

History of the California Section of AIPG

The California Section has supplied many important national leaders to AIPG, including the first AIPG President, Martin Van Couvering (1963-1965), Henry H. Neel (1970), Arthur O. Spaulding (1975), Richard Proctor (1989), and Stephen Testa (1998). In addition, the California Section is proud to have sponsored several meetings including the 5th Annual meeting in San Francisco in 1968, chaired by Daniel J. Pickrell, the 19th Annual meeting in Pasadena in 1982, chaired by Bruce Barron, and the 27th Annual meeting in Long Beach in 1990 chaired by Stephen M. Testa.

Charter AIPG members included 177 California Section members. Current long-time California Section members with CPG numbers less than 5,000 include: Joseph Wargo CPG-00054, Howard Pincus CPG-00065, David Martin CPG-00271, Robert Long CPG-00338, Willard Classen CPG-00524, John Troster CPG-00596, J. Thompson CPG-00763, Richard Faggioli CPG-00808, Robert Hindle CPG-00837, Wayne Estill CPG-00917, Nancy Stehle CPG-01749, Roy Shlemon CPG-01766, George Witter CPG-02188, Edward Nuhfer CPG-02808, Thomas Wright CPG-02812, Ronald Heck CPG-03100, John Parrish CPG-03326, Robert Stollar CPG-03497, John Moran CPG-03625, Dan Eberhart CPG-0366, Robert Lynn CPG-03669, Raul Deju CPG-04025, James Noble CPG-04079, William Elliott CPG-04194, Jon Lovegreen CPG-04379, Robert Sydnor CPG-04496, Wallace Jensky CPG-04724, Donald Fife CPG-04735, Arturo Nisperos CPG-0480, and C. Clayton CPG-04955.

The AIPG California Section is well represented in state government. The current California State Geologist is John Parrish who was the former Executive Officer of the State Mining and Geology Board, and prior to that, the Executive Officer of the Board for the Registration of Geologists and Geophysicists. Since 2005, Stephen M. Testa, also an AIPG member, has held the Executive Officer position at the State Mining and Geology Board.

California was one of the first states to license geologists. Registration in California had its basis in the very heavy rainfall in the winter of 1951-1952 which caused numerous landslides and mudslides in Southern California. Most of those slides occurred within the City of Los Angeles. Many of the landslides were precipitated by extensive excavation that had been completed by housing developments in hilly areas during the post World War II housing boom. The City of Los Angeles wrote an ordinance aimed at regulation of these practices of excavation and grading. The ordinance required that a geologic opinion was required to in the event that the City Building & Safety Department believed that the area presented a geologic hazard. An Engineering Geologists Qualification Board was established by the City of Los Angeles in 1957. The purpose of the board was to review the qualifications of those geologists practicing engineering geology in the City of Los Angeles and to establish a list of those whose reports would be accepted. The County of Los Angeles, followed the lead of the City of Los Angeles and established its own grading ordinance and Geologist Qualification Board in 1959. Over the next several years, about 20 more local geologist qualification boards were established in California. By early fall 1966, the City and County of Los Angeles, requested that the state assume the responsibility of registering, qualifying, or certifying geologists in the field. Many worked on the process, including Martin Van Couvering, as well as Henry "Hank" Neel. The Geologists Act was passed in 1968, effective in 1969. Licensure for geophysicists (early 1970s) and the title acts for specialty licensure for certified engineering geologists (in the original act) and certified hydrogeologist (mid 1990s) also occurred. A Board for the Registration of Geologists (later the Board for Registration for Geologists and Geophysicists) was formed under the Department of Consumer Affairs to license Registered Geologists. At some point it was noted that dogs and sex offenders were also registered in California, so the

designation of Registered Geologist was retired in favor of the more socially acceptable Professional Geologist title.

Over the years, the California Section of AIPG has lobbied to protect the Board of Geologists and Geophysicists many times over the past two decades as board sunset hearings occurred. In a last minute act in 2009, legislation was passed that eliminated the Board for Geologists and Geophysicists and transferred all of the duties, powers, purposes, responsibilities, and jurisdiction to regulate the practices of geology and geophysics to the Board for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. Effective January 1, 2011, the name of the Board was changed to the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists.

For lobbying, since about 1995, AIPG was instrumental with other organizations in California to form the California Council of Geoscience Organizations (CCGO). AIPG California Section members active in the CCGO founding included James Jacobs, David Sadoff and Stephen M. Testa. James Jacobs has since been the California Section representative for CCGO, serving as CCGO president of the organization for five years. The CCGO has arranged the annual Sacramento Drive-Ins in the spring legislative sessions since about 2000, and the California Section of AIPG has played a major role in the annual Sacramento Drive-Ins as part of the state legislative outreach.

The California Section has had meetings, and hosted co-field trips over the years. For the past 13 years, the California Section has participated in providing judges and prizes for the California State Science Fair, held every year in Los Angeles. David Sadoff was the primary judge with help from James Jacobs, Mehmet Pehlivan, and Mark Rogers. State officers over the past two decades include James Jacobs (president and vice president), David Sadoff (president and vice president), Mehmet Pehlivan (vice president), Karel Detterman (treasurer) and Mark Rogers (secretary). Earlier, Stephen M. Testa, Rob Larson and Chris Sexton served as section president for a series of years and Chris Sexton was a newsletter editor.

In 2010, UC Davis Student Section was founded with Professor Robert Zierenberg as advisor and James Jacobs as sponsor. Since then, monthly meetings and field trips have occurred opened to AIPG members and student members. Speakers included Rob Sydnor, John Parrish, David Sadoff, James Jacobs and others.