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Drawn to the west

SPIELMAN BRINGS LONG RESUME TO HELP ENVIRONMENT, INDUSTRY

BY CATHY PROCTOR

cproctor@bizjournals.com

303-803-9233, @CProctorDenBiz

Andy Spielman was in his element, working on natural resources and public policy at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, D.C., in the agency's office of policy, planning and evaluation, when he looked around and noticed something.

"I noticed that my boss, her boss and her boss were all lawyers," said Spielman, who these days is the co-head of the Denver office of Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr international law firm.

Spielman has had a major role in shaping the state's oil and gas regulations as a member, appointed by the governor in 2011, and currently the chairman, of the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, which oversees operations of the multibillion-dollar sector in the state.

He's also helped guide the state's air quality policies as a member since 2007, and currently the Chairman, of the Regional Air Quality Council. The council develops programs aimed at informing the public about air pollution, such as when ozone levels are too high, and what should be done to improve air quality.

Working at the EPA, Spielman had a masters degree in government administration from the University of Pennsylvania already under his belt. He'd worked at the city level, interned for a U.S. senator, interviewed for a job at the U.S. Forest Service, and was overseeing work in the 10 states



WilmerHale Partner Andy Spielman had a major role in shaping Colorado's oil and gas regulations.

that made up the EPA's three western regions.

So, he went to law school at Georgetown University – at night.

"I had a great eight years at EPA," Spielman said.

"I was at work all day, traveled a lot – to Seattle, San Francisco and Denver covering the EPA's three western regions – and I went to law school at night, thinking it would advance my public sector career."

But spending so much time in the West for work gave him the bug to be in the West full time.

"I wanted to live in the West and raise my family in the West," Spielman, 49, said.

Spielman met Tom Strickland, who was part of Denver's powerhouse law firm Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, and got a job in the firm's Denver office in 1998.

Six years later, Spielman moved to what is now Hogan Lovells in 2004 where he spent 11 years representing clients around the country – and working out the firm's Denver and Washington, D.C., offices.

In May 2015, Spielman joined WilmerHale and was once again back at work with Strickland, who was one of the founding members of WilmerHale's Denver office along with former Interior Secretary Ken Salazar.

Over the years, Spielman has been happy with the intersection of law and public policy, energy and the environment.

He's worked with ski areas on expansion plans, helped build 1,000 megawatts worth of wind farms on Colorado's eastern plains, and helped Newmont Mining craft a historic 1.5-million-acre voluntary, conservation agreement with state and federal authorities to help protect sagebrush ecosystems in Nevada.

"My practice now is focused on the administrative and regulatory components of resource development – whether its the recreation industry, energy industry, or the mining industry. My clients have goals and I try to help them get there," he said.

"I help private entities understand what it will take for the public agencies to say 'Yes,' what constraints the agencies have, the limits and the authorizations."

And his free time? Spielman reserves that for his family, his wife and four children – the oldest of which is a freshman at the University of Colorado-Boulder, with the youngest in preschool.

"We like to spend time together, we love the outdoors, so we're hiking, biking, tennis, family game nights, dinner on the patio ... You just carve out the time."