



Matthew W. Christen
Of Counsel

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Practice Groups
Land Use & Environmental Law

Bar Number
263612

Court Admissions
• U.S. District Courts:
 ◦ Central District of California

Education
Lewis and Clark Law School, JD, 2008

Western Washington University, BA, 1999

Practicing Since: 2009

Matthew (Matt) W. Christen advises and defends clients on some of the most influential land use and environmental matters across California, with experience developing critical infrastructure along the California coast. Matt brings more than a decade of experience with government at the California Coastal Commission and Air Resources Board where he advised both agencies on intricate permitting, compliance, and litigation matters regarding coastal, air quality, and CEQA issues giving him an in depth understanding of how to effectuate major projects in a complex regulatory environment.

This unique technical background helps clients develop progressive projects and regulatory frameworks that move California forward, like offshore wind farms along Northern California's coastline; statewide climate and air quality regulations; and CEQA litigation for transit programs that advance California's transition to zero-emissions.

Matt also served as lead land use attorney for the San Luis Obispo County Counsel's Office, defending County decisions on critical energy projects in court and advising key decision makers on land use policy, coastal development, and environmental compliance.

Matt understands how agencies evaluate coastal development, renewable energy proposals, and regulatory challenges. This perspective matters and allows our clients to successfully navigate California's complex regulatory processes, particularly when intersecting sensitive coastal resources and evolving energy policy.

Professional and Community Affiliations

- The State Bar of California, Member (2009–Present)
- Environmental Law Section of the State Bar of California, Diversity Committee Member (2018–2019)
- Bar Association of San Francisco, Environment, Land Use and Real Estate Section, Co-Chair (2010–2012)

Representative Experience

- **California Air Resources Board – Advanced Clean Trucks Regulation Litigation.** Assisted in the successful defense of a CEQA challenge to California’s Advanced Clean Trucks rule, a landmark regulation designed to accelerate the transition to zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles and reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions.
- **California Air Resources Board – Zero-Emission Off-Road Engine Regulation.** Served as lead legal advisor supporting development and adoption of regulations governing zero-emission off-road equipment. Work included CEQA compliance, rulemaking support, and coordination with engineers, scientists, and policymakers.
- **San Luis Obispo County – Phillips 66 Rail Spur Project Litigation.** Helped defend the County’s denial of a proposed rail spur project intended to transport crude oil by rail to a coastal refinery. The case involved claims under CEQA, the Coastal Act, and the Fifth Amendment.
- **California Coastal Commission – Offshore Wind and Federal Consistency Matters.** Advised senior staff and the Commission on federal consistency determinations under the Coastal Zone Management Act and state permitting considerations for offshore wind development and coastal infrastructure along the California coast.