Pacific Petroleum Geology

NEWSLETTER

PACIFIC SECTION · AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PETROLEUM GEOLOGISTS

NOVEMBER | DECEMBER 2026



THE WEST COAST, ALASKA TO SAN DIEGO

A New Layer for the Pacific Section

New permits in Kern County, first oil on the North Slope, and a new team at the helm of the Pacific Section. Here is the good news from the basins we love.

INSIDE

MEET YOUR OFFICERS
Profiles of the 2026–2027 Executive Committee

INTERVIEW WITH A GEOLOGIST
Thom Davis on blind thrusts, balanced sections and the Dibblee maps

NORTH SLOPE TO SAN DIEGO
A basin-by-basin look at the Section

IN MEMORIAM
Robert B. Blodgett · Dale Sakaye Kunitomi

Monterey Formation at Hazard Reef, Montaña de Oro State Park · Photo: Peter D. Tillman

PACIFIC SECTION AAPG

2026–2027 Executive Committee

PRESIDENT
Maia Davis
president@psaapg.org

PRESIDENT-ELECT
Greg Gordon

SECRETARY
Ben Davidson

TREASURER
Lisa Alpert

TREASURER-ELECT
John Porter

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Yannick Wirtz

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

STANDING COMMITTEES

Conventions	**Kevin Weberling**
Membership	**Simmie Chehal**
Honors and Awards	**John Williams**
Publications	**John Porter**
Directories	**Greg Gordon & Maia Davis**
Finance	**Amy Spaziani**

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEES

Constitution and Bylaws	**Tony Reid**
AAPG Advisory Council Rep.	**Becca Schempp**
Student Scholarships	**Cynthia Huggins**
Teacher of the Year	**Karla Tucker**
Webmaster	**Kenton Crabtree**
Student Outreach	**Becca Schempp**
Social Media	**Elle Weberling**
Five-Year Plan	**Greg Gordon & Maia Davis**

IN THIS ISSUE

Contents

3 President's Letter
Maia Davis on the hands that bring us along

5 From the Editor
New Pages, Same Old Rocks

6 Meet Your Executive Committee
Six profiles: day jobs, alma maters, favorite outcrops

8 From the North Slope to San Diego
A basin-by-basin map of the Pacific Section

10 West Coast Roundup
The good news from Alaska to Southern California

12 Interview with a Geologist: Thomas L. Davis
A California legend on a career in fold-and-thrust belts

16 In Memoriam
Robert B. Blodgett · Dale Sakaye Kunitomi

18 Our Sponsors
The companies that keep this newsletter free

21 Member Society News
AGS · CGS · LABGS · NCGS · SJGS

23 Membership Dues
New Pacific Section dues, approved in April

ON THE COVER

Hazard Reef at Montaña de Oro State Park, San Luis Obispo County, looking north to Morro Rock. Thin-bedded Miocene strata of the Monterey Formation, tilted 10 to 20 degrees to the northwest, form the wave-cut reef and the sea cliff behind it. The same siliceous Monterey is the main source rock for California's oil, and in fields such as Lost Hills and Belridge it is the reservoir too. Photo: Peter D. Tillman / Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 3.0, cropped.

SUBMIT TO THE NEWSLETTER

Articles, field-trip photos, letters, outcrop puzzles and member news are welcome. Write to **editor@psaapg.org**. Photos at 300 dpi or better (JPG, PNG or TIF); text as Word or plain email.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

A New Layer on a Deep Foundation

Grateful for the hands that reached back, and holding one out to you.



BY **MAIA DAVIS** · PRESIDENT, PACIFIC SECTION AAPG

Dear members,

My name is Maia Davis, and it is a great honor and joy to serve the Pacific Section-AAPG (PS-AAPG) as President for the 2026–2027 term.

I'm new to leadership for PS-AAPG, as are most of our Executive Committee, but we join a robust lineage of leaders who have served (and continue to serve) our community. Peeking behind the curtain, these leaders have served with a level of devotion and commitment that has blown me away. Our new group is not alone as we move toward 2027 – we are supported by generations of volunteers who continue to show up for PS-AAPG. The dedication displayed by our forbearers (many of whom are still actively involved in our leadership) is truly remarkable.

To share a little of my history, I feel at home with several of our affiliated societies. As a geology student at Santa Barbara City College, I was bussed down to Ventura for the Coast Geological Society (CGS) dinner meetings where I got to serve the beans from 2004 through 2007. In graduate school at Long Beach State, I attended the Los Angeles Basin Geological Society (LABGS) meetings from 2014 through 2018, serving as Secretary in 2018. After moving to Bakersfield, I became a regular at the San Joaquin Geological Society (SJGS) meetings from 2018 through 2021 and served as President for the 2020–2021 term. This term, I look forward to reconnecting with those groups. Likewise, I am eager to engage more with the Alaska Geological Society (AGS), as I know they have an exciting technical conference every year. I'm eager to explore and support more of the work going on up there. I also am delighted at the opportunity to make the Northern California Geological Society (NCGS) my new home association, as my actual home is in northern California.

These organizations, and others like them, have been fundamental to my development as a geologist and a human being. At every step there has been someone ahead of me, reaching a hand back, and bringing me along with them, be it through awarding me a scholarship, inviting me to play in the annual golf tournament (knowing my game is abysmal), or encouraging me to hold office. This is the encouragement we all need to keep showing up and stay in the game. The technical programs – talks, field trips, publications, etc. – groups like our affiliate societies, PS-AAPG, and AAPG facilitate have been fundamental in my growth as a geologist. They allow for exposure to studies outside of my normal focus that, after (years of) extended rumination, shine light on some component of my work and garner new understanding and questions. This has been the case for my journey, so far, and it keeps me excited about my science.

As a professional gaining some season, the hands that reach out to me are no longer only ahead of me, beckoning me onward, they are also beside me, holding me up. An example of that is this term's executive committee. I met our Editor in Chief, Yannick Wirtz, and Secretary, Ben Davidson, in 2014 at Long Beach State, where we tackled grad school, the Imperial Barrel Award competition, and field work together. John Porter, our Treasurer-Elect, and I met in 2017 when he started his adventure in California, and I was but an intern; he has cultivated my growth in many directions. Our Treasurer,

"At every step there has been someone ahead of me, reaching a hand back, and bringing me along with them."

Lisa Alpert, was one of my first friends and mentors upon my arrival in Bakersfield in 2018. I met our President-Elect, Greg Gordon, in 2019 through working with his dad, and he has been an inspiration to me since. I consider all these people my friends, and they are essential to the richness of my life and career.

To me, the value of professional organizations like our affiliate societies, PS-AAPG, and the national organization of AAPG cannot be overstated. Their essential function is to establish pathways for knowledge-sharing and professional networking. Through doing so, they create space for unimaginable potential – a publication or lively conversation at a meeting or on a field trip can illuminate a path for us that goes in a direction we had not before considered.

