



## Stephen Masciocchi

Partner

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**Steve brings a fresh perspective and more than 30 years' experience to bear in high-stakes class actions and appellate litigation.**

### PRACTICES

Appellate  
Commercial Litigation

### EDUCATION

University of Washington, J.D., 1990  
With Honors  
*Washington Law Review*, Associate Editor

Gettysburg College, B.A., 1980

### BAR ADMISSIONS

Colorado

### COURT ADMISSIONS

U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit  
U.S. Supreme Court

Steve primarily assists clients with federal and state appeals and class actions. He co-chairs the firm's Appellate Practice Group. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Appellate Lawyers, one of only four attorneys in the State of Colorado to have been inducted into the Academy.

**Depth of Experience:** Steve has handled more than 100 appeals and has presented more than 50 oral arguments in civil appeals in state and federal appellate courts. He has represented clients in a wide array of civil litigation matters, including administrative, commercial, constitutional, insurance, product liability, real estate, and oil and gas litigation.

**Broad Range of Jurisdictions:** Steve has litigated in the Federal District Courts of Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, and Wyoming, in the 4th, 8th, 9th, and 10th Circuit Courts of Appeals, and in the U.S. Supreme Court. He has appeared before appellate courts in numerous states across the country.

### EXPERIENCE

#### APPELLATE LAW

Steve represents clients in appeals in a wide range of subject areas and multiple jurisdictions. He writes and lectures frequently on appellate practice and procedure. He is the co-editor of *The Colorado Lawyer Appellate Practice* column.

#### CLASS ACTIONS

Steve has significant experience representing defendants in complex class action litigation. Steve has compiled a remarkable record of success in convincing federal district courts to deny certification and appellate courts to vacate certification orders.

#### LEGAL ETHICS

Steve represents attorneys in disqualification, grievance, and licensure matters, and he serves as an expert witness in legal ethics. He serves as Chair of Holland & Hart's Ethics and Conflicts Committee. He also sits on, and is the past Chair of, the Colorado Bar Association Ethics Committee. He is the Coordinating Editor of *The Colorado Lawyer's* column on Legal Ethics and Professional Conduct.

## CLIENT RESULTS

### Amicus Briefs

In case involving the migratory bird rule, the United States Supreme Court upheld our amicus client's position that the Army Corp of Engineers improperly asserted jurisdiction over isolated, intrastate waters.

In a key case for Colorado's oil and gas industry, the Colorado Supreme Court sided with our amicus client and declined to force the state oil and gas commission to adopt a rule requiring it to readjust its statutory mandate, under which it must both foster oil and gas production and mitigate significant environmental impacts.

In a seminal case involving Colorado's new Teacher Tenure Act, the Colorado Supreme Court adopted our amicus client's position on the act's validity and rejected challenges to the Act under the Colorado Constitution's Due Process and Contract clauses.

### Bankruptcy Appeals

In a significant victory for our client and consumer lenders, the Tenth Circuit agreed that when a bankruptcy trustee avoids a lien, the remedy of avoidance is usually sufficient, and a money judgment against the creditor is neither required nor appropriate.

In an appeal from a bankruptcy court order interpreting a Chapter 11 plan involving a fund for future tort claimants, the federal district court agreed with our interpretation of the plan and its provisions for paying the future claimants.

### Commercial Litigation Appeals

In a case of first impression, the Colorado Supreme Court reinstated our client's claim for breach of a commercial rental contract and established that loss-of-use damages are recoverable under such contracts.

In a complex commercial dispute, the Colorado Court of Appeals held that a foreign guarantor was bound to the terms of its guaranty, affirmed a \$6.7 million judgment for our client, and awarded appellate attorney fees.

In a dispute between an author and publisher, the Colorado Court of Appeals agreed that the author was not entitled to any royalties when his publishing contract was sold to another publisher.

### Employment Appeals

The Ninth Circuit affirmed a defense verdict in our employer client's favor on wrongful discharge and retaliation claims and rejected the former employee's instructional error and other arguments.

