



Partner

DEBBIE LEONARD

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Phone 775.788.2000 Fax 775.788.2020

Areas of Practice

Appellate Practice; Water, Environmental & Natural Resources; Mediation; Commercial & Complex Litigation; Real Estate

Bar Admissions

Nevada
California

Education

J.D., University of California, Berkeley School of Law (Boalt Hall), 2002

M.A., Education, University of California, Santa Cruz, 1997

B.A., with honors, Zoology, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1991

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Debbie Leonard is a partner with McDonald Carano and co-chair of the firm's Appellate Practice Group. Based in the firm's Reno office, her practice focuses on litigation and appeals deriving from real property, land use and natural resource disputes. She regularly represents clients in both regulatory and litigation matters related to land, water and other natural resources.

Before beginning her law practice, Ms. Leonard worked for the United States Forest Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service on resource management issues and environmental assessment. She also taught science at the secondary and college levels. Prior to joining the firm, she served as a Law Clerk to the Honorable David W. Hagen in the United States District Court, District of Nevada.

Appellate Practice

Ms. Leonard represents clients before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, Nevada's appellate courts and the California courts of appeal on a host of appellate matters, including direct appeals, writ practice, petitions for review and amicus briefs. She also handles appeals from administrative decisions. From ensuring that appellate issues are properly preserved in the trial court, to delivering succinct and persuasive arguments in briefs and at oral argument before appellate courts, Ms. Leonard guides clients in all aspects of appeals.

Water, Environment & Natural Resources

Having the unique experience of working as a biologist before becoming a lawyer, Ms. Leonard is well positioned to assist clients with a host of water, land and other resource-related issues. She litigates water and real property disputes and handles water rights transactions. Through a combination of effective advocacy and negotiation, she helps clients with permitting and regulatory matters before Nevada and federal agencies. She also advises clients regarding environmental due diligence.

Mediation

Ms. Leonard is a trained mediator and has successfully assisted parties to resolve all manner of disagreements, from complex business litigation to attorney-client fee disputes. With her practice area focus in water and real property law and her background in natural resource management, she is particularly suited to mediate conflicts between and among land owners, water rights holders, environmental advocates, public agencies, utilities and the agricultural community.

Offices

LAS VEGAS
2300 West Sahara Avenue, Suite 1200
Las Vegas, NV 89102
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RENO
100 West Liberty Street, Tenth Floor
Reno, NV 89501
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Ms. Leonard serves as a Nevada Supreme Court settlement judge and is a volunteer mediator and arbitrator for the Nevada State Bar's Fee Dispute Resolution program.

Commercial & Complex Litigation

Ms. Leonard litigates a variety of civil matters in state and federal court in both Nevada and California. As a former federal law clerk, she is particularly skilled in procedural issues before the United States District Court. She has had considerable success with motion practice, which has repeatedly led to the resolution of her clients' cases without the expense of trial.



AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Super Lawyers – “Mountain States Super Lawyers”

“Top 20 Under 40” award for Young Professionals in the Reno-Tahoe Area

Nevada Business Magazine, “Legal Elite”

Women of Achievement Award Recipient

Martindale-Hubbell AV® Preeminent™ Peer Review Rated



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Lead Editor, *Nevada Appellate Practice Manual* (2016 & 2018)

Nevada Supreme Court Settlement Judge

Chair, Appellate Litigation Section of State Bar of Nevada (2013 – 2014)

Volunteer Mediator and Arbitrator, Nevada State Bar Fee Dispute Mediation and Arbitration Panel

Advisory Board, Nevada Land Trust

Pro Bono Legal Counsel, Tahoe Pyramid Bikeway

Lawyer Representative, U.S. District Court, District of Nevada (2016-2018)

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