HUSCH BLACKWELL



Karin M. Jacoby, P.E.

SENIOR COUNSEL

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OVERVIEW

With a unique combination of engineering acumen, legal savvy and public service, Karin offers clients a real regulatory advantage in managing water resources and reducing flood risk.

She understands the challenges and divergent perspectives of companies, landowners, regulators and communities. And, having always lived near waterways, Karin has seen, and experienced, flooding firsthand.

She has more than 20 years' experience as a licensed professional engineer working alongside federal agencies, local communities, private businesses and nonprofits on all aspects of flood control, damage reduction and risk mitigation.

As a lawyer, she counsels clients on a wide range of flood protection matters and leads them through the complex steps necessary to finance, build, operate and maintain their infrastructure. Karin draws on her background as an engineer, when she designed civil works in the private sector and then in local government provided oversight for a $600 million waterways program.

Clients turn to Karin for her in-depth experience in evaluating water resource management challenges and assessing opportunities from all angles. She is effective at launching new initiatives, advancing ongoing efforts, generating consensus from stakeholders with a multitude of interests, and navigating the evolving water resources regulatory framework.

Industry

Real Estate, Development, & Construction

Services

Construction & Design

Construction Litigation

Development Incentives & Tax Credits

Environmental

Environmental & Chemical Regulation

Land Use

Levee & Flood Protection

Public Law

Public Policy, Regulatory, & Government Affairs

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Karin speaks nationally on topics of flood risk and floodplain management and is active in local, regional and national organizations involved in public safety and water resources infrastructure.

Karin's personal experience, professional engineering and legal acumen, along with her work in the private, public and nonprofit sectors, all combine to provide her with a comprehensive and informed perspective on management of water and related land resources, especially in the area of levees, flood protection and mitigation.

Experience

- Provided legal opinions for project flood control/floodplain management regulatory compliance.
- Involved in every facet of flood control from planning, financing, design, right-of-way acquisition, construction, and operation and maintenance, including working with all federal and state regulatory agencies and engineering firms.
- Worked on benefit reassessments to identify under-assessed properties and in assessing atypical property that should be assessed to afford districts better revenue stream for financing projects.
- Led development of system-wide improvement plans for levee-systems along the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers.
- Represented Homeowner Associations in negotiations with regulating entities for new development.
- Prepared and delivered comments/testimony/remarks on multiple federal and state legislative actions and rulemakings.
- Developed process and criteria for bank compliance with new flood insurance program requirements and evaluated private insurance policies for adherence.
- Secured an approved jurisdictional determination that reduced the amount of waters identified through a preliminary determination from 4 miles to less than 200 lineal feet.

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Experience

- Provided leadership for a waterways program comprising 25 miles of flood damage reduction projects, integrating “green solutions” and recreation improvements to promote sustainability and generate economic development.
- Led negotiations to transfer ownership of land between four separate entities, all with eminent domain authority, to alleviate flooding, allow for public and private infrastructure investment and facilitate redevelopment.
- Prepared a levee-system improvement plan in accordance with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers systemwide improvement framework policy that led to reinstatement in PL84-99 and federal repair of flood damaged levees.
- Developed recommendations to Congress for a national levee-safety program and to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for risk-based treatment of levees in the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Designed and managed multiple-site development, stormwater/drainage and transportation projects, including work at the Cahokia Mounds historical site in Illinois and along Brush Creek in Kansas City, Mo.
- Served as site engineer at the Spirit of St. Louis Airport in 1993, guiding emergency grading and drainage operations that allowed hangars and runways to reopen after flood.

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Recognition

- Ritenour High School Hall of Fame, 2016
- Missouri University of Science & Technology (Rolla), Academy of Civil Engineers, 2015
- Kansas City Industrial Council, Brick by Brick Award, 2002, 2008; Progress Award, Leadership in Improving Waterways, 2009
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Headquarters, Commander's Award for Public Service, 2009
- Kansas City Star, One of Five People to Watch, 2005
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Kansas City District, Official Commendation for Partnering, 2003
- Planned Industrial Expansion Authority, Partnership Award, 2002-2003
- Missouri Bar Pro Bono Wall of Fame, 2021

Education

- J.D., University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law
- M.P.A., University of Missouri-Kansas City
- B.S., Missouri University of Science and Technology
    - Civil Engineering

Admissions

- Missouri
- Texas

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Community Leadership

Karin remains active on the board of the Missouri and Associated Rivers Coalition (MOARC), after serving as its Executive Director for 16 years. MOARC is a regional nonprofit connecting individuals, companies and governmental agencies to promote conservation and beneficial use of water resources.

She helped establish the American Public Works Association (APWA) Water Resources Management Committee and Kansas City River Trails, a local nonprofit guiding development and implementation of the bi-state Riverfront Heritage Trail and its public art master plan.

Karin directed the firm's Neighborhood Partner Program, a pro bono initiative in a Kansas City historic neighborhood in cooperation with the Legal Aid of Western Missouri's Adopt-A-Neighborhood Project to offer residents a variety of free legal services: taxes, property deeds, wills, nuisance and code violations.

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*Contact Karin to set up an in-person consultation by appointment in the Kansas City office.



2023 Pro Bono Impact Award - bio badge

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