



Speaker Bios



Michael Barron

Michael Barron brings to the law firm of Fletcher & Sippel many years of legal experience, focusing on commercial arbitrations, contract law, real estate law, FRA regulatory law, rail commerce and STB regulatory law, as well as state and local zoning law. He has appeared before the Surface Transportation Board, the Federal Railroad Administration, the Illinois Commerce Commission, the Wisconsin Commissioner of Railroads, as well as state courts in both Illinois and Wisconsin and the Federal District Court in Chicago. He has also worked extensively in the state legislative process in Illinois and Wisconsin, assisting legislative bodies and lobbyists in drafting rail-related legislation. In addition, he has worked with communities on rail expansion and construction projects to ensure their support for enhanced rail facilities. He specializes in ICCTA and FRSA preemption issues and in the interaction of rail services and operations with state and local laws.

Michael was born in Oak Park, Illinois. He received his undergraduate degrees from the University of Notre Dame, after which he served in the United States Navy for four years as a Surface Line Officer. Following his military service, Michael attended the University of Michigan where he received his J. D. and Masters of Public Policy Degree. Michael then joined the bankruptcy firm of Hollis and Johnson as an associate, until moving on to work as General Attorney for Wisconsin Central Ltd. When the two companies merged, Michael joined CN and served as Counsel until joining Fletcher & Sippel in 2005.

Ray Birkholz

Ray began his railroad real estate career in 1999 after 14 years in the Land Surveying Business. Ray has worked at CSX as a Project Engineer, utilizing his surveying experience to support various real estate functions including sales, acquisitions, marketing and disposition of property. Ray moved to the Sales and Leasing group in 2004 and managed real estate assets within an assigned territory. In 2009 Ray moved to the Asset Development group where he was responsible for management and development of select real estate. In early 2012 Ray moved to the Property Management Group to manage the CSX Private Crossing Management Program where he is responsible for the day to day activities of the program leading a cross-functional team.

Ray has degrees in Land Surveying, and Business Administration and holds an active Florida Professional Surveyor's license.

Tom Bushey

Tom Bushey is a graduate of Michigan Technological University with a degree in Land Surveying. Tom worked as a Land Surveyor and GIS Analyst in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area before joining Esri in 1992. With Esri Tom has supported customers in the government, utility and commercial industries as a Solution Engineer. For the last 6 years Tom has focused on supporting Class 1 Railroads in the adoption of GIS technologies.

Michele Caron

Michele has 30 years of management and engineering experience, including director and project manager positions for Land, Commercial Development and Environmental groups in land and energy consulting firms and inspection/ oversight for the Corps of Engineers. Michele is Pinnacle's Vice President of Environmental and Engineering Services in our Minneapolis office. She is responsible for leading the planning and engineering functions through land and rail project development process. She also manages operational systems and integrated strategies for environmental services and land design development for our growing list of large rail, industrial and commercial clientele. Michele has expertise in entitlement strategies, feasibility review, site planning and engineering, permitting, scheduling, construction services, project management program development and quality control. Projects also have included environmental documents and permits, traffic analysis, agency negotiations, pro forma development and LEED certification. Michele has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering from the US Military Academy at West Point, New York. She is registered as a Civil PE in MN, AZ, TN, IL, KS, OH, ND, SD, KY, MO, NE and MI, and is a LEED Accredited Professional.

Greg Fouks

With over two decades of entrepreneurial and leadership experience and a nationally recognized record of success, Greg Fouks is President of the James J. Hill Center (formerly the James J. Hill Reference Library). In this role, Fouks is responsible for carrying on the legacy of one of Minnesota's and America's most renowned entrepreneurs, James J. Hill, known as "The Empire Builder" and creator of the Great Northern Railway. Fouks and his team are assisting businesses and entrepreneurs in finding answers to their questions so they can initiate, grow and successfully innovate at their companies.

Previously he spent 12 years designing customized executive search programs tailored to fit the specific needs of financial service clients for TalentTracker and HRVaule Group. He assisted these organizations in hiring their senior management teams, including selecting over 150 CEO's and 400 executive team members.

Prior to his work in the executive search industry, he served in executive management capacities in several international consulting firms serving the healthcare and financial service industries. He began his career with the Minnesota Mutual Companies (Securian Financial) and worked extensively with financial service and credit union clients.

Fouks holds a bachelor's degree from St. Cloud State University.

Mark Holder

Mark began his railroad real estate career in 1987 with CSX Transportation, Inc. headquartered in Jacksonville, FL. He has experience in real estate valuation, environmental, asset management, sales, timber, development, and joint ventures. He currently is Director of Property Management with CSX. His responsibilities include property management; demolitions; private crossing management; sales to public agencies; management of timber sales and the Sight Clearance Encroachment Program.

