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TRAILBLAZERS

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL

KYLE PARKER CROWELL & MORING LLP

PIONEER SPIRIT Kyle Parker grew up in Washington, D.C. around energy industry trade associations. He had been coming to Alaska since he was a kid, so when the *Exxon Valdez* ran aground, he took the opportunity to return. "My father taught me that you accomplish a lot more behind the scenes than you do as someone who is viewed at the front of an issue. Not being identified by a single issue or client has been valuable to me."

TRAILS BLAZED Spurred by the Exxon Valdez Spill, Alaska has been dealing with a broader set of environmental regulations since 1989. "The rest of the country has slowly followed the expansion of regulatory programs that has been our life since 1989." Based on his experience there, Parker has been able to help companies nationwide improve their permitting processes and better deal with regulators. Parker makes sure his team is working with the people writing the permit applications. "Before Deepwater Horizon, companies did not typically embed attorneys with their permitting staffs. But if you have environmental groups attacking your permits, and your attorneys were not involved on the front end, you will risk being stalled with adverse court decisions. Companies outside of Alaska are now using this strategy."

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS Parker expects an increased level of scrutiny from environmental groups and state and federal regulators in Alaska and elsewhere on all types of energy projects. "Those providing legal services to the proponents of these projects will have to work at the business level, and work more closely with lawyers, consultants and permit writers." He suggests that it's a manageable process if time and money are invested up front so that permits be defended against court challenges.

