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# MVPs: Latham's Janice Schneider And Stacey VanBelleghem

By **Gautama Mehta**

*Law360 (November 12, 2026, 4:00 PM EST)* -- Janice Schneider and Stacey VanBelleghem of Latham & Watkins LLP's environmental practice won back-to-back high-stakes victories for Danish wind developer Orsted, beating federal stop-work orders at two of its U.S. offshore projects and earning them a spot as two of the 2026 Law360 Environmental MVPs.

**Their biggest accomplishment:**

Schneider and VanBelleghem led the team at Latham & Watkins that secured critical relief for Orsted's Revolution Wind and Sunrise Wind projects, which are under construction off the coasts of Rhode Island and New York respectively, in the face of the Trump administration's crackdown on offshore wind energy.

Their first win came after the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management ordered Revolution Wind to halt construction in August 2025. Schneider and VanBelleghem persuaded the D.C. Circuit to issue a preliminary injunction reversing the order.

"We got that preliminary injunction on September 22, 2025, a month after the stop-work order, and it allowed construction of the project to resume, which was really critical — it's an approximately $6 billion project," VanBelleghem said.

Three months later, this experience proved extremely useful when BOEM issued similar stop-work orders on Dec. 22 to Revolution Wind, Sunrise Wind, and three other wind projects that Schneider and VanBelleghem did not represent.

The duo sprang into action on behalf of their clients.

"It's an enormous amount of work that needs to be done in a very short period of time and we had to move very, very quickly, because every day of delay is millions of dollars in lost costs," Schneider said.

The paperwork they had to immediately file included amending their complaint for Revolution Wind, filing a new complaint for Sunrise Wind, and compiling



declarations of the harms the projects were suffering from the delay.

Those harms were significant and costly.

"In Revolution, the company actually had a 3,000-ton piece of equipment on a barge in the Atlantic Ocean that was scheduled to be installed days after the stop work order came in," Schneider said.

"These matters really carried unusually high stakes," VanBelleghem said. "It's just so unprecedented for a fully permitted project in the middle of construction to face this kind of challenge."

Ultimately, all five of the wind farms won their cases, securing injunctions against the stop-work orders. The injunction for Revolution was granted on Jan. 12 and the injunction for Sunrise on Feb. 2 — restoring progress on a pair of projects that together, when complete, will generate enough electricity to power nearly 1 million homes.

VanBelleghem and Schneider both said their shared track record of working on fast-moving litigation together played a role in their success.

"The extensive experience and body of work that we had done — we've worked very closely together for many many many years — helped us to be ready to take up the moment when it happened," Schneider said.

"We have a lot of experience with emergency motions," VanBelleghem said, reminiscing about an all-nighter they pulled together on Valentine's Day, 2011, to fight a temporary restraining order against a client. "It is one of the areas where I just feel like we are at our best."

**Why they are environmental attorneys:**

Both VanBelleghem and Schneider had careers prior to attending law school that made environmental law a natural fit.

"I worked for seven years in the field of historic preservation, and I worked in a policy position in that field and I really got a unique perspective on how these laws shape our communities and how it balances a variety of interests," VanBelleghem said. "It really kind of felt like a natural progression for me in law school from historic preservation to environmental law."

That may have been the initial draw, but the reason she made a career in the specialty was its variety.

"What's kept me here — I've been practicing environmental law at Latham for 18 years — is the breadth of work," VanBelleghem said. "I'll often say I feel like I've had five or six different careers at my 18 years in this practice."

Schneider, meanwhile, was a marine biologist and environmental consultant before she became a lawyer.

"As part of my responsibilities, I would have to write National Environmental Policy Act required documents, I was doing Clean Water Act permitting and Endangered Species Act consultations, and so I got curious, and I thought, 'Well, gee, what is all of this law stuff about? Let me go to law school,'" Schneider said.

That move was initially intended as a temporary detour, but it stuck, she said.

"My whole plan was to go back into consulting after going to law school," Schneider said. "But I had a great opportunity right out of school with the U.S. Department of the Interior in public service, and it's kind of what kind of launched me on my legal career. That was 1992, and I haven't looked back, I've thoroughly enjoyed every single moment of it."

**What motivates them:**

Schneider said solving problems for clients and helping people in general are what motivate her.

"I also like building things. One of the things that I like about our practice is that we are working with people to develop critically needed large scale infrastructure and energy projects here in the United States," she said. "And particularly in the energy sector, I just really like working on something that can then actually be built and move forward and provide benefits to the community."

VanBelleghem said she, too, finds client relationships are part of what keeps her going.

"I really like the opportunities to really engage with clients," VanBelleghem said. "We get to work with so many different people across a client organization, and it feels like a really important responsibility, but also a privilege, that they've put their trust in us to help on their most important matters."

**Their advice for junior attorneys:**

VanBelleghem encourages junior attorneys "to have an open mind about trying something new."

"Particularly in the environmental practice, there are so many different statutes and disciplines and different types of matters that we work on," VanBelleghem said. "As a junior associate, I was often surprised that, when I maybe agreed to take something on because I felt like I had to, there was this new area of practice that I wouldn't have anticipated that I would find interesting and enjoy, and I was glad I had taken the opportunity."

Schneider said junior attorneys must have confidence in themselves and not be afraid to speak up and share opinions, "including and in particular on strategy."

"Certainly, you want to listen and hear what the more senior folks have to say, but as a more senior attorney myself, I always benefit from hearing what others who may have different perspectives think about certain things," Schneider said. "And if it's coming from a junior associate I appreciate it all the more."

**Other notable cases they've worked on:**

VanBelleghem pointed to her work advising Vistra on the environmental aspects of its acquisition of seven natural gas plants from Lotus Infrastructure Partners.

"That was an opportunity to take some of the experience that we have in regulatory and other matters and provide support in a really important transaction for a client," said VanBelleghem, who was lead attorney on the transaction.

Schneider touted the duo's ongoing litigation on behalf of Sable Offshore Corp.

"We've got a couple cases where environmental groups challenged certain agency approvals to allow production to resume on a platform offshore of California," Schneider said. "One case involving the development and production plan — we got that dismissed on standing ground. We have another case that's pending."

*--As told to Gautama Mehta. Editing by Amy Rowe.*

*Law360's MVPs are attorneys who have distinguished themselves from their peers over the past year through high-stakes litigation, record-breaking deals and complex global matters. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2026 MVP winners after reviewing nearly 1,000 submissions.*

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