



# DRAFT Conference Program



## Michigan Rail Conference 2022

*“Pivot for Growth:  
Supply Chain and Mobility”*

August 1-3, 2022  
Bay College Escanaba, MI

# Welcome

## Welcome from the Conference Chairs

It is our pleasure and privilege to invite you all to the 2022 Michigan Rail Conference (MRC). We consider this year's conference special for several reasons. First, we celebrate a full decade of conferences, demonstrating the longevity, support, and need for the event in our State. Second, after two years of virtual conferences, we are able to once again enjoy conversations with our colleagues in a live environment. Finally, we return to the beautiful Upper Peninsula of Michigan, thanks to our hosts at Bay College, Escanaba.

As always, we want thank all individuals and organizations essential to continuing our tradition of MRC. We applaud our Conference Planning Committee who has yet again been able to bring a fascinating slate of nationwide speakers for us. They've also been instrumental in securing sponsors whose generous contributions allow us to keep MRC fees affordable. Last, but not the least, we're greatly indebted to our diverse group of speakers, who have not only committed to speak, but to take time in their busy schedules for a visit in Escanaba, Michigan. We cannot imagine a more suitable theme to our conference than *Pivot for Growth: Supply Chain and Mobility*. While it seems that we're finally shaking off the major disruptions caused by the pandemic, the supply chain woes (as

well as rail transportation challenges) have only increased and general mobility is facing new challenges, as people return to offices, fuel prices increase, etc. Rail transportation will continue to play a major part in these developments, but how it responds to the changing economic, political, and societal landscape remains to be seen. We hope that the combination of our speaker presentations, panel discussions, and conversations among our colleagues will allow all of us to leave Escanaba with a bit more understanding on today's rail transportation issues and how we ensure that the industry is ready for the challenge in Michigan and beyond.

We look forward to you joining us at the tenth anniversary event this August and appreciate your past support. Let's make this year's event even better than the ones that have gone before!!!

Welcome to the conference!

