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Experience

Ryan Hiete is a partner in the firm's Westlake Village office and is a member of the firm's Public and Environmental Law Practice Group. Mr. Hiete's practice covers the full spectrum of environmental law, including compliance, governmental environmental reviews and investigations, administrative hearings, real property transactions involving environmentally impacted sites, due diligence and litigation. Mr. Hiete typically handles cases involving, among others, the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"), the Clean Air Act ("CAA"), the Clean Water Act ("CWA"), California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, Proposition 65, the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act ("CERCLA"), the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act ("RCRA"), California's Hazardous Substances Account Act ("HSAA"), and most recently, California's new climate change-related law, AB 32. Mr. Hiete frequently interfaces with governmental agencies, including attorneys, officers and technical staff from the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the California Air Resources Board, the California Attorney General's Office, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office and Los Angeles City Attorney's Office, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control, various regional water quality control boards, the South Coast Air Quality Management District, the Office of State Fire Marshal, local fire departments, and health and safety departments of various counties and cities.

Mr. Hiete's environmental practice is focused on the representation of public entities. Mr. Hiete represents and has represented cities, school districts, public water districts, colleges and public health care centers. Although focused on public entities, Mr. Hiete also represents a wide variety of private entities, including private water companies, property owners and developers, large international corporations, industrial/manufacturing companies, commercial enterprises, private member organizations, family trusts and national banking institutions.

Concerning CEQA, Mr. Hiete has counseled clients on and assisted in the review and preparation of environmental impact reports and various other types of documentation prepared pursuant to CEQA. Mr. Hiete also has represented clients in litigation defending and challenging environmental documents under CEQA.

Mr. Hiete also has extensive experience in other areas of environmental law, including surface and groundwater pollution cases, contaminated soil and soil gas-related issues, storm water discharge, air emissions and permitting, climate change/global warming-related issues, hazardous waste management, energy, environmental insurance, brownfields, real estate development and construction projects, landfills, asbestos, access issues, above and underground storage tank cases,

zoning and land use planning, drafting environmental legislation, and handling responses to federal, state and local criminal cases. Mr. Hiete's recent work on such matters includes the following:

- Representation of a large school district in matters related to the district's massive school construction program. Specifically, Mr. Hiete represents the district on a wide variety of environmental and land use-related issues, including: (i) air quality issues, including compliance with California's global warming law AB 32; (ii) review of potential school sites and assisting in the review of environmental impact reports and other environmental planning documents; (iii) negotiating environmental provisions of purchase and sale agreements; (iv) access agreements; (v) railroad safety assessments and other health risk assessments; (vi) pipeline-related issues, including pipeline removal projects; (vii) storm water projects; (ix) analysis of issues related to diesel emissions from the district's bus fleets; (x) condemnation of environmentally impacted properties; and, (xi) numerous groundwater pollution cases.

- Representation of several public and private water agencies (including cities and water purveyors) on the following issues: (i) complex groundwater pollution investigations and cleanups; (ii) litigation related to soil and groundwater pollution (including chemicals such as perchlorate, petroleum hydrocarbons, MTBE, PCBs and VOCs); (iii) administrative hearings related to soil and groundwater pollution; (iv) applications for funding under California's UST Cleanup Fund; and, (v) compliance with CERCLA's National Contingency Plan.

- Representation of clients on global warming/climate-change related issues, including extensive analysis of California's AB 32.

- Representation of certain employees of large international oil/energy corporation in a federal criminal investigation at major port facility in California. The issue in the ongoing investigation involves alleged significant air emissions violations, among other issues.

- Representation of large property developers and corporations on numerous issues, including: (i) asbestos surveys and removal; (ii) due diligence review of environmental conditions of properties; and (iii) contract negotiations (purchase and sale, leases, subleases, drafting environmental provisions, access and lender reviews).

- Representation of medical/health facilities on pollution-related issues, to ensure that sensitive receptors of the medical facilities are properly accounted for and protected.

- Representation of industrial plating facilities on compliance and regulatory issues, including: (i) alleged violations of air permits; (ii) air permit renewals; (iii) response to civil and criminal proceedings concerning alleged unlawful air emissions and water discharge; (iv) Prop 65-related cases; (v) alleged violations of hazardous waste laws (e.g., RCRA); (vi) efforts to close facilities under oversight of governmental agencies; and (vii) purchase and sale of plating operation facilities.

- Representation of the emergency response company that handled the response to the *M/V Cosco Busan* oil spill in San Francisco, California. This matter involves representing the client in multiple federal, state and local investigations, including proceedings filed by the United States Department of Justice, the United States Coast Guard, the National Transportation Safety Board and the California Department of Fish and Game Office of Oil Spill Prevention and Response.

In 1999, before beginning his private practice, Mr. Hiete acted as legal counsel for the Belmont Learning Center Commission, a commission charged with reviewing and analyzing all of the environmental and safety issues associated with the then-planned Belmont Learning Complex, a $200 million proposed joint use project in Downtown Los Angeles. In this capacity, Mr. Hiete reviewed all of the legal issues associated with the project, including CEQA, CERCLA, nuisance, trespass, Prop. 65, the CWA and CAA and seismic-related issues. Mr. Hiete also worked with the individual commissioners in analyzing environmental legal issues and interfacing with experts called to testify before the commission.

While attending McGeorge Law School, Mr. Hiete attended Loyola Law School in 1999 as a visiting student, where he was on the staff of the *Loyola Law Review*. Mr. Hiete is currently a member of the Executive Committee of Los Angeles County Bar Association, Environmental Section, and in 2007, the Executive Committee appointed him to be the Section's Global Warming Advisor. He also is a former Board member of the Mono Lake Committee, an organization charged with protecting Mono Lake and the Mono Eco-basin. Mr. Hiete was selected a 2012 Southern California Rising Star by *Super Lawyers Magazine*.

Education

- University of Colorado at Boulder, B.A., 1994
- McGeorge School of Law (University of the Pacific), J.D., 1999

Bar Admissions

- State Bar of California

Practice Area

- Environmental & Public Law