



## Can I Land Here?

A Legal View of Aeronautical Decision Making

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**Date:** February 28, 2026

**Location:** Albuquerque, NM

**Sponsored by:** Aerco

**Access Slides Anytime:** [davebair.co/Aerco2026](http://davebair.co/Aerco2026)



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Dave has been involved in ballooning since the late 1970's and owned his first balloon with his brother in 1990. His introduction to ballooning was primarily through his parents, Ray and Carol, and crewing at Fiesta. Dave is commercially rated for both hot air and gas balloons. He got his hot air private certificate in 1989, commercial in 1991 and the gas rating in 2003. He has over 1100 flight hours in hot air and gas balloons and has flown throughout the United States and foreign countries.

His most interesting hot air adventure was flying over Pikes Peak and landing in Colorado Springs, flying at nearly 18,000ft. He and the family have flown in Ireland, Germany, France, Great Britain, Netherlands, and Belgium.

## Landing Priorities and Lawsuit

### Key Questions / Cues

### Notes

Topic Agenda

- Priorities for Landing
- Legality of Operations
- Improving Your “Legality”
- Choose Your Risk

Landing Priorities

1. Safety
2. Damage
3. Accessible
4. Aesthetic

Where does “legal” fit?

**Take-Away #1**

**“Legal is a personal opinion”**

Too many competing and overlapping laws

Lawsuit Case Study

- Colorado Springs
- Private Property Landing
- 2-Year threats
- \$16,995 Lawsuit

## Landing Priorities and Lawsuit

### Key Questions / Cues

### Notes

What are your criteria for Legal?

- Friends land there
- Past Tolerance
- FAA Rules
- Public vs. Private Land
- AIBF PZ Map
- Etc....

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**Take-Away #2**

**“Legal is in the eye of the beholder”**

**Anyone can sue you for any reason**

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Was my Landing Legal?

- Flight Tracks
- Red Zones
- Property Damage
- Nobody Home
- No Permission

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**Take-Away #3**

**“A safe landing buys you time”**

**Injuries create emergency,  
everything else can wait**

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## Improving Your 'Legality'

### Key Questions / Cues

### Notes

#### Improve Your Legality

- Do your homework
- Plan your flight
- Train your crew
- Build relationships

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#### Research tools

- Flight Tracks
- PZ Map
- OnX Hunt
  - [Apple](#)
  - [Android](#)
- [County Assessor](#)
- Ownership History

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#### Who actually has rights on the property?

- Owner
- Lessees
- Renters
- Managers

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## Choosing Your Risk

### Key Questions / Cues

### Notes

Crew Responsibilities

- Ask permission respectfully
- Park responsibly
- Close gates
- Tone Matters

Take-Home #4:

“Relationships reduce legal friction”

Anyone can choose *not* to sue you.?

<b>High Safety</b>	<b>Suvivable. Animosity.</b>	<b>Ideal. Sustainable. Fun.</b>
<b>Low Safety</b>	<b>Kill the Sport</b>	<b>Wrong Priorities. Poor Judgement.</b>
	<b>Low Legality</b>	<b>High Legality</b>