In a large class action involving fraud-based claims of employees who were terminated under a reduction-in-force, the Idaho Federal District Court denied class certification for lack of both typicality and predominance.

## Environmental Appeals

In a complex NEPA matter involving an attempt by environmental groups to shut down drilling in the San Juan Basin, the Tenth Circuit affirmed an order in our clients' favor denying plaintiffs' motion for preliminary injunction.

In post-trial motions after judgment involving a contract to remediate a Superfund site, the federal district court adopted our position that federal contract law, not Idaho law, governed whether the plaintiff was entitled to prejudgment interest, saving our client over \$23 million.

## Oil, Gas, and Mining Appeals

In a dispute between a pipeline company and a developer, the Tenth Circuit affirmed a judgment requiring the developer to incur the cost of relocating the pipeline to accommodate a new development.

In a significant appeal involving multi-million dollar mining royalty claims, the Ninth Circuit upheld summary judgment in favor of our client based on the doctrine of laches.

After agreeing to hear our two Rule 23(f) appeals, the Tenth Circuit vacated orders certifying large statewide classes of Kansas and Oklahoma royalty owners and determined that the lower courts failed to follow recent Supreme Court precedent in certifying the classes.

In two large punitive statewide class actions brought by oil and gas royalty owners in Colorado and New Mexico, the federal district court denied certification based on our arguments that the named plaintiffs failed to prove both commonality and predominance.

In a large punitive oil and gas royalty class action in New Mexico, the federal district court granted our motion for summary judgment and dismissed the named plaintiffs' claims and thus obviated any class certification proceedings.

## Real Estate Appeals

In a complicated, pipeline-construction case, the Colorado Court of Appeals affirmed an award of nearly \$9 million for our client and rejected the appellant's attempt to reinstate its approximately \$20 million in counterclaims.

The Colorado Court of Appeals ruled in our client's favor in a commercial real estate dispute over funds in an escrow account and awarded our client appellate attorney fees.

## Torts and Insurance Appeals

In a case of first impression, the Tenth Circuit affirmed summary judgment and upheld our client's right to rescind a \$3 million "key man" life insurance policy. The court agreed with our view of when an insurer becomes "chargeable with knowledge" of a fact concealed by the insured under

unsettled Colorado law.

In two separate but related product liability cases involving defective heating hose, the Tenth Circuit affirmed large judgments for our clients and upheld prejudgment interest awards from the date of a defective product's installation, which added almost \$11 million to the judgments.

In an appeal involving an explosion that leveled a building, the Colorado Court of Appeals agreed that the trial had been infected by multiple evidentiary errors and reversed the \$6 million verdict the jury had rendered against our client.

## PUBLICATIONS

"The Tenth Circuit Reverses Injunction Against Implementation of Federal Navigable Waters Protection Rule," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 04/23/2021

"Tenth Circuit Analysis," *Author, published monthly by Law.com*, Co-Author

"Tenth Circuit Explains and Applies the Scope of Federal Preemption of Product Liability Suits Based on Medical Device Failures," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 03/22/2021

"Tenth Circuit Holds That a State Can Cede Its Jurisdiction to the Federal Government Only Through State Legislation," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 01/25/2021

"Tenth Circuit: Our Mandate Means What It Says," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 12/21/2020

"Tenth Circuit Dismisses Putative Anti-Vaccination Class Action for Lack of Standing," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 11/23/2020

"10th Cir. Holds That Questions of Arbitration Agreement Formation Can Only Be Decided by Court," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 10/22/2020

"Civil Interlocutory Appeals in Colorado State Courts," *Colorado Lawyer*, Co-Author, October 2020

"Tenth Circuit Upholds Constitutionality of Sex Offender Registry," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 09/21/2020

"Tenth Circuit Confirms Extremely Limited Federal Appellate Review for Remand Orders," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 09/01/2020

"Tenth Circuit Affirms Denial of Qualified and Sovereign Immunity Defenses," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 07/21/2020

