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Crowell Mines Patton, EPA, DOI For 7 Enviro Attys

By **Allison Grande**

Law360, New York (August 19, 2009) -- Crowell & Moring LLP has bolstered its energy, climate change and resource development practices by snagging five partners from Patton Boggs LLP and two senior hires from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Department of the Interior.

The seven senior attorneys bring to Crowell & Moring's environment and natural resources group extensive knowledge of compliance and enforcement issues under several federal acts including the Clean Air Act, the Endangered Species Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Water Act and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act.

"These highly experienced lawyers will increase our ability to help clients meet regulatory requirements and navigate litigation challenges on their most vital natural resource development projects throughout the U.S. and elsewhere," said R. Timothy McCrum, Crowell and Moring's ENR group co-chair, in a statement.

Partner Kyle W. Parker, an energy lawyer and former Alaska assistant attorney general who comes to the firm from Patton Boggs, will head Crowell & Moring's new Anchorage, Alaska, office, which will officially open in the coming days.

The six other lawyers will be based in the firm's Washington office.

The opening of a new office to serve clients in the Pacific Northwest as well as the substantial addition to its practice group reflects the expanding scope of environmental law practice and a growing need for experienced litigators in these areas, according to Chet M. Thompson, the firm's ERN group co-chair and former EPA deputy general counsel.

“Our clients are responding to two of the most critical challenges facing America right now — concerns over climate change and the need to find and use energy within our borders,” he said.

Thompson added that the worlds of environmental law and natural resources were colliding every day, and the firm's newest additions had created a practice ready to serve that reality.

The two senior counsel hires, Michael Bogert and Robert Meyers, provide the firm with “expertise in areas that are very hot right now,” Thompson said.

Bogert, the former regional administrator of the EPA's Region 10 in the Pacific Northwest, dealt with ESA reform, climate change and water rights issues in his last position as counselor to Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne.

Meyers, a former deputy chief counsel for the U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee, oversaw implementation of the Clean Air Act and national air quality standards in his former role as acting assistant administrator for the EPA's Office of Air and Radiation.

Crowell & Moring also added Patton Boggs partner John C. Martin, that firm's former environmental group co-chair.

Martin, who specializes in the application of environmental regulation to the energy industry, has also worked as an attorney at DOI and the U.S. Department of Justice.

“We've had the pleasure of working side by side with Crowell & Moring on litigation matters for many years, and we are proud to join their team of highly sophisticated practitioners who are dedicated to helping corporations be upstanding environmental stewards at a time when the stakes couldn't be higher,” Martin said in a news release.

The other former Patton Boggs attorneys include Amy Chasanov, an environmental litigator with experience with NEPA and the Clean Water Act; Susan M. Mathiascheck, a recent deputy chair of the Patton Boggs litigation department; and Duane A. Siler, a litigator who advises industrial sector and energy clients on a variety of hazardous and toxic chemical issues.

Thompson said the firm was pleased to get experienced environmental lawyers that it had run across and competed with in the past, and that “at the end of the day, we decided that what we can offer clients collectively is pretty irresistible, so we decided to join forces.”

The new additions are part of the firm's series of environmental hires, which include the 2008 additions of Peter D. Robertson, former chief of staff of the EPA, and Elliot P. Laws, a former EPA assistant administrator.

Crowell & Moring has embarked on these hires at a time when other firms are trying to cut back, according to Thompson, to prepare for the changes in the expanding world of environmental law.

“We're confident we'll have to face these issues in the future, so we have to move forward and invest in the future now,” Thompson said.