As many of us know all too well, the petroleum industry in California (maybe for Alaska, too?) is in a (prolonged) period of transition. After being laid off from my dream job in Bakersfield in 2021, I have had to reimagine the path of my career. However, the skillsets I've developed as a petroleum geologist have carried me through multiple shifts in disciplines and the fundamentals have remained relevant. Additionally, my network – many of you who are reading this – has kept me motivated and optimistic. Attending the PS-AAPG/SPE Joint Meeting in April this year was an incredibly inspiring occasion for me. A passion and curiosity that had gone dormant with the perceived loss of a dream I had for myself was shaken awake, and I have renewed purpose. There is potential all around us, we just need to be open to it. Our affiliate societies, PS-AAPG, and AAPG are excellent havens to explore that potential. I certainly have only benefitted from my engagement, and I hope to encourage and inspire others to be involved and stay engaged. I'm likely preaching to the choir here... But tell your friends! We cannot imagine the benefits we will reap from being involved in these organizations.

I am grateful to you, dear members, long-standing and new, for showing up and being interested. You make this work worthwhile, and you cannot imagine the meaning you bring to it.

If you would like to be more involved with PS-AAPG but aren't quite sure where to start, consider joining a committee (see the full list on the Contents page). We'd love support on our Conventions Committee, Student Outreach, or with developing our 5-year Plan. We would also love to see your work and stories in our pages – consider contributing content to the newsletter! Member involvement is encouraged, welcome, and necessary. If you've got ideas, share them; if you want to be involved, raise your hand – reach out! My hand is out, ready to bring you along and hold you up. And know that I am always grateful for the hands that reach back.

Your friend,
Maia Davis
President, Pacific Section AAPG

GET INVOLVED

Join a committee. The Conventions Committee, Student Outreach and the 5-year Plan all need help. Every committee and its chair is listed on page 2.

Write for the newsletter. Send us your articles, field photos and stories; page 5 tells you how.

Reach out. Maia Davis, President
president@psaapg.org

FROM THE EDITOR

New Pages, Same Old Rocks

BY **YANNICK WIRTZ** · EDITOR IN CHIEF

It is an honor to start work as Editor in Chief of the PSAAPG newsletter. Before anything else, I want to thank Tony Reid, who put this newsletter together issue after issue. Thank you, Tony, for all the time and care you gave to the Section.

My goal is to carry on Tony's efforts and achievements with the newsletter and to help give it a new look: clean, good-looking graphics, real photos, and stories that make you want to read, share and get involved. I have had a little practice with this as a volunteer with Californians for Energy and Science, and I hope to bring some of that experience to these pages.

This issue is only the beginning. If you have ideas for how the newsletter could be better, or if you would like to contribute an article, a photo or a story of your own, please get in touch at **editor@psaapg.org**. Every suggestion is welcome.

See you in the field,
Yannick



Yannick Wirtz, Editor in Chief



Sunset over the Carrizo Plain. The view runs across the plain toward Soda Lake, in Carrizo Plain National Monument. The San Andreas fault follows the plain's northeastern edge along the foot of the Temblor Range, with the San Joaquin Basin beyond. *Photo: BLM California (public domain).*

Have a field photo you would like to see here in the next issue? Send it to editor@psaapg.org with a line on where and when you took it.

NEW FEATURE

Meet Your 2026–2027 Executive Committee

Six volunteers constitute the Executive Committee for 2026–2027. Meet them here.



PRESIDENT

Maia Davis

Maia is a Professional Geologist (CA, UT) with more than 16 years in applied geoscience: oil and gas, surface and groundwater conservation, agricultural and forest land management, and environmental remediation. Her career has taken her to offshore petroleum basins on four continents and to nearly every major petroleum basin in California.

DAY JOB
Senior Geologist, Broadbent & Associates, Inc.

ALMA MATER
B.S. Geology, UC Santa Barbara · M.S. Geology, CSU Long Beach · M.S. Soils and Biogeochemistry, UC Davis

HOME BASIN
Sacramento Basin

MEMBER SINCE
2014

FAVORITE OUTCROP
Dolomite breccias at the north end of Jalama Beach and near Highway 1 at the old Grefco Quarry road

OFF THE CLOCK
Going someplace with her dog, Merle, or eating good food with a nice glass of wine and great friends



PRESIDENT-ELECT

Greg Gordon

Greg is a geological advisor with California Resources Corporation. He has more than 20 years of experience in California oil and gas exploration and development, as well as projects in the Texas Gulf Coast and offshore Nigeria. Beyond petroleum, Greg has worked on hydrogen and geothermal projects, and he has taught geology as an adjunct professor at California State University, Bakersfield. He has served as president of the San Joaquin Well Logging Society and of the San Joaquin Geological Society, and he is the 2026–2027 President-Elect of PSAAPG. He received the 2020 CSUB Alumni Rising Runner award.

DAY JOB
Senior Geological Advisor, California Resources Corporation

ALMA MATER
B.S. Geosciences, UT Dallas · M.S. Geology, CSU Bakersfield · Ph.D. Geology, Colorado School of Mines

HOME BASIN
San Joaquin Basin

MEMBER SINCE
About 2014 to 2020, and again from 2026

FAVORITE OUTCROP
Guaso turbidite system, Ainsa Basin, Spain

OFF THE CLOCK
Family activities, basketball, guitar, planning travel, running, reading and debating



SECRETARY

Ben Davidson

Ben is a Professional Geologist (CA) with 10 years of experience in the oil and gas industry. He first joined California Resources Corporation in 2016 as an engineering tech, constructing wellbore diagrams. In 2017 he was hired as the geologist for Pacific Coast Energy Company (PCEC), where he managed the 3D geologic models for the Orcutt and Brea-Olinda oil fields. When PCEC changed hands in 2019, Ben moved back to the Los Angeles Basin, where he continued his work at the Brea-Olinda Oil Field with Bridge Energy. He joined the PSAAPG Executive Committee as Secretary in the summer of 2026.

DAY JOB
Senior Geologist, Bridge Energy, LLC

ALMA MATER
B.S. and M.S. Geological Sciences, CSU Long Beach

HOME BASIN
Los Angeles Basin

MEMBER SINCE
2013

FAVORITE OUTCROP
The "Speckled Beds" of the Miocene Modelo/Monterey Formation along Camino de la Cumbre, Sherman Oaks

OFF THE CLOCK
Cycling, swimming, running and mountain biking



TREASURER

Lisa Alpert

Lisa (PhD, PG) prepares and reviews technical reports at Geo-Logic Associates for submittal to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and state regulatory agencies in support of Class VI Underground Injection Control (UIC), or carbon sequestration, applications. Before that she spent 14 years at Aera Energy, working the San Ardo and Belridge fields for oil development and then moving into water resources, where she worked all Aera assets in the context of SB 4 and General Orders, along with groundwater monitoring and regulatory responses to the State Water Resources Control Board and CalGEM.

DAY JOB
Senior Professional Geologist, Geo-Logic Associates

ALMA MATER
Ph.D., USC · M.S. and B.S., CSU Los Angeles

HOME BASIN
Los Angeles; previously San Joaquin

MEMBER SINCE
2011

FAVORITE OUTCROP
Soft-sediment deformation along Highway 14

OFF THE CLOCK
Her family and her dog



TREASURER-ELECT

John Porter

John (PG) works as Director of Geoscience with Black Knight Energy Resources and consults through Porterra Inc. He previously worked California basins with California Resources Corporation, U.S. onshore plays with Encana and the deepwater Gulf of Mexico with Marathon. John was Treasurer of the San Joaquin Geological Society from 2023 to 2025.