Prior to joining CSX, Mark was an independent commercial appraiser and has been actively involved in the real estate profession since his graduation from Florida State University with a degree in real estate. He has been an appraiser in both the public and private sectors. He has earned professional designations, including the MAI, awarded by the Appraisal Institute. Mark has been qualified as an expert witness in both Circuit and Federal Courts and has served as a Special Master in property tax disputes. He is also a Florida licensed real estate broker.

Mark currently serves on the executive committee and as vice-chair of the real estate committee for ARDA.

Jim Holland

Jim Holland has over 25 years of experience in environmental engineering and is a registered P.E. in 10 states. In 1991, he founded Pinnacle Engineering, Inc and has served as CEO since the company's inception. Jim's tireless efforts and leadership have been the primary catalyst for growth and change within Pinnacle Engineering. Jim's experience spans the realm of service offerings. For the past 15 years, Jim has focused his practice on the Rail Road and infrastructure industries. Jim is a trusted partner that Rail and Industrial clientele call on in times of emergencies that have environmental issues. In this role, Jim is called upon to provide an immediate assessment of the environmental impacts of the situation and to relate this assessment to corporate management and to the regulatory community. Jim has responded to over 25 large scale environmental releases in the upper Midwest.

Over the last 3 years Jim has lead Pinnacle's expansion into the Bakken Oil Fields in Western North Dakota. Most notably, Jim is presently serving as "Principal in Charge" on a "Crude to Rail" facility project valued at over 50MM. The first shipments of crude will be shipped from the facility in early December.

Jim has a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Minnesota. He is licensed as a PE in MN, WI, NE, KS, SD, ND, IL, IN, IA and OH.

Stacey Hugo

Stacey Hugo joined Norfolk Southern Corporation in 2005 as Administrator, Political Programs where she was responsible for the management of the political action committee as well as coordination of lobbying compliance. In her current role as Manager of Community Outreach she handles grassroots, community relations and social media.

Stacey proudly serves on the South Norfolk Revitalization Commission and also as a Member of the Board of Directors for the Girl Scout Council of Colonial Coast and the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce (Norfolk Division).

Prior to joining Norfolk Southern, Stacey worked for United States Congressman Jon Porter (R-NV-03) and on the United States House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. She also spent nine years working for Ann Eppard Associates lobbying issues on behalf of such groups as: the Pennsylvania Turnpike, Port of Corpus Christi, and the city of Harlingen, Texas.

Stacey graduated from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art History. She is originally from Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Louis F. Jambois

The Port Authority's President and Chief Executive Officer has more than 30 years of experience in developing and implementing community financing programs at the federal, state and local levels. He has extensive experience with legislative policy creation, innovative development financing, and initiation of collaborative efforts between public and private entities.

A Minnesota State University Mankato graduate, Jambois began his development career with the City of Prior Lake in 1976. Jambois joined what is now the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) a year later. There he managed the state's Outdoor Recreation Grant Program. He also managed the State's Community Development Block Grant Program and the State's Enterprise Zone Program. He was a key organizer and financial leader of a Federal and State interdisciplinary disaster recovery effort that helped rebuild communities following several tornado and flood disasters. He helped create and launch the state-funded Contamination Cleanup Program and, later, the Redevelopment Program. He helped create and then launch Minnesota's Job Opportunity Building Zone (JOBZ) program. He chaired the Governor's Airport Community Stabilization Funding Task Force and helped create the Minnesota Affordable Homes Congress. Most recently, he served the interests of local communities as executive director of the Association of Metropolitan Municipalities.

Jambois graduated from the Minnesota State University, Mankato in 1975 with a bachelor's of science degree in Park and Recreation Resource Management. He earned a Master of Arts degree in Urban and Regional Studies from the university in 1981.

As president, Jambois will continue to leverage the Port's strengths in redevelopment, business and workforce development with similar expertise among a myriad of economic development partners and continue to develop and diversify Saint Paul and the East Metro.

Lena Kent

Lena Kent is the regional director public affairs. In this role, she leads BNSF's media and public affairs efforts in California, Arizona, Nevada and Utah.

Lena began her career in the railroad industry with BNSF Railway in 1996. During her career, she has held numerous positions with progressive leadership responsibility in Human Resources and Corporate Communications. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communication, California State University, San Bernardino.

Lena and her husband, Don, have two children and reside in Southern California.

Steven Neubauer

Steve has worn many hats in his 36+ year career with the BNSF; he worked his way up literally from cleaning locomotive toilets on the midnight shift to his current position as Director Institutional Safety. He currently manages a team responsible for BNSF's private

grade crossings consolidations/closures, reviewing crossing permit applications for access across ROW, training law enforcement and other emergency responders to work safely around railroad property, and providing community education awareness/Operation Lifesaver presentations to the general public. He received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management.

Eric Powell

Eric Powell was born in Indianapolis and grew up in Speedway, Indiana – near both the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and several rail lines, feeding his interest in all things horsepower-related.