— Nick Little & Pasi Lautala

## Keynote Speaker



**Jennifer Mitchell**

Deputy Administrator  
Federal Rail Administration

## MRC Technical Program | Tuesday, August 2nd

7:15 – 8:00 AM Registration and Breakfast

8:00 – 8:15 AM Welcome and Safety Briefing

**Nikkie Johnson**  
Manager - Passenger & Freight Development  
Michigan DOT

**Nick Little**  
Director - Railway Education  
Michigan State University

8:15 – 9:30 AM Conference Opening

Moderator: Pasi Lautala, Michigan Tech

**Kirk Steudle**  
Econolite

**Peter Schwartz (invited)**  
FRA

9:30 – 10:00 AM Break

# MRC Technical Program Continued | Tuesday, August 2nd

## 10:00 – 1130 AM Plenary Panel – Michigan Updates

Moderator: Nikkie Johnson, Michigan DOT

**Peter Anastor**  
Director of Rail  
Michigan DOT

**Rick Harnish**  
Executive Director  
High Speed Rail Alliance

**Brian Buchanan** &  
Sales Manager  
Watco

**Stefan Loeb**  
Executive VP & Chief  
Commercial Officer  
Watco

## 11:30 – 1:00 PM Lunch & Keynote Presentation

Moderator: TBA

**Jennifer Mitchell**  
Deputy Administrator, FRA

## 1:00 – 2:15 PM Breakout Session #1A – Mobility 1 - Improving On Time Performance

Moderator: TBA

**Thomas Fryer**  
Chief Engineer  
AB Rail

**Dan Schulte**  
Senior Director of Engineering  
Quandel Consultants

**Karen Hedlund**  
Member  
Surface Transportation Board

## 1:00 – 2:15 PM Breakout Session #1B - Mobility 2 - Round Table -Lessons Learned from PTC

Moderator: Bob Goodheart, Pathfinder

**John Rickoff**  
President & CEO  
Lake State Railway Co.

**Chris Jagodzinski**  
Assistant VP - Operations  
Amtrak

**Rachel Klumpp**  
Analyst - PTC  
CN

## 2:15 – 2:45 PM Break

## 2:45 – 4:00 PM Breakout Session #2A – Supply Chain 1

Moderator: Nick Little, Michigan State University

**Stacey Lyons**  
US Manager of Government  
and Public Affairs  
CN

**Jim Pang**  
Vice President, New Services  
Development & Innovation  
Trinity Rail

**Ward Forquer**  
Vice President, Markets &  
Logistics  
Michigan Potash & Salt Co.

**Peter Wolff**  
Director Market Development  
TTX Company

## 2:45 – 4:00 PM Breakout Session #2B - Funding Opportunities?

Moderator: Libby Ogard, Prime Focus, LLC

**Nikkie Johnson**  
Economic Development &  
Freight Operations Specialist  
Michigan DOT

**Mike Hnatiuk**  
Western Michigan Railroad

**Pasi Lautala**  
Director, Rail Trans. Program  
Michigan Tech

**Tim Hoeffner**  
Senior Consultant Rail  
Quandel Consultants

## 4:00 – 4:30 PM Conference Wrap-Up

## 4:30 – 5:30 PM Closing Reception

Please see next page for pre & post conference activities.



# Pre-Conference Activities | Monday, August 1st

## Student Scholarship Golf Outing Fundraiser

Terrace Bluff Golf Club

10:30am (tent)

Team Check-in

11:00am (tent)

Start

## Welcome Reception

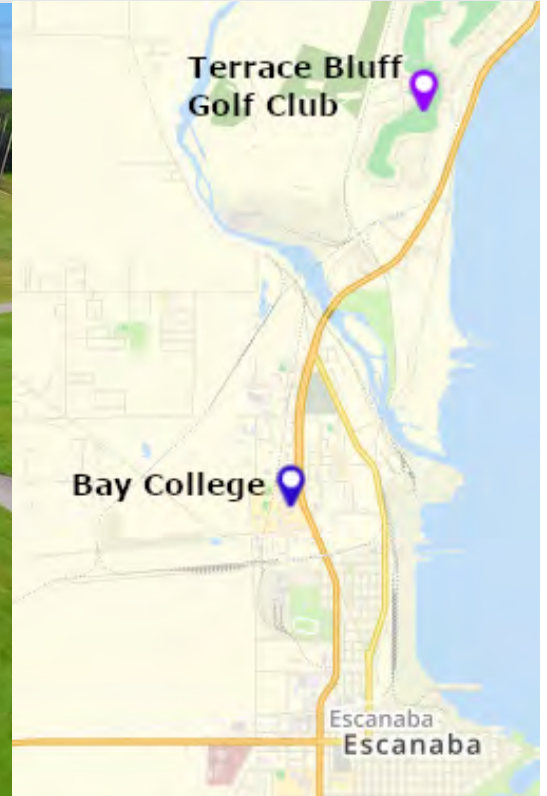
Terrace Bluff Golf Club

6:00 - 8:00 pm

Opening Reception at Terrace Bluff Golf Club

7527 D-61

Gladstone, MI 49837



# Post-Conference | Wednesday, August 3rd

## Field Visits

Various Locations

7:30 am

Meet at pick-up location

8:00 am

Buses leave to begin field visits

Noon (approx)

Buses return to pick-up location

# Other Conference Information

## Dress Code

Monday

Casual

Tuesday

Business Casual

Wednesday

Casual

PPE Required (vest, hard hat & safety glasses  
- provided, no open toe shoes)

# Diamond Sponsors



# Platinum Sponsors



Center for Railway  
Research and Education  
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MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

# Gold Sponsors



# Silver Sponsors

**RAILWAY/AGE**

# Conference Planning Committee

Stacey Lyons - CN Railroad; Shasta Duffey & Mike Hnatiuk – Lake State Railway Company; Michael Gaynor - GoRail; Nikkie Johnson – Michigan DOT; Jon Cool – Michigan Railroads Association; Nick Little – Michigan State University; Amanda (Kerttu) Codere, Pasi Lautala, and David Nelson – Michigan Tech; Kay Chase - Western Michigan University; Tim Hoeffner – Quandel Consultants; Robert Goodheart – Pathfinder Engineering; Peter Schierloh – SW Bridge Engineers; Ken Westcar, Mark Miller & Robert Pokorski