DAY JOB
Evaluating marketed deals and emerging plays

ALMA MATER
B.S., University of Wyoming · M.S., Montana State University

HOME BASIN
Any basin with an active petroleum system

MEMBER SINCE
2018

FAVORITE OUTCROP
Medicine Peak and Sugarloaf Quartzites: ripples that formed in minutes, over 2 billion years ago

OFF THE CLOCK
Exercise, the outdoors and reading



EDITOR IN CHIEF

Yannick Wirtz

Yannick is a senior geologist with Earth Consultants International (ECI). Originally from Germany, he earned his B.S. in Geology at RWTH Aachen University before an internship at ECI and the pull of Southern California culture set the course for his career. He went on to complete his M.S. in Geology at California State University, Long Beach. Yannick specializes in subsurface 3D modeling for the oil and gas and renewable energy industries, and he volunteers with Californians for Energy and Science.

DAY JOB
Senior Geologist, Earth Consultants International

ALMA MATER
B.S. Geology, RWTH Aachen University (Germany) · M.S. Geology, CSU Long Beach

HOME BASIN
Los Angeles Basin

MEMBER SINCE
2026

FAVORITE OUTCROP
Highly folded section of the upper Monterey Formation at Sweeney Road, Lompoc

OFF THE CLOCK
Surfing, playing soccer and working on music projects

GET INVOLVED

The Section runs on volunteers: the conventions, field trips, short courses, scholarships, the website and this newsletter are all put together by members in their spare time. You do not need to be an officer to help. A few hours a month goes a long way, and it is the fastest way to meet geologists across the Section. Interested? Write to **president@psaapg.org**.

THE PACIFIC SECTION

From the North Slope to San Diego

One Section, five member societies, and some of the most prolific sedimentary basins on Earth.



BASIN SNAPSHOTS

Nine Places, One Section

ALASKA

North Slope

Prudhoe Bay, found in 1968, is the largest oil field in North America. It has produced since 1977 through the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. The new frontier is the Brookian topset play in the Cretaceous Nanushuk Formation, home of the Pikka and Willow developments.

ALASKA

Cook Inlet

Richfield's 1957 Swanson River discovery was Alaska's first commercial oil field. Tertiary nonmarine sandstones (Hemlock, Tyonek) hold the oil, and coals and shallow sands supply the gas that heats Southcentral Alaska.

OREGON

Mist Gas Field

Oregon's only commercial gas field was discovered in 1979 in Eocene sandstones of the Cowlitz Formation. Its depleted reservoirs now serve as underground gas storage for the Pacific Northwest.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Sacramento Basin

A dry-gas province in the northern Great Valley forearc. Rio Vista, discovered in 1936, is California's largest gas field. The reservoirs are Upper Cretaceous and Paleogene deep-water and deltaic sandstones.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

San Joaquin Basin

The heavyweight of the Section. Midway-Sunset (1894), Kern River (1899), Elk Hills and Belridge are giants, sourced mainly by Miocene Monterey shales. Kern County produces most of California's oil.

CENTRAL COAST

Santa Maria Basin

Union Oil opened the Orcutt field in 1901. Fractured Monterey chert and dolostone are the reservoir here, onshore and offshore at Point Arguello. The outcrops at Point Buchon and Shell Beach are a classic field trip.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Ventura Basin & Santa Barbara Channel

Pliocene Pico and Repetto turbidites, folded into the Ventura Avenue anticline, have produced since 1919. Offshore, platforms in the Channel tap Monterey and Sisquoc reservoirs.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles Basin

Often called the richest basin in the world for oil per volume of sediment. Huntington Beach (1920), Signal Hill (1921) and Wilmington (1932) made Southern California an oil capital. The THUMS islands still produce from Long Beach Harbor.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

San Diego

The southern end of the Section has no oil fields, but its sea cliffs are a classroom. The Cretaceous Point Loma Formation and the Eocene La Jolla Group are textbook submarine-fan and channel outcrops, used as analogs for deep-water reservoirs.



The Trans-Alaska Pipeline crossing the northern Brooks Range. *USGS (public domain)*



Rincon Island and its causeway, Rincon oil field, Ventura Basin coast. *Mike Peel / Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0*



Eocene sandstone sea cliffs at Torrey Pines, San Diego. *Stch2022 / Wikimedia Commons, CC0*

Basin summaries compiled by the editor from published sources. Corrections and additions are welcome.

WEST COAST ROUNDUP

Good News from the Basins

Drill permits in Kern, first oil on the North Slope, and California's first carbon storage. The stories that mattered from June to October 2026.



The Kern River oil field from the air, on the bluffs northeast of Bakersfield, with the Kern River at right. *Photo: Uncle Kick-Kick / Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0, cropped and contrast-adjusted.*

SAN JOAQUIN BASIN · KERN COUNTY

Kern County drilling rebounds under SB 237

SB 237, which took effect on January 1, lets the state rely on Kern County's 2025 environmental review when it permits new wells, up to 2,000 a year, while keeping a 3,200-foot setback from homes, schools and parks. By mid-September, CalGEM had issued 378 permits to drill new oil and gas wells in Kern, and the county had issued 1,160 permits for other well work. Watchdog groups counted 17 new-drill permits statewide in all of 2025.

California Resources Corp. says it received 193 of the 194 permits it applied for and is running five rigs, four of them in Kern. Not every permit becomes a well, but it is the first sustained drilling program in the giant fields of the San Joaquin since the 2019–2025 permitting freeze.

Sources: Office of the Governor, Sept. 19, 2026; KERO-23 Bakersfield; CalGEM.

NORTH SLOPE · ALASKA

Pikka flows, and the Nanushuk delivers

Santos and Repsol brought Pikka Phase 1 online in mid-May. By the end of the third quarter, rates had briefly topped the 80,000-barrel-a-day plateau target before being held near 70,000 while seawater injection catches up. Thirty-two wells have been drilled, and five tankers have loaded Pikka crude at Valdez. At plateau the field adds about a fifth to Alaska's production.

Pikka is the first production from the Cretaceous Nanushuk Formation topset play, shallow-marine and deltaic sands in stratigraphic traps, found less than a decade ago. In April, Santos's Quokka-1 appraisal well nearby found about 143 feet of net oil pay and flowed 2,190 barrels a day.

Sources: Repsol and Santos releases, May and Oct. 2026; *Oil & Gas Journal*.

SAN JOAQUIN BASIN · ELK HILLS

California's first CO_2 goes underground

On May 26, Carbon TerraVault, a CRC–Brookfield joint venture, began injecting CO_2 from the Elk Hills gas plant into the depleted 26R reservoir, more than a mile down. It is the state's first operating carbon-storage project, permitted for up to 1.46 million tonnes a year. Eight more reservoirs are in the EPA permit queue.

Sources: CRC, May 26, 2026; U.S. EPA Class VI permits.

NORTH SLOPE · NPR-A

Record bids, and Willow at the halfway mark

March's lease sale in the National Petroleum Reserve drew 430 bids from 11 companies and $164 million in high bids, the most in the reserve's history; half goes to the State of Alaska. ConocoPhillips's Willow project passed 50 percent complete and is on track for first oil in early 2029. The state forecasts North Slope output above 500,000 barrels a day in fiscal 2027.

Sources: Alaska Public Media; BLM; ConocoPhillips; Alaska Dept. of Revenue.

