

November 7, 2011

What's New with Outstanding Project Awards?

By Siamak Jafroudi
Petra Geotechnical, Inc.
CalGeo Past President



Each year at our Annual Conference, CalGeo puts the spotlight on the best geotechnical projects in the state with our Outstanding Project Awards. A panel of peers selects the year's finest work in a number of categories, providing winners

with a powerful new marketing message, and everyone with the opportunity to learn from exciting, innovative approaches to challenging situations.

The Awards Program is open to all CalGeo member firms in good standing, except member firms on the judging committee. **This year we are inviting, for the first time, individual members, affiliate members and non-member firms to submit entries.** Any project will be considered for the award, but only projects completed and constructed within the previous five calendar years are eligible.

Check our website in mid-December for details on eligible projects, entry forms and due dates.

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CalGeo Regional Membership Meeting & Webcast

Seismically Induced Lateral Earth Pressures: An Update



Prof. Nicholas Sitar

Join us November 9 as UC Berkeley Professor Nicholas Sitar presents the latest results from his centrifuge model studies and observations from large earthquakes. The live dinner presentation will be held at the Holiday Inn in Dublin. If you can't make it to Dublin, the presentation will be webcast live to 16 sites across the state.

[Click here](#) to RSVP and for more information on the presentation and webcast sites.

Member News

New CalGeo Members

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Shawn Ariannia

Koury Geotechnical Services
Chino, CA
(909) 606-6111 ext 701

ACTIVE MEMBERS

Acacia Consultants & Engineering, Inc.

3025 Venture Road
Placerville, CA 95667
Contact: Bill Kenney
william.kenney@acaciace.pro
(530) 748-1336

ENGEO Recognition

Entrepreneur Magazine has named CalGeo member ENGEO among the nation's best places to work in 2011. The magazine's October issue ranked ENGEO ninth on its "Best Small Businesses to Work For" list. ENGEO was selected among hundreds of participating companies based on feedback from its employees and a review of the company's credibility, respect, fairness, pride and camaraderie. Congratulations to ENGEO!

[Click here](#) to view the full Best Businesses to Work For list, or [here](#) to learn about building a high-trust workplace.

LACO Associates Expansion

LACO Associates has added a new office and a new employee. The new Ukiah office, located at 311 South Main Street, will be led by engineer Scott Kelly. Scott has more than 23 years of experience and specializes in project and construction management, water and wastewater system analysis, hydraulic and site design, traffic analysis, and communication. To read the full press release, [click here](#).

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Student Chapter Update

Cal Poly Pomona Students Inspect Dams in the Eastern Sierras

By Giovanni Bryden

CalGeo Student Chapter Treasurer

Cal Poly Pomona

This summer, Southern California Edison (SCE) was gracious enough to let a group of Cal Poly Pomona civil engineering students - along with Cal Poly professor and local legend Dixon Davis - tag along on a series of dam inspections in the eastern Sierras. The inspections were led by SCE Senior Engineer John Stossel, and included visits to Gem Lake, Lake Sabrina, Tioga Lake, and seven others. With stretches of hiking, boating, camping, and even a ride on a 100-year-old tram car, this trip was an adventure as much



View from the Agnew Lake Dam spillway

as it was a priceless learning experience. We were able to follow inspector Bill Vogler from the Department of Safety of Dams (DSOD) on his tri-annual investigation of a series of arch, gravity, and wood-faced dams. Bill was patient and gracious enough to break down what he looked for in a dam including, but not limited to: growing amounts of leakage, tears in a dam liner, and sinkholes near the upstream toe of the dam.

His interface with SCE officials allowed us to catch a rare glimpse into the complex relationship between a regulatory agency and the company being inspected. We were even able to turn the wheels and open the valves to a few of the dams - no easy task since these wheels work with primitive gears and have been around for almost 100 years!

On behalf of the Cal Poly Pomona student chapter of CalGeo, I would like to extend a great thanks to Professor Davis, John Stoessel, and Southern California Edison for giving us the opportunity to take in some of the majestic sights of the eastern Sierras and take part in an educational trip the likes of which we may never get the chance to embark on again.

