

TRAILBLAZERS

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL

TERESA A. HILL

K&L GATES LLP

PIONEER SPIRIT Teresa Hill grew up in the West in a family of loggers and dairymen, where her father helped build coal-fired power plants. "But we also spent weekends camping, fishing and hiking. So the need for the balance was apparent very early." She went to law school and pursued an environmental and resources certificate.

TRAILS BLAZED Hill became involved in wind projects about 10 years ago. "Traditionally, most renewable agreements were among developers and utilities, who were buying to meet renewable portfolio standards." But three or four years ago, major corporations started buying renewable energy directly to meet their own sustainability goals. She works with the Business Renewables Center, which educates companies on how accomplish these direct purchases. "Companies were approaching us wanting to buy renewable energy, but they were often limited because of their diverse load or utility regulations. Deal structures, like the virtual power purchase agreement, work around those barriers to help companies get these transactions done and meet their goals."

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS Activity such as Oregon passing a clean energy and transition bill, the Paris Accord and the Clean Power Plan, even with delays and complications, allows for optimism around renewables. "To answer questions of long-term sustainability risk and transfer to a low-carbon economy, companies are buying renewable energy now." While the actual number of companies currently doing so is small, it will become a cultural norm for companies beyond the Fortune 100. "It will be a combination of more innovative deal structures and engaging utilities even more to allow this."