COOK INLET · ALASKA

New gas wells for Southcentral Alaska

In August the state approved three new wells on Hilcorp's Beluga River K Pad on the west side of the inlet. In September, BlueCrest Energy said it has funding for a new gas well in the Cosmopolitan Unit near Anchor Point, which it estimates could supply 25 million cubic feet a day from 2027. Both target the Tertiary sands that heat Anchorage, ahead of a tight winter.

Sources: Alaska DNR via OffshoreSource; Alaska Public Media, Sept. 16, 2026.

SACRAMENTO

In-state supply is back in the conversation

With refinery closures squeezing supply, the governor signed SB 795 in September to allow E15 gasoline and used authority from SB 237 to switch to winter-blend fuel early. His office now describes SB 237 as a way to "responsibly stabilize oil production in Kern County." It is a notable change in tone from Sacramento.

Source: Office of the Governor, Sept. 19 and 28, 2026.

ON THE WATCH LIST

Santa Ynez Unit: Sable Offshore restarted Platforms Harmony and Heritage in March after 11 years, with Hondo targeted for late 2026; the restart is still contested in court.

Alaska LNG: construction awards and gas agreements signed; no final investment decision yet.

Offshore leasing: BOEM has begun an environmental review of possible California lease sales; the state is opposed.

CALIFORNIANS FOR ENERGY & SCIENCE

Helping Californians understand energy economics, security and policy.

A nonpartisan, science-based nonprofit led by people who work in California energy. Fact sheets on gasoline and power prices, imports and refinery closures, the *Unleash California* podcast, and outreach to students across Kern County.

Membership is free and open to everyone.

ENERGYANDSCIENCE.COM INFO@ENERGYANDSCIENCE.COM





INTERVIEW WITH A GEOLOGIST · NO. 1

Thomas L. Davis

STRUCTURAL GEOLOGIST · VENTURA, CALIFORNIA

Photo: thomasldavisgeologist.com · Thom Davis (white cap) with local guides east of the Dabbar Anticline, Sulaiman fold belt, Pakistan

From the Big Bend of the San Andreas to the fold belts of Pakistan, Thom Davis has spent more than four decades drawing balanced cross sections through some of the most complicated structure on Earth.

Few geologists have shaped how we picture the structure of Southern California more than Thomas L. "Thom" Davis. A consulting geologist based in Ventura, Thom earned his BS at UCLA and his PhD at UC Santa Barbara, where his 1983 dissertation mapped the western Big Bend of the San Andreas fault and the San Emigdio Mountains.

At ARCO he worked fold-and-thrust belts from the Brooks Range to Pakistan's Potwar Plateau. With Jay Namson he won the company's 1986 technical achievement award for applying balanced cross sections to California exploration. As partners in Davis & Namson Consulting Geologists, the two drew the regional sections that put blind thrusts under Los Angeles on the map. Thom proposed the Elysian Park thrust system months before the 1987 Whittier Narrows earthquake, and their 1994 *Nature* paper tied the Northridge earthquake to the same style of faulting. Much of Thom's and Jay's work is free to download at davisnamson.com and thomasldavisgeologist.com.

His international work spans Pakistan's Sulaiman and Kirthar fold belts, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Colombia and Venezuela. Today he runs Thomas L. Davis Geologist, has taught field mapping at CSU Bakersfield, and, as President of the Geologic Maps Foundation, has helped put more than 300 of Tom Dibblee's geologic maps online for free.

Throughout his career, Thom has made tremendous efforts to support students and academic programs, and he has led free field trips across Southern California and Baja California, open not only to geologists but also to the general public.

We sent Thom our questions this fall; his answers follow.

"It is a mistake to equate more than 140 years of exploration along the structurally complex west side with the discovery of all its commercial oil deposits."



Thom Davis on the pier at Prisoners Harbor, Santa Cruz Island.

AT A GLANCE

BASED IN
Ventura, California

EDUCATION
BS, UCLA · PhD, UC Santa Barbara (1983)

CAREER
ARCO · Davis & Namson Consulting Geologists · Thomas L. Davis Geologist

KNOWN FOR
Balanced cross sections; the blind thrusts under Los Angeles

GIVES BACK
President, Geologic Maps Foundation; has taught field mapping at CSU Bakersfield; leads free field trips in Southern and Baja California

READ HIM
tdavisgeo.substack.com

INTERVIEW WITH A GEOLOGIST

Thom Davis, in His Own Words

Q You went from a BS at UCLA to a PhD at UC Santa Barbara on the western Big Bend of the San Andreas fault and the San Emigdio Mountains. What drew you to that piece of country, and who taught you how to map?

A I learned geologic mapping at UCLA under Clem Nelson, Ron Shreve, and Clarence Hall, all great field mappers. I was very fortunate to complete summer field camp under Nelson in the White-Inyo Mountains, where he was the local expert. It was a geologically and physically demanding area. I don't think this high level of field-mapping instruction is common today. That field education shaped my entire career and gave me the confidence and skills to field map in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Colombia, Venezuela, and several areas in the western USA. I decided to do my PhD at UCSB on the western Big Bend of the San Andreas fault because it had not been mapped in detail, and there was a question of how the fault influenced the evolution of the adjacent San Emigdio Mountains. At that time, the late Neogene structural style and evolution of the western Transverse Ranges were not well understood, and my San Emigdio Mountains research was part of that larger regional question. After my dissertation, the research continued at ARCO in the deformed parts of the Cuyama Basin and Temblor Range.

Q At ARCO, you and Jay Namson won the company's 1986 technical achievement award for applying balanced cross sections in California, including a subthrust basin under the Carrizo Plain. How hard was it to sell thrust-belt geometry in a state where most people thought "strike-slip"?

A It was easier to convince ARCO than most academics and other California petroleum geologists that fold-and-thrust-belt deformation was a more realistic model than the prevailing flower-structure interpretation. ARCO had much of the drilling and seismic data showing that the northern Cuyama Basin and Carrizo Plain were deformed by a fold-and-thrust belt, despite the nearby San Andreas fault. I think one of the most important accomplishments Jay Namson and I made was demonstrating that a previously unrecognized subthrust part of the Cuyama Basin extended beneath the Carrizo Plain. Additional support for our fold-and-thrust-belt interpretation came from the seismological characteristics of moderate to large earthquakes, including the 1983 Coalinga, 1987 Whittier Narrows, and 1994 Northridge earthquakes. After leaving ARCO, Jay and I started a consulting business. One of our first clients was the USGS, and we were able to map the Elysian Park thrust beneath the Los Angeles Basin and other blind thrusts in southern California. The cross sections are available to view and download for free at: thomasldavisgeologist.com/cross-sections

Q You have written about untested large traps on the west side of the San Joaquin basin. What structural traps do California explorers still overlook, and why?

A I'm focused on two structural opportunities along the oil-rich west side of the San Joaquin Basin: (1) large subthrust anticlines and other traps, and (2) small- to moderate-sized traps in structurally complex areas downdip of existing oil fields. Many explorers still underestimate the extent and number of subthrust structures along the west side. Existing wells and two-dimensional seismic profiles suggest several subthrust areas with indications of large traps: searchanddiscovery.com Although the sizes of these possible traps are attractive, they remain high-risk leads. More cross-section work, mapping, and 3D seismic surveys are needed to better define the structural geometry, closure, and reservoir presence. A less expensive approach is to explore downdip of existing oil fields in structurally complex areas, with potential for 5–30 MMBO recoverable. Not every subthrust or downdip lead will become a 'good' prospect. It is a mistake to equate more than 140 years of exploration along the structurally complex west side with the discovery of all its commercial oil deposits: searchanddiscovery.com

Q Your Substack recently asked whether the unconventional Monterey shale play is dead. What is your answer, and what would it take to change it?