"Contracts," *Colorado Bar Association CLE*, June 30, 2020

"Supreme Court OK's TABOR Repeal Initiative," *Law Week Colorado*, Co-Author, 06/29/2020

"Tenth Circuit Affirms District Court Decision To Abstain Under 'Pullman'

From Exercising Jurisdiction," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 05/20/2020

"Tenth Circuit Addresses Adequacy of Procedures for Sexual Misconduct Investigations at Colleges and Universities," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 04/15/2020

"The Tenth Circuit Rejects Correctional Officer's Qualified-Immunity Defense to Alleged Sexual Abuse of Inmate," *Law.com*, Co-Author, 03/25/2020

"Contracts," *Colorado Civil Claims: Elements, Defenses, and Sample Pleadings, Chapter 7 (CLE in Colo., Inc., 1st ed. 2019)*, July 2019

"Overuse, Underuse of Amicus Briefs," *Law Week Colorado*, June 2017

"What Amici Curiae Can and Cannot Do with Amicus Briefs," *The Colorado Lawyer*, April 2017

"Hurdles to Interlocutory Review Under CAR 4.2," *The Colorado Lawyer*, p. 107, July 2015

"Client-Drafted Engagement Letters and Outside Counsel Policies," *The Colorado Lawyer*, p. 33., February 2014

"Climate Change and Positional Conflicts of Interest," *The Colorado Lawyer*, Co-Author, October 2011

"Marketing Plus Referrals for a Fee - Feeder Operations by Any Other Name," *The Colorado Lawyer*, p. 75., July 2007

"Federal Anti-Terrorism Laws And Law Firm Clients," *The Colorado Lawyer*, p. 117., Co-Author, October 2004

"Novel Theories and Notable Exceptions: Making the Most of a Federal Appellate Court's Discretion to Hear Issues for the First Time on Appeal," *Trial Talk*, p. 26., Co-Author, April/May 2004

"Ethical Marketing," *The Colorado Lawyer*, p. 27., October 2003

"The Insurer's Right to Recoup Defense Costs, the Insured's Right to Independent Counsel, and the Recovery of Attorney Fees in Coverage Actions," *Paper for ABA TIPS Insurance Coverage Litigation Committee Midwinter Mtg.*, February 23, 2003

"Rights in Flux: The Insurer's 'Right' to Recoup Defense Costs and the Insured's 'Right' to Independent Counsel," *The Brief*, p. 30., Winter 2003

"Interlocutory Appeals," *Paper for Colorado Appellate Practice, CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, Co-Author, October 29, 1999

"The Insurer's Right to Reimbursement of Defense Costs: The Emerging Morass," *American Bar Association Tips Corporate Counsel Comm. News, Summer 1999*, p. 1., Summer 1999

"Internet E-Mail: Legal and Practical Considerations," *American Bar Association Journal Practice Mgmt.*, p. 42., October 1998

"Internet E-Mail and Encryption: Privilege, Confidentiality, and Malpractice Risks," *The Colorado Lawyer*, p. 21., October 1998

"The Item Veto Power in Washington," *64 Washington Law Review* 891, 1989

## **SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**

"Client-Draft Engagement Letters and Outside Counsel Policies: Ethical Quandaries and Unintended Consequences," *Association of Corporate Counsel - Colorado Chapter*, December 2020

"Contracts," *Colorado Bar Association CLE*, June 2020

"Beginning and Ending the Attorney-Client Relationship," *Colorado Bar Association CLE*, November 2019

"Practice from the Amici's Perspective," *Strategies for the Appellate Practitioner, Idaho State Bar Appellate Practice Section Sponsored CLE*, October 4, 2019

"Oral Argument - Tips from the Bench," *Moderator, Appellate Practice Update 2017, CLE in Colorado Inc.*, November 29, 2017

"Conflicts of Interest and Disqualification," *CLE Presentation for Ethics 7.0, CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, November 18, 2016

