



SOUTHERN UTE INDIAN TRIBE

Tribal Water Attorney

Closing Date

Position closes at 5:00 pm Mountain Standard Time on 10/29/2020

Job Location

Ignacio, CO

How to Apply

Please apply online at <https://careers.southernute.com/pfund>

POSITION SUMMARY:

Under the supervision of the Legal Department Director, attorney will serve as a member of the Tribe's Legal Department, with principal responsibility for representing the Tribe on water matters. Where time allows, the attorney will represent the Tribe in other matters that require the Legal Department's attention, including code review and drafting, litigation, contract review, and employment matters.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Evaluates potential opportunities and threats associated with the Tribe's water rights portfolio.
2. Stays abreast of State and Federal water law changes, informing necessary legal and Tribal staff and recommending action when needed.
3. Advocates and lobbies, individually and with the Tribe's lobbyists, on State and Federal water policy and legislation that impacts tribal water.
4. Identifies and evaluates opportunities to secure and utilize tribal water rights for the benefit of the Tribe and its membership.
5. Assists technical staff in resume review, including filing statements of opposition.
6. Represents the Tribe in Water Court.
7. Represents tribal interests at local, State, and Basin level.
8. Negotiates, drafts, and presents ditch easements, rights-of-way, and carriage agreements.
9. Mentors and educates tribal technical staff on water law.
10. Works with outside engineering staff on evaluating modeling assumptions and guidelines for representing current and future tribal water use.
11. Works with technical staff to evaluate potential water storage needs.
12. Works with Bureau of Indian Affairs, ditch companies, water users' associations, Water Conservancy Districts, Pine River Irrigation District, local water commissioners, OM&R Associations, and state engineer's offices.
13. Represents Tribe on San Juan River Recovery Implementation Program if requested.
14. Represents the Tribe in Statewide planning efforts and works with the Colorado Water Conservation Board.
15. Participate in tribal water organizations, partnerships, and initiatives, such as the Ten Tribes Partnership and the Water and Tribes Initiative.
16. Reviews routine legal matters when requested, including, but not limited to, employment agreements, contracts, personnel actions, service agreements, construction contracts, rights-of-way requests, real estate matters, home ownership documents, summonses and garnishments.
17. Provides legal representation, advice and assistance to Tribal Council, Tribal Department Directors and supervisors, and tribal staff, as needed.

18. Consults with Legal Department Director on decisions related to strategy, legal positions, disposition of cases, and matters impacting tribal sovereignty.
19. Maintains strict confidentiality at all times.
20. Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with Tribal Officials, Tribal Court Judges, Tribal staff and managers, Tribal members, other attorneys representing the Tribe, representatives of other jurisdictions and water-related organizations, and the public.
21. Maintains professionalism and operates at all times within ethical mandates.
22. Represents the Tribe in tribal, state and/or federal courts, except with regard to complex litigation affecting jurisdiction or in specialized areas outside the attorney's areas of expertise.
23. Works within the Tribal Code, Constitution, Tribal Personnel Policies and Procedures, and other program guidelines and requirements.
24. Provides litigation support to the Tribe's outside counsel in matters involving the Tribe or affecting tribal interests, when directed.
25. Attends Tribal Council meetings, as directed, to provide updates, legal input, and advice.
26. Attends staff meetings and trainings as requested.
27. Adheres to the American Bar Association's Model Rules of Professional Conduct and maintains strict confidentiality at all times.
28. Performs other job-related duties as assigned.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

- Must have graduated from an accredited law school.
- Must be licensed to practice law in one or more state jurisdictions.
- Must have at least 5 years of experience practicing water law as an attorney.
- Must have working knowledge of federal Indian water rights and how they interact with State rights.
- Must have working knowledge of Colorado water law and Law of the Colorado River.
- Must have working knowledge of Endangered Species Act.
- Must be in good standing in the jurisdictions in which he or she is admitted to practice law.
- Must be licensed to practice law in the State of Colorado and be in good standing with the Colorado Supreme Court or eligible to waive into admission in Colorado within a year of hiring.
- Must have an understanding of legal reference resources, research techniques, practices and procedures used to prepare and present an effective case in court or administrative proceedings.

- Must have a valid Driver's License for state of residency and be insurable through the Tribal Vehicle Insurance policy.
- Must pass a thorough background check including criminal history, fingerprint check, pre-employment drug test, and professional references demonstrating a record of reliability and professionalism.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Good understanding of Tribal jurisdiction and Indian Law.
- Experience litigating cases in the Colorado Water Courts.

HIRING PREFERENCE:

Native American preference; all applicants welcome to apply.