A The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimated 13.7 billion barrels (BBO) of unproved technically recoverable Monterey/Santos oil before reducing that estimate to 0.6 BBO as geological and production evidence accumulated (EIA, 2014). Subsequent USGS assessments estimated much smaller mean undiscovered technically recoverable continuous Monterey oil resources. What do the USGS assessments resolve, and what remains uncertain? The USGS estimates of continuous Monterey oil are 21 MMBO (San Joaquin), 4 MMBO (Ventura), and 11 MMBO (Los Angeles), compared with the substantially larger, older EIA estimate for the broader Monterey/Santos tight-oil play. USGS assessments infer substantial petroleum migration through natural fractures and faults but also explicitly recognize potential deep continuous accumulations (Tennyson et al., 2015, 2017;

Schenk et al., 2025). The principal uncertainty is whether well control and assumed low per-well recoveries adequately characterize the deepest, relatively undeformed compartments. Inadequate drilling evidence neither establishes nor rules out the existence of a large, commercially producible petroleum resource. Here is the link to the entire post: tdavisgeo.substack.com

Q You mapped at 1:50,000 in Pakistan's Sulaiman Range and the Mari-Bugti Hills. What was fieldwork there like day to day? Is the photo on your website from there?

A My work was in the Sulaiman fold belt of Baluchistan. It's a fantastic area, arid and well exposed, geologically and historically interesting. Political instability has contributed to its remaining underexplored and underdeveloped. When I first started working in Pakistan in 1986, I was with ARCO International. The Soviets were still occupying Afghanistan, and the USA was viewed more or less as a friend by the local Pashtuns. For about a decade, I traveled to Baluchistan a number of times, spending a month or two doing fieldwork before returning to the USA. By the time I stopped doing fieldwork in Baluchistan, around 1997, the USA and most non-Muslim outsiders were viewed less favorably, and the security situation was worsening. I managed to do a lot of field mapping, complete a seismic survey, and have two wells drilled, one with Albion and one with Conoco. Yes, the photo on my website is from a day in the field east of the giant Dabbar Anticline. Here is a link to a summary of the work around Dabbar: linkedin.com

Q You have argued that the San Andreas can guide exploration along Myanmar's Sagaing fault, and you have worked in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Which California lessons travel well, and which do not?

A Myanmar (also known as Burma) has producing oil fields, some very old, and further potential. But political and security issues have left its oil resources underexplored and underdeveloped. Myanmar is tropical, and heavy vegetation cover and a lack of detailed surface mapping make exploration difficult, as do limited exploratory well and seismic data. The right-lateral strike-slip Sagaing Fault lies along the eastern margin of the oil-producing Central Depression. The tectonic characteristics of the fault and adjacent basin are similar to those of the west side of the San Joaquin and Cuyama Basins adjacent to the San Andreas fault. Some earlier structural studies interpreted the anticlinal oil traps along the Sagaing Fault as flower structures, but we were doubtful. Our California work became a useful guide in overcoming the lack of detailed mapping. A closer look at the well and seismic data indicated that the anticlinal oil traps of the Central Depression were part of a Neogene fold-and-thrust belt and led to further exploration leads: searchanddiscovery.com

Q For our Alaska readers: at ARCO you also worked the Brooks Range fold belt and the Arctic Coastal Plain. What carries over between the Brooks Range and California's young fold belts, and what does not?

A Jay Namson and I mapped in the foothills of the Brooks Range, just south of the coastal plain, in the early 1980s while we were with ARCO. The area is more like the Rocky Mountains than California, both structurally and stratigraphically. It took me a while to get used to mapping at a more regional scale than in California. Most of the mapping was on the ground, hiking around and lugging a shotgun loaded with slugs—pesky bears! We did map from a helicopter several times, which was a disorienting challenge. Much of the Brooks Range and coastal plain resembles what the late Pleistocene Northern Hemisphere must have been like: no roads, no towns, and lots of big animals (grizzly and polar bears, moose, and caribou). We had a too-close encounter with a mother grizzly and her two cubs, which was interrupted by the sudden appearance of a stray and somewhat goofy caribou that fortunately distracted the mother.

Q Through the Geologic Maps Foundation, your team digitized nearly 300 of Tom Dibblee's maps and gives them away free. What did you learn about Dibblee as a mapper from working through his sheets line by line?

A Yes, there are now over 300 Tom Dibblee Jr. geologic maps in the Geologic Maps Foundation's map library: geologicmapsfoundation.org/geologic-maps The Dibblee maps are high-quality PDF files, all free to view and download. The original mapping and its various attributes were digitized into GIS and placed on modern topographic bases. We hope to add many more maps in 2027. Our ultimate goal is to make the maps downloadable to a smartphone app hosted by the Foundation, which is one reason to have all the maps in GIS. In addition, the library includes other maps and links to map viewers, including the Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Park Sidebar apps: Death Valley Sidebar app and Joshua Tree National Park Sidebar App

BTW: we are having an end of 2026 fund raiser: donorbox.org/2026-fundraiser

I was fortunate to go into the field with Tom Dibblee on several occasions and to visit his home office in Santa Barbara many times. Tom worked for Richfield Oil Company in the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s and felt a special fondness for ARCO, which was formed from the merger of Atlantic and Richfield.

Q You combine lidar, drones and GIS with old-fashioned field mapping, and you teach field geology at CSU Bakersfield. Is field mapping a dying skill? What would you tell a department chair thinking about cutting field camp?

A Actually, what I taught at CSU Bakersfield was mapping in the field, with pencil, protractor, and Brunton compass. That's the part missing from a lot of geologic education today. For the classroom part of the course, I would spend more time using Google Earth with the maps we had made in the field. I avoided GIS because it was one more thing for students to learn, and frankly, they already had gaps in their geologic education, especially structural geology. I didn't want to make the course even more difficult. While I enjoyed teaching mapping, the COVID-19 shutdown made trying to teach fieldwork remotely too unrealistic. I don't think cutting field camps or field classes is a great idea, although I know it has become a common option at universities.

Q Your firm now screens California oil fields for carbon storage and keeps a Salton Trough geothermal database with brine chemistry, including lithium. Which petroleum geology skills carry over directly to CCS, geothermal and lithium?

A Yes, we have a lot of California data for natural gas and carbon storage, as well as geothermal exploration and development. Some of the data is publicly available, and much is private data we have acquired over the years. Clients can purchase our well-organized databases through the Thomas L Davis Geologist webpage, which include digitized well-log curves (.LAS files) and other data presented as spreadsheets and image files, saving themselves a lot of setup time.

Q Where do you see California oil and gas in ten years, and what role should geologists play in that conversation?

A I believe California will still be using a lot of fossil fuels in ten years, possibly even in 100 years. Fossil fuels are simply too useful and necessary a resource to go away anytime soon. What proportion is produced locally and what proportion is imported (crude oil and refined products) is really the key question California geologists need to pay attention to.