"Motions to Disqualify Opposing Counsel," *CLE Presentation for the Pueblo Bar Association*, November 10, 2015

"Preservation of Issues for Appeal," *CLE Presentation for Appellate Practice Update, CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, December 13, 2013

"Ethical Dilemmas Created by Client-Drafted Engagement Letters and Outside Counsel Policies," *ACC Ethics Day*, December 4, 2013

"Ethical Marketing," *CLE Presentation Colorado Real Estate Fall Update, CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, October 11, 2013

"Ethical Marketing," *CLE Presentation for Willis Carpenter Real Estate Symposium, CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, July 13, 2013

"Not-So-Obvious Rules of Professional Conduct," *CLE Presentation to Pitkin County Bar Association*, May 25, 2012

"Beginning and Ending the Attorney-Client Relationship: Engagement Letters and Withdrawal," *CLE Presentation for Ethics 7.0 CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, December 1, 2011

"Climate Change and Positional Conflicts of Interest," *CLE Presentation to Colorado Bar Association Environmental Section*, October 25, 2011

"Interlocutory Appeals in Colorado State Courts," *CLE Presentation for Appellate Practice Update*, *CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, November 19, 2010

"Not-So-Obvious Rules of Professional Conduct," *CLE Presentation for University of Denver Sturm College of Law Alumni Weekend*, October 15, 2010

"Multi-Jurisdictional Practice and the Unauthorized Practice of Law," *Presentation for Renewable Energy Transmission Conference: Bridging the Gap*, Denver, CO, March 18, 2010

"Will MJP be the End of Me? Multi-Jurisdictional Practice and the Unauthorized Practice of Law," *Annual Ethics CLE*, *CLE International, Inc.*, December 7, 2009

"The Ethics of Representing More Than One Party to a Real Estate Transaction," *CLE Presentation for Annual Real Estate Law Update*, *CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, November 6, 2009

"Interlocutory Appeals in Colorado State Courts," *CLE Presentation for Appellate Hot Topics*, *CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, October 10, 2008

"Collecting Prejudgment and Postjudgment Interest in Colorado," *CLE Presentation*, *CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, June 26, 2008

"Lawyer Mobility and Conflicts Checking," *CLE Presentation for Tuesdays at the Bar*, *Denver Bar Association*, November 14, 2006

"Ethics When Emotions Run High," *CLE Presentation for Colorado Municipal League Annual Meeting*, June 28, 2006

"Motions to Disqualify Opposing Counsel," *CLE Presentation for Ethics*, *CLE International, Inc.*, December 9, 2005

"Current Ethical Issues in Appellate Practice," *CLE Presentation for Appellate Practice in Colorado's Federal and State Courts*, *CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, May 13, 2005

"Ethics: Considerations When Emotions Run High," *CLE Presentation for Local Regulation of Adult Businesses*, *CLE International, Inc.*, September 13, 2004

"Internet Ethics: Email Confidentiality and Marketing on the Web," *CLE Presentation for Legal Ethics*, *CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, October 25, 2002

"Appellate Advocacy Workshop," *Faculty*, *CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, May 10, 2001

"Ethics Update," *CLE Presentation for Torts Update*, *CLE in Colorado, Inc.*, November 4, 1999

## RECOGNITION

- American Academy of Appellate Lawyers, Fellow

- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, Appellate Practice, 2013-2021
- Martindale-Hubbell®, AV Preeminent® Rating, 2002-2019
- Colorado Super Lawyers®, Appellate, 2017-2021
- *5280 Magazine* Top Lawyers, Appellate, 2021

## PROFESSIONAL AND CIVIC AFFILIATIONS

- *The Colorado Lawyer*  
Professional Conduct and Legal Ethics Column, Coordinating Editor  
Appellate Practice Column, Co-Editor
- American Bar Association  
Litigation Section, Appellate Practice Committee
- Colorado Bar Association  
Ethics Committee  
Litigation Section, Appellate Practice Subcommittee
- Denver Bar Association