

August 24, 2012

## President's Message

By Todd Kamisky  
CalGeo President



As I look through my files in preparation for my term as CalGeo President, I continue to be amazed by the progress our organization has made. Four years ago, CalGeo embarked on a strategic planning process that set forth efforts to increase value for our members and cement CalGeo as *THE* voice of California's consulting geotechnical engineers. We have made tremendous progress, and there's still work to do.

Specific outcomes can be seen in our move to broadcast the Regional Meetings and our increased participation in the legislative process. Taking even a longer view, our Student Outreach Committee developed new student chapters at several universities, which has brought significant attention to the profession among our industry's future leaders.

With those projects firmly on a good path to success, the Board is in the process of re-evaluating our strategic tasks for the year ahead. As President, I plan to focus the organization on the following topics:

- Growing the number of student chapters
- Recruiting young engineers and new graduates as members
- Bringing Regional Meeting webcasts to even more locations
- Communicating the value of geotechnical engineers to those who hire us
- Increasing member involvement in CalGeo committees

Click [here](#) to learn more about these goals and the year ahead. I look forward to working alongside all of our members as your President.

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## Farewell to Siamak

By Rex Upp

CalGeo bids a fond farewell to Past President Siamak Jafroudi after his 11 years of dedicated service to our association. Siamak, President of Petra Geotechnical, was encouraged to become involved in CGEA leadership when he attended the 2000 Annual Conference in Kona, Hawaii. While on the Board, he chaired the Technical Advisory, Outstanding Project Award and State Compensation Insurance Fund committees, and



Siamak Jafroudi

served on several others including Membership, Programs, and Ways and Means.

Siamak says CalGeo's most significant accomplishment during his tenure was the development and implementation of our strategic plan, now in its sixth year. He greatly values the friendships he's developed with other board members and the opportunities CalGeo has provided to meet and interact with other business leaders in similar practices from around the state. Looking to the future, he would like to see more members become involved with CalGeo's Board and committees.

Join us all in thanking Siamak for his leadership and wishing him much continued success. He may be off the Board, but we're certain we haven't seen the last of him.

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## Strategic Planning Survey

### We Need Your Input!

The Board of Directors is scheduling a strategic planning session on Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>, and we'd love to get your opinion! We have created a survey in Survey Monkey that will take only a few minutes of your time to complete. Your opinion is invaluable to us and will help guide CalGeo's future. Please go to <http://surveymonkey.com/s/WDVC7P8> to take the survey by September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Thank you for your comments, we really appreciate it.

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## September Regional Meeting and Webcast

### "Perception Is Everything: Geophysics for Geotechnical Engineers"

Mark September 18 on your calendars for CalGeo's next Regional Dinner and webcast.

Our presenter, Joseph McKinney, PG, GP, an engineering geophysicist for Earth Systems Southwest, will discuss how "Perception Is Everything" and what geophysics means for geotechnical engineers. You'll learn the latest geophysical techniques and explore their applicability through case histories.

Join us live in Southern California or at one of our webcast locations across the state.

#### CalGeo Regional Dinner Meeting

**September 18, 5:30 p.m.**

**DoubleTree by Hilton, Irvine**

**Spectrum**

**Members: \$50 at hotel site, \$30 at webcast site**

**Non-Members: \$60 at hotel site, \$40 at webcast**

site

Students: \$10 at any site

Look for the registration documents COMING SOON to your email box or click [here](#).

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## Legislative Update

By Rick Keene

CalGeo Legislative Advocate



No dessert unless you finish your vegetables! That's essentially the message California voters and leaders in Sacramento have imposed on the state's legislators when it comes to doing the public's business. Our representatives can only take a summer recess if they clear their plates beforehand, which includes passing a budget. They also stop receiving paychecks if a budget isn't passed by June 15. So as the weather got warmer in Sacramento, so did the activity.

In a flurry, the State Legislature passed a budget, reauthorized high speed rail expenditures, moved the water bond to the 2014 ballot and finished the budget trailer bills. And for eating their peas, they got the month of July for a little R & R.

But it wasn't all toes in the sand. CalGeo Board members were busy during the break meeting with legislators in their districts to build relationships for next year's legislative agenda.

### Proposition 32

On another front, an item will appear on the November ballot that could fundamentally reform the state's broken campaign finance system. Proposition 32 would ban automatic deductions of wages by corporations, unions and government agencies to be used for politics, instead requiring annual consent of the employee. This could be a game changer if it passes, as it would curb special interest power and level the playing field for small business.

More on this in future months as the Board considers action.

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## Engineering Better Readers

By Patty Bain Bachner

*"The book basket is empty again!" says Katherine LuDue, a teacher at Briceville Elementary School (Briceville, TN).*

*"The children always have their noses in books; at the bus stop, in the cafeteria –all they do is read!" says Telaya Parham, assistant principal of the Camden Elementary School (Newark, NJ).*

What excites these educators so? Engineering Better Readers



A proud student from the EBR Newark pilot shows off his purchase.

(EBR), the flagship program of the [Engineers' Leadership Foundation](#) that incentivizes students to read. They're awarded points for every book and then use those points to purchase toys, bikes, Wii's, sports equipment, Barbie's, and such at the "school store." Reading scores have gone through the roof.

Only in its second year, EBR oversees four successful programs. A local engineering firm sponsors each, funding incentives and providing volunteer mentors. Their service is reported by local papers and TV. They've become community leaders.

