

5/5/14



## Oil and Gas Expert Resources for Private Landowners

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This publication is intended to help private landowners who need assistance when negotiating a mineral lease (primarily oil and gas) on their property. Listed below is a brief listing of legal services that are available for hire as well as some informational type of resources that are available at little or no cost (i.e. through the Internet, etc.)

The **first part** of this document contains a listing of the names of attorneys and law firms that can provide legal services as it pertains to oil and gas laws. The attorneys were contacted and asked if they were currently actively representing landowners in oil and gas matters.

This list is merely provided as a starting point for landowners searching for legal counsel relating to oil and gas leasing. Negotiating a mineral lease that truly protects the interests of a landowner involves both legal and technical knowledge of the crude oil and natural gas industry in Michigan. Therefore, in selecting legal counsel, landowners may wish to verify that the potential law firm has experience in working with landowners concerning oil and gas leasing (e.g. ask for references of previous landowner clients that they helped with negotiating an oil & gas lease). Landowners may also wish to ask whether said legal counsel is currently representing or on retainer to any of the oil and gas companies seeking to contract with the landowners in the area.

The **second part** of this document contains a listing of informational resources available at little or no charge (i.e. through the Internet, MSU Extension, etc.) that landowners may wish to consult to see if any of these sources can provide answers to their questions about oil and gas leasing.

### **It's All in the Lease Language ...**

MSU Extension advises landowners that a lease to extract minerals from underneath your land is a legally binding document. Be sure you know what the lease language really means! When negotiating a lease, a landowner should be sure to focus on more items (e.g. damage clauses, etc.) than just the monetary rewards (i.e. royalty and per acre lease payments) that they will receive. Therefore, be sure you completely understand everything contained in the lease (and its consequences) **before** signing it. If in doubt, a landowner may wish to seek legal counsel or do further research on their own. Hopefully, the information provided here can help landowners to "wade through" the often confusing and arduous process of leasing.

*\* These names are being provided as a public service. MSU Extension makes no claims as to the completeness of this listing nor is MSU Extension endorsing any of the individuals or law firms listed below. Furthermore, any legal firm that can document that their organization provides such legal services to landowners can ask to be added to this list (see mailing address above).*

## Legal Services

Mr. David L. Leonardson  
114 E. Main Street  
Suite B, P.O. Box 1705  
Gaylord, MI 49735  
989-732-7724

Susan Hlywa Topp, P.L.C.  
213 E. Main Street  
Gaylord, MI 49735  
989-731-4014

Stefan J. Scholl, Attorney at Law  
Stefan J. Scholl, P.C.  
3280 Woods Way, Ste #4  
Petoskey, MI 49770  
231-347-3836

Philip R. Rosi  
Rosi & Gardener P.C.  
735 S. Garfield Avenue, Ste 202  
Traverse City, MI 49686  
231-941-5878

Jeffrey Jocks  
Olson & Bzdok, P.C.  
420 E. Front Street  
Traverse City, MI 49686  
231-946-0044

Mr. Peter J. Zirnhelt, P.C.  
Zirnhelt, Bowron & Wiggins, P.L.C.  
400 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Traverse City, MI 49684  
231-946-8630

Joe Quandt  
Zimmerman, Kuhn, Darling, Boyd, Quandt & Phelps PLC  
412 S. Union Street  
P. O. Box 987  
Traverse City, MI 49685  
231-947-7900

John Lynch  
Lynch Gallagher  
555 North Main St. P. O. Box 1279  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858  
517-803-4361

David McCurdy, Michael Figliomeni  
& Nathan Piwowarski  
McCurdy Wotila & Porteous, P.C.  
120 W. Harris Street  
Cadillac, MI 49601  
231-775-1391  
Fax -231-775-1391

David Porteous  
McCurdy Wotila & Porteous P.C.  
4393 220<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Reed City, MI 49677  
231-832-3231  
Fax: 231-832-3341

Mark Pehrson PC  
409 West Ludington Ave.  
Ludington, MI  
231-843-3709

Doug Springstead  
Springstead Law Offices, PC  
214 Washington St.  
Hart, MI 49420  
231-873-4022

Mr. Henry Knier, Jr.  
Smith, Martin, Powers & Knier, P.C.  
900 Washington Ave., P. O. Box 219  
Bay City, MI 48707-0219  
989-892-3924

Trent C. Hilding, ESQ  
6824 E. Lake Montcalm Rd  
Edmore, MI 48829  
989-427-3436

Law Offices of Lawrence M. Elkus, Prof. Corporation  
30833 Northwestern Highway, Ste 204  
Farmington Hills, MI 48334  
248-539-3232  
Fax: 248-53-9191

David G. Moore  
403 South Superior St.  
Albion, MI 49224-0660  
517-629-5576

## **Legal Services (cont.)**

Michael C. Haines  
Or John M. DeVries  
Mika Meyers Beckett & Jones, PLC  
900 Monroe Avenue, NW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 632-8000

Martin J. Kamprath  
Lennard, Graham & Goldsmith, P.L.C.  
222 Washington Street  
Monroe, MI 48161-2146  
(734) 242-9500

Aaron Bowron  
Zirnhelt, Bowron & Wiggins, P.L.C.  
400 E. 8<sup>th</sup> St.  
Traverse City, Michigan 49684  
231-946-8630

Scott A. Storey  
Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, P.C.  
313 South Washington Square  
Lansing, MI 48933

Michael J. Daray  
Law Weathers; 800 Bridgestone Place  
333 Bridges St. NW; Grand Rapids, MI 49504  
Phone 616-459-1171

Andy Richards  
Smith-Bovill PC  
140 West Tuscola Street, Suite B  
Frankenmuth, MI 48734  
989-652-9923

## **Informational Resources**

### **Leasing Consultants (not attorneys)**

Lynn Gould  
Clare, MI  
989-386-3594

### **On the Internet...**

Pennsylvania State Natural Gas	<a href="http://extension.psu.edu/natural-resources/natural-gas">http://extension.psu.edu/natural-resources/natural-gas</a>
FracFocus chemical disclosure registry	<a href="http://fracfocus.org/">http://fracfocus.org/</a>
Oil and Gas Leases	<a href="http://www.oil-gas-leases.com">www.oil-gas-leases.com</a>
National Association of Royalty Owners	<a href="http://www.naro-us.org/">http://www.naro-us.org/</a>
Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment Gas, Oil and Minerals	<a href="http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10368_11800_46637---,00.html">http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10368_11800_46637---,00.html</a>
Michigan Oil and Gas Industry News	<a href="http://www.michiganoilandgas.org/Publications.aspx">http://www.michiganoilandgas.org/Publications.aspx</a>

## **MSU Extension**

Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) website [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/oil\\_and\\_gas](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/oil_and_gas). Documents include "Grant of Right of Way Information for Pipelines, Power Lines, Etc.," "Landowner Information for Oil/Gas/Mineral Leases," Bulletin E2124, Seismic Testing on Your Property and many more.

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