He received a degree in Journalism and Public Relations from Ball State University and, following a one-year stint working for the Indiana General Assembly, embarked on a 14-year career in motorsports public relations. Thirteen of those years, from late 1997 through 2010, were at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Eric joined the Indiana Rail Road Company Public Affairs staff on Jan. 1, 2011, at first focusing on energy and transportation policy issues. In February 2012 he moved into the role of Manager of Economic Development, and “Intermodal” was added to his title and responsibilities in 2013 when Indiana Rail Road announced its trans-Pacific intermodal freight partnership with CN Rail.

Eric resides in Carmel, Ind., with his wife, Sara, and their two young children.

Madeline Roebke

Madeline Roebke is an attorney with Union Pacific Railroad. Madeline supports the real estate and engineering departments at Union Pacific. In addition to the drafting and negotiation of utility agreements, she assists with real estate acquisitions, sales, leases, condemnation proceedings, public project agreements, title issues and various other matters. Prior to joining Union Pacific, Madeline practiced with Kutak Rock LLP and was an in house attorney with the University of Nebraska system. Madeline graduated from the Concordia University in Nebraska and obtained her law degree from Washington University in St. Louis.

Alanna Strohecker

Alanna is a Project Manager at AECOM, primarily working on projects within the Freight Rail Market Sector at AECOM. Alanna has experience in the design, review, and construction of various passenger and freight railroad, highway, and utility design projects. Currently, Alanna serves as the Program Administrator for AECOM’s General Engineering Contract with CSXT Transportation where she is responsible both for the financial aspects of the entire contract across AECOM as well as the technical and managerial aspects of the public projects portion of the contract. Alanna and her team manage and review various public projects including proposed overhead bridge replacement/rehabilitations, undergrade structures, grade crossing modifications, utility installations and other adjacent construction projects with CSX Transportation from preliminary engineering design review through construction on behalf of the railroad. Alanna’s experience also includes the role as a project engineer for the program to process applications for construction of utility facilities on the Norfolk Southern right of way, coordinated with the NS real estate and engineering departments. The projects within the NS Pipe and Wire Program included longitudinal occupations and transverse crossings above, under, along, and across the Norfolk Southern tracks and property in 22 states.

From 2008 to 2010, Alanna served as a Regional Manager of Economic Development for BNSF Railway, covering the territory of North and South Dakota. Alanna managed programs from conception to construction for new rail served facilities including greenfield developments, industrial parks, and customer facility expansion projects. Alanna coordinated the efforts of various departments within BNSF including engineering, operations, service design, marketing, sales, and real estate in order to efficiently bring facilities on line for both the customer and BNSF. Alanna also previously worked as a Program Manager at Wabtec Railway Electronics, working with railroads and transit agencies to ensure customer satisfaction with Wabtec’s EPIC Air Brake System. In this role, she supervised systems, software, mechanical, and electrical personnel for specific program related tasks and facilitated all contact between the customer and Wabtec’s engineering and manufacturing departments.

Alanna received her Bachelors of Civil Engineering from Villanova University and her Masters of Business Administration from the University of Maryland. Alanna is a member of ARDA, AREMA, and WTS and serves as the Vice Chair of the Upper Merion Township Economic and Community Development Committee.

Will Wangerin

Will Wangerin has over 15 years in railroad experience and is currently responsible for the Business and Industrial Development for Canadian Pacific in the US. Will leads the coordination and development of new and existing facilities on CP rail lines across all industry sectors throughout the midwest.

Most of Will's background with Canadian Pacific has been in the Operations department, most recently as Operation Superintendent for North Dakota. He spent the last six years in North Dakota experiencing the growth of the Bakken Oil Fields in Western North Dakota first hand while managing rail operations across the state.

Will attended the University of Minnesota and studied Agriculture Industry and Marketing.

Kristine Williams

Kristine Williams has over 12 years of real estate experience. Kristine is currently responsible for managing Canadian Pacific's US real estate transaction team. This team is responsible for easements, leases, sales and acquisitions across the US.

Kristine received a Bachelor of Science degree in Real Estate Finance from the University of St. Thomas in St Paul, Minnesota and her MBA from the University of St. Thomas's Opus College of Business in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Kristine is currently the President of Canadian Pacific's Minneapolis chapter of Women on Track, is a member of Minnesota Commercial Real Estate Women and serves on the City of Ramsey Economic Development Authority.

Scott Zurn

Mr. Zurn is a Manager of Environmental Remediation at Canadian Pacific (CP), located in Minneapolis, MN. He has 18 years of experience in the environmental field, including work with regulatory entities, environmental consultants, and transportation firms. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Geology. Mr. Zurn began his career as an environmental consultant and for the last 3 years he has been with CP in a management position. Mr. Zurn is responsible for support of the corporate remediation program and risk management of CP's historically contaminated sites at various CP properties in the upper Midwest of the U.S. His duties also include management of CP's U.S. water supply well sealing program, as well as providing environmental support to internal and external clients relating to risk assessment, land transactions, agency relations, and litigation activities.