

# Bill Ross

## Of Counsel



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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.

## 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.

### 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  
US Court of Appeals  
4th Circuit  
US District Court - North Carolina  
Middle District  
Eastern District

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

Moderator, "Beyond Easements-Getting Communities Excited about Sentinel Landscapes," Sustaining Military Readiness Conference, St. Louis, MO, August 2018

Moderator, " Unconventional Partnerships: Sustaining the Future of Military Readiness," Sustaining Military Readiness Conference, St. Louis, MO, August, 2018

Int J Chron Obstruct Pulmon Dis. 2014; 9: 613-627.

Published online Jun 16, 2014. doi: [10.2147/COPD.S59995](https://doi.org/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

## SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Brooks Pierce Attorney Bill Ross Moderates Two Panels at Sustaining Military Readiness Conference in St. Louis, September 25, 2018