Q What one piece of advice would you give students and early-career geologists, from Alaska to San Diego, who want a career in structure and exploration?

A The job market is so much more complex and unstable than when I came out of school. Consequently, a specific career path may not be realistic or available. A student wanting to apply structural geology to oil and gas exploration should try to get a job with a medium-sized or major oil company to receive advanced training and industry experience. If you want to work in a resource industry, adding some economics and business education will help a lot. Understanding how your employer makes money is key to being a productive employee and to your financial and employment security.

Q If a reader could visit only one field area you have shown on a field trip, which should it be, and what should they look for?

A Death Valley National Park is a premier geology field-trip location for education and research because of its well-exposed geology and wide range of features and processes. Plus, it is nearby. Many great geology stops are reachable by paved roads, and numerous dirt roads provide access to less well-known but equally valuable stops. You really need to visit the park to appreciate its size and range of great geology. My Substack.com page has some of my Death Valley geology articles, for instance: tdavisgeo.substack.com

Q What is still on your geologic bucket list?

A Make more Kern County oil discoveries, lead Death Valley and White-Inyo Mountains field trips, make more California cross sections, and return to surface mapping in Pakistan and Myanmar.



Thom's pick: On the edge of the Basin & Range and Death Valley country. Looking west from the Inyo Mountains, Cerro Gordo Road below, and across the Owens Lakebed to the Sierra Nevada.
Photo: Thom Davis

MORE FROM THOM DAVIS

CROSS SECTIONS, FREE TO VIEW AND DOWNLOAD
thomasldavisgeologist.com/cross-sections

DAVIS AND NAMSON CROSS SECTIONS, FREE
davisnamson.com

SUBSTACK
tdavisgeo.substack.com

DIBBLEE GEOLOGIC MAPS, FREE
geologicmapsfoundation.org/geologic-maps

GEOLOGIC MAPS FOUNDATION 2026 FUNDRAISER
donorbox.org/2026-fundraiser

Who should we talk to next? Suggest a geologist for No. 2: see page 5.

IN MEMORIAM



Bob in the field as a young geologist. *Photo: NPS History Collection, from his 2020 oral history*

Robert B. Blodgett

OCTOBER 5, 1952 – OCTOBER 5, 2026

CONSULTING GEOLOGIST AND PALEONTOLOGIST · ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

Alaska's fossil detective, and a familiar byline in these pages.

Robert B. "Bob" Blodgett, whose articles on Alaska's oil seeps, historic wells and fossils have filled many pages of this newsletter, died in Anchorage on October 5, 2026, his 74th birthday.

Bob was born in Pocatello, Idaho. His family moved to Seattle and then, in January 1960, to Anchorage, where he finished high school in 1971. He earned BS (1975) and MS (1978) degrees in geology at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, with a thesis on the Devonian Ogilvie Formation of east-central Alaska and the Yukon. At Oregon State University he completed a PhD in 1987 under Arthur Boucot on Devonian gastropods from the Livengood Quadrangle.

From 1988 to 1995 he worked for the U.S. Geological Survey's Branch of Paleontology and Stratigraphy in Reston, Virginia, spending long hours in the Smithsonian collections, and held an Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship in Göttingen, Germany. After teaching natural sciences at Western Oregon, he came home to Anchorage as a consultant to the Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys, the USGS, the National Park Service and many of the companies exploring Alaska for oil and gas.

Bob was an authority on Paleozoic brachiopods and gastropods and published more than 330 papers. His fossil faunas helped trace Alaska's accreted terranes, among them the Farewell and Alexander terranes, back to Siberian sources. He built the Alaska Paleontological Database, with more than 17,000 fossil localities, and the Late Triassic gastropod genus *Blodgettella* is named for him. His oil-seep work on the Alaska Peninsula and in the Holitna and Cook Inlet regions gave explorers a field geologist's view of basins few people ever visit.

He worked every day until a stroke in November 2025. Before his death he donated his rock and fossil collection to the Alaska Geologic Materials Center in Anchorage. He was buried on October 20 in Paul, Idaho, near his mother, and is survived by four nieces and nephews.

Bob wrote often for *Alaska Geology*, the newsletter of the Alaska Geological Society. With permission from the AGS and from Bob, the Pacific Section has reprinted his articles here, and we will keep doing so.

BOB IN THESE PAGES

Nov–Dec 2024 · Oil seep in Upper Jurassic strata of the Naknek Formation near Barabara Creek, Alaska Peninsula (with Dirk Bodnar)

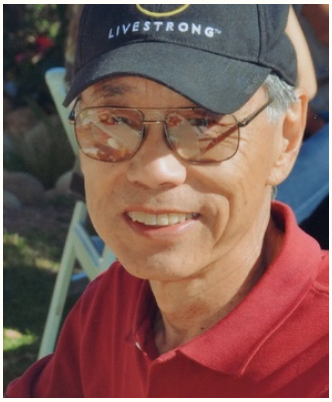
Mar–Apr 2025 · The Siberian origin of the Alexander terrane of Southeast Alaska

Jul–Aug 2025 · Heroes of Alaskan paleontology: Edwin Kirk, USGS

Nov–Dec 2025 · Historic wells of Alaska: Standard Oil of California Lee #1, northern Alaska Peninsula

Compiled from the Hansen Mortuary obituary, a 2020 National Park Service oral history with Bob, and Alaska DGGS records.

IN MEMORIAM



Courtesy Coast Geological Society

Dale Sakaye Kunitomi

1943 – AUGUST 29, 2026

CONSULTING PETROLEUM GEOLOGIST · CAMARILLO, CALIFORNIA

Coast Geological Society President, Pacific Section Vice President, and a CGS member for more than 45 years.

Dale Sakaye Kunitomi, a petroleum geologist who gave decades of service to the Pacific Section and the Coast Geological Society, died on August 29, 2026, at age 83.

Dale was born in 1943 at the Heart Mountain camp in Wyoming, where his family was among the Japanese American families incarcerated during World War II. His parents, Jack and Masa Kunitomi, were college graduates who went on to long careers teaching in Los Angeles schools. After the war the family returned to Hollywood. Dale attended Belmont High School and Los Angeles City College, then transferred to UCLA, where he discovered geology. He later took four years of graduate night classes at USC to keep up with the plate tectonics revolution, which left him with divided loyalties every football season.

His career began with the City of Long Beach, just as the eastward extension of the giant Wilmington field was getting under way. He moved on to Southern California Gas Company and then to independent oil companies, among them Pauley, Argo and Celeron, exploring and developing fields in California and Alaska from offices in Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Ventura and Bakersfield. In 1988 he set up as an independent consultant in Camarillo, working on oil and gas, geotechnical and groundwater projects and 3D geologic models of oil fields. His first talk to the Coast Geological Society, in 1977, was on converting the Honor Rancho oil field to gas storage.

Dale was Vice President of the Los Angeles Basin Geological Society in 1976, President of the Coast Geological Society in 1993–94, and Vice President of the Pacific Section in 1999. He chaired the site committee for two Ventura conventions, helped with the Santa Barbara convention, and co-edited Pacific Section Miscellaneous Publication 46, *Structure and Petroleum Geology, Santa Barbara Channel, California* (1998). The Section gave him its Distinguished Service Award in 2004 and Honorary Life Membership in 2013.

