

# Bill Ross

Of Counsel



#### CONTACT INFO

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#### OFFICE

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Bill Ross is the former Secretary of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and uses his experience in private practice and state government to counsel clients on a wide range of projects, cases and initiatives related to environmental law, natural resources, and sustainability.



#### PRACTICE AREAS

Environmental

#### INDUSTRIES

Agribusiness  
Banking, Investment & Financial  
Services  
Construction & Development  
Manufacturing  
Not-for-Profits  
Real Estate  
Technology  
Transportation  
Utilities

#### EDUCATION

University of Virginia School of Law  
J.D., 1972  
Davidson College  
B.A., 1969

#### BAR & COURT ADMISSIONS

North Carolina  
4th Circuit  
NC Courts  
Middle District  
Eastern District

## MY PRACTICE

### ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Bill led the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources as the agency's secretary from 2001-2009. The department in those years included 27 different divisions (environmental, natural resources, educational, and administrative), managed an annual budget of approximately \$1 billion, and had 4,000 permanent and 2,300 seasonal employees. In addition, Bill was director of legal affairs for the agency from 1979-1984. Having returned to Brooks Pierce in 2009 where he had previously (1984-2001) helped to develop the firm's environmental practice, Bill now focuses as a lawyer and consultant on projects, cases and initiatives in environmental law, environmental health, natural resource conservation, military readiness, and sustainability.

In 2017, he served briefly as acting secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality. In so doing, he became both the longest and shortest serving secretary of the department.

Bill served as a visiting professor in environmental science and policy at the Duke University Nicholas School of the Environment from 2010-2014.

### NATURAL RESOURCES LAW

Bill is a consultant through Texas A&M University to the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program at the U.S. Department of Defense and through North Carolina State University to the NC Sentinel Landscapes Partnership. Both programs seek to advance multiple interests (including working lands, conservation, and national defense) through innovation and collaboration.

## HONORS

Recognized by his peers for inclusion in *Business North Carolina's* "[Legal Elite](#)" in Environmental Law (2011, 2014-2015)

Received the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, presented by the Governor of NC (2008)

Received the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal, Department of the Army (2008)

Received the 2008 Marvin Collins Outstanding Planning Award, NC Chapter of the America Planning Association

Received the [Pelican Award, North Carolina Coastal Federation](#) (2003)

Received the 2003 [Environmental Excellence Award, Federal Highway Administration](#) (presented to senior leadership at NC DENR and NC DOT)

Received the 2003 [Clean Air Excellence Award, Regulatory/Policy Innovations, US EPA](#) (presented to the State of NC and multiple partners)

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Chair, U.S. [EPA National Advisory Council on Environmental Policy & Technology](#), 2012-present

Co-Chair, [Research Triangle Environmental Health Collaborative](#), 2012-present

Vice Chair, Board of Trustees, [Environmental Working Group](#), 2010-present

Member, Board of Trustees, [Friends of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences](#), 2009-present

Vice Chair, Board of Directors, [North Carolina Audubon](#), 2014-present

Member, Board of Directors, [North Carolina Botanical Garden Foundation](#), 2014-present

Member, Board of Directors, [Johnson Service Corps](#), 2014-present

Former Chair, [North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority](#), 2009-2013

Former Member, Board of Trustees, [North Carolina Global TransPark Authority](#), 2012-2013

Member, [North Carolina Bar Association](#), 1973-present

Founding chair, section council member, and member, [Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Law Section, North Carolina Bar Association](#), 1987-present

Member, [American Bar Association](#), 1973-present

Organizer and speaker, Environmental Law and Health, Conservation & Sustainability Programs, 1980-present

## PUBLICATIONS & MEDIA

Int J Chron Obstruct Pulmon Dis. 2014; 9: 613–627.  
Published online Jun 16, 2014. doi: [10.2147/COPD.S59995](#)  
PMCID: PMC4075234

**Long-term dynamics of death rates of emphysema, asthma, and pneumonia and improving air quality**  
[Julia Kravchenko](#), [Igor Akushevich](#), [Amy P Abernethy](#), [Sheila Holman](#), [William G Ross, Jr.](#), and [H Kim Lyerly](#)

Environ Health Perspect; DOI:10.1289/ehp.1408542

**Climate Change and Public Health in North Carolina: A Unique State Offers a Unique Perspective**  
Leah Devlin, Mikey Goralnik, William G. Ross Jr., Kimberly Thigpen Tart

2013 North Carolina Environmental Legislation Summary, August 1, 2013

Ross Appointed to National Environmental Council, April 10, 2012

Brooks Pierce Presents Seminar on State of Sustainability, July 14, 2011

State of Sustainability Event, June 22, 2011

Ross Joins Raleigh Office of Brooks Pierce, September 3, 2010