scott Douglass & McConnico Regulatory Seminars, Spring 2016 & Fall 2017
- “Horizontal Drilling, Retained Acreage and Allocation Wells in the Spraberry Trend Area Field,” presented as an in-house seminar for a client operator, Fall 2017
- “Railroad Commission Rule 32: Flaring and Venting Gas,” written and presented at the Scott Douglass & McConnico Regulatory Seminar, Spring 2015
- “Drafting Traps in the Modern Oil & Gas World,” written and presented at the State Bar of Texas 32nd Annual Advanced Oil, Gas and Energy Resources Law Course, Fall 2014
- “Eagle Ford Land, Legal and Regulatory Issues,” presented as an in-house seminar for a client oil company, Winter 2013
- “Legal Characteristics of Land Ownership,” presented to the Railroad Commission of Texas Eagle Ford Task Force, Fall 2012.
- “Horizontal Drilling: Land & Regulatory Problems in Texas,” presented to the Houston Association of Professional Landmen, Fall 2011
- “Voluntary Pooling: Express & Implied Limits on Pooled Units,” presented at the Scott, Douglass & McConnico Regulatory Seminar, Spring 2011
- “Pooling: The Basics, Plus Something We Only Thought We Knew,” presented to the Austin Area Professional Landman Association, Spring 2010
- “Royalties & Royalty Disputes,” presented to the University of Houston’s Advanced Oil & Gas Short Course, Summer 2009
- “Multidistrict Litigation from the Defense Perspective,” published in the State Bar Litigation Section Report, Fall 2008

News & Insights

- Seven SDM Lawyers Named to Texas Rising Stars®
- Fortune 500 Oil & Gas Company - jury trial regarding breach of joint operating agreement
- SDM prevails in jury trial regarding breach of joint operating agreement
- Six SDM Lawyers Named to Texas Rising Stars®
- SDM Lawyers Recognized in The Best Lawyers in America, 2022 Edition
- SDM Obtains Denial of Eagle Ford Lease Termination Claim Against EP Energy
- 13 SDM Lawyers Recognized in Best Lawyers® 2023 Honors
- SDM Lawyers Recognized In Best Lawyers® 2024
- Texas Expands the Railroad Commission’s Authority Over Renewables
- SDM Lawyers Recognized In Best Lawyers® 2025
- Mark Hanna presents at the 23rd Annual Energy Litigation Conference
- Congrats to our SDM 2024 Texas Super Lawyers
- U.S. District Court Affirms Ruling In Favor Of SDM Client EP Energy
- Railroad Commission Adopts New Rules for Lithium Development in Texas
- Mark Hanna recognized in Top 25 Energy and Natural Resources Attorneys
- SDM continues to be ranked in Chambers USA
- SDM Secures Victory in McMullen County Oil and Gas Jury Trial
- SDM Lawyers Recognized in 2026 Best Lawyers® Awards and Best Lawyers Ones to Watch® in America
- Congrats to our SDM 2025 Texas Super Lawyers
- SDM continues to be ranked in Chambers USA
- SDM Lawyers Recognized in 2027 Best Lawyers® Awards and Best Lawyers Ones to Watch® in America
- SDM Lawyers Recognized in 2026 Texas Super Lawyers®

Practice Areas

- Business Litigation & Torts
- Oil & Gas Business Advice
- Oil & Gas Litigation
- Oil & Gas Regulatory
- Renewable Energy
- Public Utilities

Education

- University of Texas at Austin, B.S., Electrical Engineering, 2002
- Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law, J.D., magna cum laude, 2006

Admissions

- State Bar of Texas
- U.S. District Courts for the Northern, Southern and Western Districts of Texas

Activities

- Member of the Oil, Gas and Energy Resources Section of the State Bar of Texas
- Member of the Oil, Gas and Mineral Law Section of the Austin Bar Association
- Fellow, Texas Bar Foundation
- Community and Charitable Organizations
  - Member, SMU Dedman School of Law Emerging Leader Board
  - Former Member of the Board of Trustees of The Contemporary Austin and the Arthouse at the Jones Center