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Southern Utah Landslide



Southern Utah experienced a massive landslide in early October following heavy rains that displaced 1.5 million cubic yards of dirt, rock and debris onto state Route 14, likely rendering the key thoroughfare impassible through next summer. To read more about this landslide, [click here](#).

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JOB BOARD

Visit our [website](#) for the latest information on current available positions throughout the industry, including:

- Senior Geotechnical Engineer with BSK Associates
- Geotechnical Practice Manager with Geocon

- Civil Engineer with TerraCosta Consulting Group

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Recap of Post-Earthquake Reconnaissance Workshop

By Dr. Rex Upp

Upp Geotechnology Inc.

Geotechnical engineering is an experience-driven field and the importance of detailed mapping and surveying of damaged areas following a natural disaster cannot be overemphasized. That's why nearly 100 engineers gathered recently at Preservation Park in Oakland for a full-day workshop on post-earthquake reconnaissance sponsored by [SFGI](#), [GEER](#), [PEER](#) and [EERI](#).

Based on several case histories, this daylong workshop provided the attendees with a preliminary introduction to the data needed, how it is collected and how it is made available for access by others. Information was presented on the latest in satellite, airborne, and ground-based imaging of earthquake damage and other geotechnical hazards. The basic tools needed for a post-earthquake reconnaissance were discussed and demonstrated, including best practices for merging GPS, digital photography and physical measurements.

In the afternoon, we participated in a hands-on field reconnaissance exercise using techniques presented in the workshop. The day finished with a demonstration of ground-based Lidar, creating an image of the attendees in the auditorium.

GEER sponsors teams of volunteers (funded largely by NSF) to collect geotechnical data very soon after seismic events. To become a volunteer, apply on the [GEER website](#).

CalGeo will present an introduction to post-earthquake reconnaissance at an upcoming web cast regional meeting.

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Safety First

Return of Whooping Cough

Courtesy of the California State Compensation Insurance Fund

Pertussis is a respiratory illness commonly known as whooping cough. This very contagious disease is caused by a type of bacteria called *Bordetella Pertussis*, and can be deadly to infants. The disease is found only in humans and is spread from person to person. People with Pertussis spread the disease by coughing or sneezing while in close contact with others, who then breathe in the Pertussis bacteria. The first two weeks of whooping cough are the most infectious period of contagion.

The disease usually starts with cold-like symptoms and perhaps a mild cough or fever. Pertussis is confirmed with a laboratory test from a nose swab taken at the health care provider's office, and early treatment with antibiotics is very important.

PREVENTION: Vaccination is the prevention. Vaccine protection for Pertussis fades with time, so adults need a booster shot. Contact your treating physician about a Pertussis vaccination or booster.

Joke of the Month

The Mathematician and Engineer

A mathematician and an engineer are sitting next to each other on a long flight. The mathematician leans over to the engineer and asks if he would like to play a fun game. The engineer just wants to take a nap, so he politely declines and rolls over to the window to catch a few winks.

The mathematician persists and explains that the game is real easy and lots of fun. He explains, "I ask you a question, and if you don't know the answer, you pay me \$5. Then you ask me a question, and if I don't know the answer, I'll pay you \$5."

Again, the engineer politely declines and tries to get to sleep. The mathematician, now somewhat agitated, says, "Okay, if you don't know the answer, you pay me \$5, and if I don't know the answer, I'll pay you \$50!"

This catches the engineer's attention, and he sees no end to this torment unless he plays, so he agrees to the game. The mathematician asks the first question. "What's the distance from the earth to the moon?"

The engineer doesn't say a word, but reaches into his wallet, pulls out a five-dollar bill and hands it to the mathematician. Now, it's the engineer's turn. He asks the mathematician "What goes up a hill with three legs and comes down on four?"

The mathematician glances up at him with a puzzled look. He takes out his laptop computer and searches all of his references. He uses his cell phone to search the web as well as and the Library of Congress. Frustrated, he sends e-mail to his co-workers - all to no avail.

After about an hour, he wakes the engineer and hands him \$50. The engineer politely takes the \$50 and turns away to try to get back to sleep.

The mathematician then hits the engineer, saying, "What goes up a hill with three legs, and comes down on four?" The engineer calmly pulls out his wallet, hands the mathematician five bucks, and goes back to sleep.



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