Away from work he loved deep-sea fishing with Grace from their Boston Whaler, and he traveled to China, Kenya, Kamchatka, Alaska, Canada, Australia and Mexico. Coast Geological Society members remember his humor, his knowledge, and his skill at the barbecue.

He is survived by his wife, Grace Marie Kunitomi; his son, Damon; his siblings Kerry Cababa, Colleen Miyano, Darrell Kunitomi and Donald Kunitomi; and other relatives. A memorial service was held on September 26 at Fukui Mortuary in Los Angeles.

Compiled from the Coast Geological Society memorial and the *Los Angeles Times* death notice.

FROM DALE'S WORK

In 2007 Dale, Stephen P. Mulqueen and Bruce H. Hesson led an AAPG convention field trip from Long Beach to the oil seeps of Los Angeles and Ventura counties. Their Pacific Section guidebook, *Oil on Their Shoes*, is still cited in studies of California's seeps.

THANK YOU

Our Sponsors

These companies support the Pacific Section and keep this newsletter free for every member. When you need their services, please tell them you saw them here.

SPONSOR · HALF PAGE

EARTH CONSULTANTS INTERNATIONAL
Solutions For Complex Earth Science Problems Around the World Since 1997

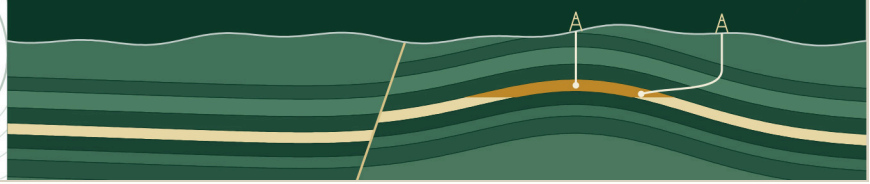
Subsurface data and interpretations, turned into decisions.

Geological consultants based in Southern California. Since 1997, ECI has solved complex earth science problems for oil and gas, energy, geological hazards and environmental clients, with 3D geologic modeling, analytics and disciplined data management.

EARTHCONSULTANTS.COM
(310) 904-3445
ORANGE, CALIFORNIA

OIL, GAS AND THE SUBSURFACE

- 3D geologic modeling and visualization
- Structural and stratigraphic analysis
- Petrophysics and well log analysis
- Well planning and drilling optimization
- Wellbore integrity and casing corrosion
- Plug and abandonment programs
- Shallow geohazards and fault hazard evaluation
- Decommissioning site assessment
- Machine-learning risk screening from well data
- Legacy records and data management
- Expert testimony and litigation support



SPONSOR · HALF PAGE

BROADBENT

CREATING SOLUTIONS, BUILDING TRUST

Since 1987, Broadbent & Associates has provided sound scientific solutions to complex resource management challenges. Our team of geologists, engineers, and scientists combine technical expertise with a commitment to building lasting client relationships.

NORCAL (916) 810-1810 | PORTLAND (503) 213-9559

SERVICES INCLUDE

- Groundwater Exploration, Aquifier Testing & Well Design
- Soil/Groundwater Characterization
- Petroleum Contaminated Soil Management
- Risk Assessment, including PFAS
- Phase I & II Site Assessments
- Site Remediation
- Geothermal Characterization & Development
- Air quality Permitting & Stack Testing
- Health & Safety, Industrial Hygiene
- NEPA & Environmental Permitting
- Emergency Response
- Drone Services

Offices in California, Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas & Utah

SPONSOR · HALF PAGE

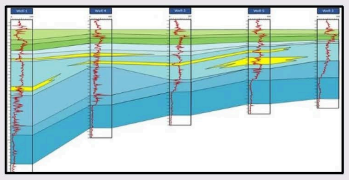
BLAKE GEOLOGICAL SERVICES LLC

Whether it's Exploration, Exploitation, Infill Drilling, or CCUS projects:

- Paleo analysis is critical for understanding the stratigraphy framework of key reservoirs
- Integration of paleo interpretations will enhance the accuracy and reliability of the team's geological assessments
- Paleo results help to identify unexpected faults, unconformities, or facies changes.

Experience and Background

- Over 48 years of paleo expertise in the onshore & offshore basins of southern & central California
- Experience with improving structural and stratigraphic resolution at field and reservoir scales
- Familiarity with reviewing and reanalyzing older or legacy paleo data to maximize the available information.
- Workflow includes the integration of paleo results with geological, mudlog, and petrophysical data



Sample logistics and sample processing handled in association with Best Core Services, Bakersfield, CA

Gregg H. Blake, President
Email: ghblake51@gmail.com
Phone: 281-222-7189
Website: www.blakegeo.com

SPONSOR · HALF PAGE

Well Re-/Abandonment
Merger & acquisition due diligence
Permit preparation & submission
Engineering program generation
Wellbore diagram generation
Site spill & safety planning
Abandonment execution
CEQA documentation
Agency liaison

Oil & Gas Compliance
Orphaned & idle well management
Production & injection reporting
Permit package development
15-Year engineering analysis
Testing compliance
UIC project reviews
Area of review

TECH OG
Professional Technical Support
www.techog.org

Geologic Services
CA - PG licensed
BFW & USDW determination
Pore space evaluation
Mapping and modeling
On-site operational support
Well log interpretation & digitization

Decision Quality Advising
Certified DQ analysis
Facilitation
Project framing
Portfolio analysis
Strategy generation
Value and trade-off determination
Qualitative & quantitative assessment

ADVERTISE IN PACIFIC PETROLEUM GEOLOGY

Reach Pacific Section members from Alaska to Hawaii, six times a year; every issue is also posted at psaapg.org. Consulting, field services, software, courses and job openings are welcome, and year-long ads run in all six issues. **To place an ad,** submit it online at **forms.gle/TF8jk9MSV2qG8QV69** with your artwork. Questions: **editor@psaapg.org**. Member societies advertise their meetings free.

SIZE	ISSUE	YEAR
Full page	$100	$250
Half page	$50	$125
Business card	$30	$75

DATES TO REMEMBER

Calendar

Society meeting · AAPG lecture (Zoom) · Field trip or event · Deadline

November 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	**7** Field trip
8	9	**10** SJGS*	11	**12** AAPG DL	13	**14** Oil Festival
15	16	**17** CGS*	**18** NCGS	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1 AAPG DL	2	3	4	**5** Sci. Bowl Deadline
6	7	**8** SJGS*	9	**10** AAPG DL	11	12
13	14	**15** CGS*	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

NOVEMBER 2026

SAT 7 — **Sierra Foothills railroad field trip** California Geological Survey repeat tour led by Jim Wood. sierrageology.org

TUE 10 — **SJGS dinner meeting*** Bakersfield. Speaker to be announced.

THU 12 — **AAPG Distinguished Lecture** F. Javier Hernández-Molina: "Rethinking deepwater sedimentation: new paradigms in oceanic current processes and products."

SAT 14 — **Kern Oil Festival** Bakersfield. kernoilfestival.com

TUE 17 — **CGS dinner meeting*** Ventura. James Faulds on next-generation geothermal.

WED 18 — **NCGS meeting** Orinda. Tim McHargue on the Eel Submarine Canyon and great earthquakes.

