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AN ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY LAW PRACTICE

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Manko, Gold, Katcher & Fox Creates New Networking Opportunities Empowering Women in Environmental Law



Philadelphia, PA (May 2, 2017) – Continuing the firm’s history of advancement and advocacy of opportunities to women in the law, Manko, Gold, Katcher & Fox Partner Suzanne (Shoshana) Schiller has spearheaded a new initiative to bring together women who practice in the niche area of complex Superfund litigation.

It began when Schiller noticed that, more and more, the disembodied voices on her Superfund conference calls were female ones. In an area of the law where men still dominate, this was significant -- decisions affecting clean-ups costing hundreds of millions of dollars were being discussed and debated mostly by women working across the country who had never met. "There was one particular lawyer, Michelle Rosenthal of the Veris Law Group in Seattle, who I really wanted to meet, particularly after we had sparred and resolved a particularly difficult issue in one of the cases," Schiller relates. "She seemed to feel the same way, because not soon after, she emailed that she was coming to New York and suggested that we get together. And she dangled a ticket to *Hamilton*, so that sealed the deal." From there, Schiller and Rosenthal began reaching out to the women on the phone calls, and the response was overwhelmingly

positive. Thus a loose collective of women whose practices include representing major national and international companies in Superfund case became the Women of CERCLA.

The group's first gathering was held in March 2017 just before the American Bar Association's Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources' 46th Spring Conference in Los Angeles. Approximately 25 women, both in-house and outside counsel, enjoyed lunch and conversation at a small restaurant in Hollywood. "There's no question that attorneys work better together, and even litigate against one another better, when they know each other," Schiller explained. The networking that began at the lunch continued through the three-day conference that followed, with green and white "Women of CERCLA" tote bags spotted throughout the conference venue. More than one participant commented that they felt more connected to the conference and to the attendees as a result of the lunch, and that connection expanded outward to attorneys in other practice areas.

"In retrospect, the group's formation was a natural next step for many of us who have worked together for years by phone, but had never met in person," Rosenthal explained. "The gathering was an amazing opportunity to deepen those existing professional relationships and to spend time with women we already considered colleagues, but over time have come to think of as long-distance mentors and friends."

Schiller and Rosenthal are committed to making sure that these events continue and have already begun exploring options for getting together again later this year and next. The group is expected to grow as CERCLA lawyers continue to join its ranks and explore opportunities to share ideas, debate legal issues, collaborate on cases, mentor one another, and provide mutual support.

MGKF concentrates its practice in environmental, energy, safety, and land use law and litigation. It represents clients ranging from Fortune 100 corporations to small, privately held enterprises, both in the Mid-Atlantic region and on a national basis. MGKF is honored to be the top-rated law firm, since 2011, in the Top Workplaces surveys by the Philadelphia Inquirer, Daily News and Philly.com and has been recognized by Law360 as one of the top 20 Best Law Firms for Female Partners in the nation. Offices are located at: 401 City Avenue, Suite 500, Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania; 535 Route 38, Suite 145A, Cherry Hill, New Jersey; and at 25 West Third Street, Suite 303, Williamsport, Pennsylvania. For additional information, visit www.mankogold.com or call 484-430-5700, 856-317-1299, or 570-567-7325.

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