"We are always looking for new locations and Champions," says EBR Director Patty Bain Bachner. Contact her at [patty@engineersleadership.org](mailto:patty@engineersleadership.org).

CalGeo is discussing how we can help bring the Engineering Better Readers program to California. We will provide updates as we find the best way to implement this great program.

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## Reminder!

### California Prevailing Wage Law Meeting

Join us September 12 as labor law experts Van Goodwin and Wayne Hersh of Littler Mendelson facilitate an interactive discussion titled *"Six Things You'd Better Understand Before Beginning (or Continuing) Public Works Construction in California."*

Click [here](#) to register and for more details.

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## Member News

### Ukiah Construction Materials Testing Laboratory Achieves Certification

LACO Associates has earned accreditation from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and acceptance from the Division of the State Architect (DSA) for their Ukiah laboratory. LACO has added several field and laboratory staff members to support the growing demand for construction materials testing and special field inspections, and the Ukiah lab is prepared to serve Mendocino, Sonoma and Lake Counties more efficiently and economically than the firm's Eureka lab. Mendocino County has only two labs with these certifications, including LACO. There are three certified labs in Sonoma County. LACO's Eureka lab is one of the only two such labs in Humboldt County.

AASHTO accreditation and DSA acceptance demonstrate the lab rigorously calibrates its equipment and maintains strict quality management systems to support code required construction testing.

### The Salary Survey is Here

For those that participated in this year's Salary Survey, it is on its way to you. If you did not participate and wish to purchase a copy of the Salary Survey, click [here](#).

## Landslide of the Month

### Alaska Landslide – One of the Biggest in North America

By Rex Upp



Perhaps the largest landslide in North America occurred with little notice on June 11, 2012. The earth movement began on the upper flank of 11,750-foot Lituya Mountain and flowed more than five miles before resting atop a glacier in Glacier Bay National Park. The event registered as a 3.4-magnitude earthquake, but went unnoticed until July 2, when a Canadian air taxi pilot flew over. It was not seen by tourists on Glacier Bay cruise ships as it is about 12 to 15 miles up the glacier from the bay. Experts believe the slope gave way after the rock was weakened by repeated freeze-thaw cycles. Click [here](#) for more information including a video of a fly-over along the entire landslide run-out.

## Geotechnical Characterization of Collapsible Soils

By Christian Delgadillo and Donald Coduto

Cal Poly Pomona

Through the courtesy of CalGeo, the authors distributed a collapsible soils survey to California geotechnical engineers. The survey results showed that the most common laboratory test for measuring collapse potential is the ASTM D2435 consolidation test. Only 10% report using the ASTM D5333 collapse test.

The recommended remediation most often consists of removal and recompaction using various criteria to specify the depth of removal. Bypassing the soils using deep foundations, prewetting, chemical stabilization, and in-situ compaction after wetting also were frequently mentioned.

In order to develop further insights into the geotechnical properties of collapsible soils, and thus provide a basis for conducting settlement analyses, the authors also conducted a series of laboratory tests on samples of collapsible soils and investigated the relationship between collapse strain and degree of wetting. The test

program found very little correlation between the hydrocollapse strain and common index properties.

To learn more about this study on collapsible soils, [click here](#).

## Safety First

### Portable Ladder Safety

*Courtesy of Cal/OSHA Consultation Service*



## Portable Ladder Safety *etool*

### Inspect Ladders Before Use

Cal OSHA requires ladders to be inspected.

Before use, employees should always inspect both Self Supporting and Not Self Supporting ladders for the items checking:

- for damage, lack of structural integrity, missing components or loose parts
- that labels are intact and readable.
- that accessories (e.g., leg levelers, paint shelves, stand-off shelves) are in good condition.
- for even feet (to avoid backward or sideways slipping out at the bottom).
- for slip resistant material on the base or nonskid feet

#### ***On extensions ladders that:***

- ropes and pullers are in good condition
- stops are on rails of the top section to ensure it will not fall, and on are on both rails of the bottom section to ensure enough overlap between the sections. The sliding section (s) (the "fly") should overlap the bottom section (the "base") by at least:

- 3 feet on ladders up to 32 feet long
- 4 feet on ladders 32 – 36 feet long
- 5 feet on ladders 36 - 48 feet long
- 6 feet on ladders longer than 48 feet



### **DAMAGED OR WORN LADDERS SHOULD BE DESTROYED**

#### ***For Metal Ladders inspect for:***

- loose rungs, nails, bolts screws and other metal parts
- bent or dented rungs or rails
- sharp edges, corners and burrs
- damage from corrosion

#### ***For Wood Ladders inspect for:***

- integrity of rungs and rails
- chips, splits, cracks and splinters in the rails
- holes and knots
- loose / wiggly parts

#### ***For Fiberglass or Plastic Ladders inspect for:***

- breaks, cracks, chips and splinters



- *deformed rails or rungs from heat, chemical or environmental exposure*

**For Self Supporting Step Ladders:**

- *in addition to the items mentioned above, verify that the two front legs are the same length and that the two hind legs are the same length*

Click [here](#) to learn more about ladder safety.

**State Compensation Fund of California Contact**

CalGeo members interested in becoming a member in CalGeo's "Safety First" group can contact Patty Amaya at (323) 327-5773, email her at [pattyamaya@scif.com](mailto:pattyamaya@scif.com), or by clicking [here](#) for more information.

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