

Robert D. Woods

PARTNER

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Credentials

- University of Chicago Law School
J.D., *with honors*
- University of Texas
B.A., *with Highest Honors*
Phi Beta Kappa
Eva S. Woods Unrestricted Presidential
Scholarship
- Admitted to Practice:
Texas
U.S. District Court for the Southern District of
Texas

Robert is an accomplished litigator who specializes in high-stakes disputes in the oil and gas industry. With a deep understanding of the industry and extensive experience in complex litigation, he handles royalty, lease termination, subsurface trespass, JOA, processing/gathering agreements, environmental contamination, surface use, and similar cases across the country.

Robert has presented opening statements as well as presented and cross-examined witnesses in significant trials and arbitrations. He also combines his trial experience with strategic counsel to help clients find solutions outside the courtroom or avoid disputes before they arise.

Ranked nationally in oil and gas litigation by *Chambers USA*, Robert is a sought-after speaker and author on legal issues affecting the oil and gas business, regularly publishing and presenting on emerging issues in the industry. He is recognized as a “Texas Rising Star” by Thomson Reuters’ *Super Lawyers* and named “One to Watch” in Commercial Litigation and Oil & Gas Law by *Best Lawyers in America*.

Robert is a member of the prestigious Institute for Energy Law’s 2nd Leadership Class for 2019-2020, one of only 40 professionals selected from around the country.

Experience

- *Columbia v. SWN* (Marshall County, W. Vir.) Secured favorable settlement for operator against claims of underpayment of an overriding royalty, after prevailing on key legal issues at the outset of the case.
- *Rounds v. Unbridled Resources* (W.D. Okla.) Secured favorable settlement for operator in a putative class action alleging failure to pay royalty on fuel gas, as well as underpayment of interest under a royalty statute, after filing motion to exclude the plaintiff’s expert witness.
- *Rhea v. Apache* (E.D. Okla.) Secured favorable settlement for operator in an already-certified class action alleging underpayment of royalty for breach of the implied covenant to market and alleged failure to pay royalty on fuel gas, after prevailing on key legal issues at summary judgment.

- *ETC Texas Pipeline v. Colgate Energy* (Harris County, Texas) Secured favorable settlement for midstream client in action for breach of a midstream dedication, after the producer's motion for summary judgment was denied.
- *Tapstone Energy v. Enable* (Oklahoma County, Okla.) Secured favorable settlement for midstream client against claims for breach of a gathering and processing agreement.
- *Titus Oil & Gas v. Novo Oil & Gas* (Eddy County, N.M.) Secured favorable settlement for client against claims for alleged forfeiture of interest under joint operating agreement.
- *Sierra Frac Sand v. CDE Global* (E.D. Tex.) Secured dismissal for forum non conveniens of a multi-million fraud and breach of contract lawsuit arising out of the sale of sand processing equipment.
- *Briggs v. Southwestern Energy* (Penn. Supreme Court) Assisted client in coordinating briefing in landmark appeal of subsurface trespass issues in the Marcellus Shale, including amici.
- *Chieftain Royalty v. Newfield* (E.D. Okla.) Secured favorable settlement for operator against a putative class action alleging underpayment of interest under a royalty statute.
- *Apollo v. Apache* (Midland County, Texas) Secured no evidence summary judgment on the eve of trial for operator against alleged multi-hundred million dollar claims under purchase and sale agreements and joint operating agreements related to carried interests and alleged failure to preserve leasehold.
- *Confidential Client*. Secured a favorable settlement for an overriding royalty interest owner related to the deduction of post-production costs in Oklahoma.
- *Confidential Client*. Secured favorable settlement in multi-million-dollar trespass to try title dispute in South Texas regarding retained acreage after summary judgment briefing.
- *Smith v. SWN* (E.D. Arkansas) Part of a team that secured a full defense jury verdict in a two-week \$300 million trial of a royalty underpayment class action related to an affiliate midstream contract.
- *Eagle Ford Royalty Cases*. Representation and settlement of over a dozen royalty claims at all stages of litigation in various South Texas jurisdictions.
- Numerous advisory matters relating to joint operating agreements, subsurface trespass, gas gathering/processing contracts, and royalty payment issues in multiple jurisdictions.

Professional Honors & Affiliations

- *Lawdragon*, "Lawdragon 500 Leading Energy Lawyers" 2025
- Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers in Texas for Oil & Gas Litigation, Nationwide (Band 3), 2025
- "Up & Coming" in Nationwide Oil & Gas Litigation, *Chambers USA: America's Leading Business Lawyers*, 2022-2024
- "Ones to Watch" in Commercial Litigation and Oil and Gas Law, *Best Lawyers in America*, 2021-2025

- “Associate to Watch,” in Texas Energy & Natural Resource Litigation, *Chambers USA: America’s Leading Business Lawyers*, 2020-2021
- “Texas Rising Star,” in Energy & Natural Resources by Thomson Reuters’ *Super Lawyers*, 2019-2023
- Houston Young Lawyers’ Association (Board of Directors, 2018-2019; Leadership Academy Co-Chair, 2017–2019)
- Institute for Energy Law (Advisory Board; Young Professionals Leadership Council, 2019-2021)
- Member: Institute for Energy Law 2nd Leadership Class, 2019-2020
- Member: Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation
- Member: Oil, Gas & Mineral Law Section, Houston Bar Association

Presentations & Publications

- “Onshore vs. Offshore – What Do You Need to Know,” Institute for Energy Law’s 7th National Young Energy Professionals’ Law Conference, March 27, 2024 (panelist)
- “Perspectives from Both Sides of Royalty Litigation – Operator and Landowner,” 21st Annual Energy Litigation Conference, November 9, 2022 (co-presenter)
- “Bluestone: Texas Supreme Court Adds to Law on Postproduction Costs and Analyzes Issue of First Impression on Free Use Clause,” *The Energy Dispatch*, Institute for Energy Law, June 2021
- “Royalty Litigation Update,” Houston Bar Association Oil, Gas & Mineral Law Section CLE, May 27, 2021 (co-presenter)
- “Be Careful What You Bargain For: A Litigator’s Perspective on Negotiating and Interpreting Oil and Gas Contracts in Texas,” TJOGEL Symposium, February 2021 (co-presenter)
- “Trends in Royalty Litigation in Texas, the Fifth Circuit, and Beyond,” 2019 TJOGEL Symposium (presenter)
- “Royalty Litigation and Class Actions in Texas and the Fifth Circuit,” *The Advocate*, Winter 2018 (co-author)
- “The Royalty Class Action Trial – Lessons Learned,” Institute for Energy Law 17th Annual Energy Litigation Conference, November 2018 (co-presenter)
- “Recent Developments Regarding the Discovery Rule and Fraudulent Concealment Doctrine,” Page Keeton Civil Litigation Conference, October 2016 (author and presenter)
- Young Energy Professionals General Counsel Forum, Institute for Energy Law, 2015-2017 (co-chair)
- “An Uncertain Fate for Oil and Gas Midstream Agreements,” *Law360*, February 2016
- “Are Modern ‘Compensatory’ Royalty Clauses Unenforceable Penalty Clauses? Five Factors to Guide the Analysis,” *Section Report of the Oil, Gas & Energy Resources Law Section*, State Bar of Texas, Spring 2016