DECEMBER 2026

TUE 1 — **AAPG Distinguished Lecture** Lauren Birgenheier: "The power of geoscience: adapting in a changing energy landscape."

SAT 5 — **Berkeley Science Bowl** UC Berkeley. See the story below.

SAT 5 — **NCGS scholarship deadline** Richard Chambers Memorial Scholarship applications must be postmarked by this date.

TUE 8 — **SJGS dinner meeting*** Bakersfield. Speaker to be announced.

THU 10 — **AAPG Distinguished Lecture** Octavian Catuneanu: "Developments in sequence stratigraphy."

TUE 15 — **CGS dinner meeting*** Ventura. Yonni Schwartz on a post-fire debris flow in the El Capitán watershed.

LOOKING AHEAD · JANUARY–FEBRUARY 2027

SAT 16 — **Tulare Gemboree** Jan 16–17, Exeter Veterans Memorial Building. tulegem.com

TUE 19 — **CGS dinner meeting*** Ventura. Joe McKinney on the Carson City Landfill PCE plume.

TUE 16 — **CGS dinner meeting*** Ventura. David Huber on deep-sea mining and critical minerals.

* Date assumes the society's regular meeting day; confirm on its website. AAPG lectures: register at aapg.org/resources/distinguished-lectures. LABGS and AGS winter dates not yet posted.

BSB 2026 Berkeley Science Bowl

COMMUNITY

Earth Science on the Buzzer

The **Berkeley Science Bowl** returns on **December 5, 2026**. Run by the student chapter of the American Chemical Society at UC Berkeley, the quiz tournament brings high-school teams from the Bay Area and beyond to compete in biology, chemistry, physics, math and earth science.

The event has grown from 24 to 72 teams since 2023 and now draws more than 300 competitors. The organizers are looking for sponsors, with tiers from $300 to $1,500, to cover room costs, buzzer systems and travel help for teams.

It is a good way to put geology in front of the next generation of scientists. Details at **berkeleysb.org**.

FIVE SOCIETIES, ONE SECTION

Member Society News

Have a talk to give? Most of the societies are still filling their 2026–2027 programs. Contact them directly to offer a talk, and tell them you saw it here.

Alaska Geological Society

ALASKAGEOLOGY.ORG

Monthly luncheon talks, usually the third Tuesday, BP Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, Anchorage. Doors 11:00 am, talk 11:30 am. Free, in person and on Microsoft Teams; bring your lunch.

COMING UP

Luncheon dates · No dates or speakers had been announced at press time; check alaskageology.org.

Renew now: AGS memberships expire November 1. Dues $25, students $5 (membership@alaskageology.org).

PRESIDENT	Monte Mabry
PRESIDENT-ELECT	Holly Fair
VICE PRESIDENT	Dave Buthman
SECRETARY	Adam Manzer
TREASURER	Veronica Jones
PAST PRESIDENT	Ken Helmold

2025–2026 board as listed in the May 2026 AGS newsletter; 2026–2027 slate not yet posted.

P.O. Box 101288, Anchorage, AK 99510 · president@alaskageology.org

Los Angeles Basin Geological Society

LABGS.ORG

Dinner meetings usually the third Thursday, The Barrel Room at Four Sons Brewing, 18421 Gothard St, Suite 100, Huntington Beach. Dinner 6:00 pm, talk 7:00 pm. $10 donation, students free; walk-ins welcome.

COMING UP

Winter talks · Speakers not yet posted; reserve through the form at labgs.org.

Pacific Section members are LABGS members too, with no separate local dues.

TEMPORARY PRESIDENT & PROGRAMS	Rick Behl
TREASURER	Daniel Rice
SECRETARY & WEBMASTER	Joseph Landeros
SCHOLARSHIPS	Karla Tucker

Board as listed in the May 2026 LABGS newsletter; not yet updated for 2026–2027.

Membership applications go through the Pacific Section, P.O. Box 1072, Bakersfield, CA 93302 · landerosjd@gmail.com

Coast Geological Society

COASTGEO.ORG

Dinner meetings the third Tuesday, Poinsettia Pavilion, 3451 Foothill Rd, Ventura. Social 6:00 pm, dinner 7:00, talk 7:45. $35, early-career $25; students $20 per season. Register through the link at coastgeo.org.

COMING UP

Nov 17 · James Faulds: "Next-gen geothermal or conventional geothermal with an AI twist"

Dec 15 · Yonni Schwartz: "Assessment of a post-fire debris flow impacting El Capitán watershed, Santa Barbara County"

Jan 19 · Joe McKinney: "Carson City Landfill PCE plume"

Feb 16 · David Huber: "Can deep-sea mining counter China's control of critical minerals and the green transition?"

PRESIDENT	Bill Dinklage
ACTING VICE PRESIDENT	Sabina Thomas
SECRETARY	Nina Minga
TREASURER	Karen Hartman
PAST PRESIDENT	John Williams
MEMBERSHIP	Phil Kinney
SCHOLARSHIPS	Eiko Kitao
LOGISTICS	Roberta Harma
WEBMASTER	Eric Heaton

Talk months from coastgeo.org; exact dates assume the usual third Tuesday.

P.O. Box 3055, Ventura, CA 93006 · coastgeologicalsociety@gmail.com

Northern California Geological Society

NCGEOLSOC.ORG

Evening meetings generally the last Wednesday, Masonic Center, 9 Altarinda Rd, Orinda. Social 6:30 pm, talk 7:15 pm. $5, students and K–12 teachers $1. No meetings in December. Meetings are no longer on Zoom; recordings go to YouTube (@NCGS1000).

COMING UP

Nov 18 · Tim McHargue, Stanford: "Evidence of great earthquakes from the Eel Submarine Canyon, Northern California" (moved up a week for Thanksgiving)

Dec · No meeting

Jan–Feb · Speakers not yet announced

Richard Chambers Memorial Scholarship: paper applications must be postmarked by **December 5, 2026**. Thank you to Phil Garbutt, who stepped down in June after 21 years as Scholarship Chair.

PRESIDENT	Tom MacKinnon
PAST PRESIDENT	Jim O'Brient
PROGRAM DIRECTOR	John Karachewski
TREASURER	Don Medwedeff
RECORDING SECRETARY	Martin Steinpress
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Barb Matz
FIELD TRIPS	Will Schweller
SCHOLARSHIPS	Wayne Narr
MEMBERSHIP	Tom Barry
K-12 & OUTREACH	Joe Iovenitti
WEBMASTER	Andrew Alden

Contact: tom.mackinnon@comcast.net · Dues and renewals at ncgs.regfox.com

San Joaquin Geological Society

SANJOAQUINGEOLOGICALSOCIETY.ORG

Dinner meetings the second Tuesday, American Legion Hall (Post 26), 2020 H Street, Bakersfield. Social 6:00 pm, dinner 6:30, talk 7:00. Members $35 with reservation, $40 without; students $20.

COMING UP

Nov 10 · Dec 8 · Speakers to be announced; reserve at forms.gle/nNpbGE7EajNoiV7BA

Congratulations to the 2026 SJGS scholarship winners from CSU Bakersfield and CSU Fullerton, and thanks to all who came out for the Fall Fiesta on October 23.

PRESIDENT	Brandon Clark
PRESIDENT-ELECT	*Open: volunteers wanted*
VICE PRESIDENT	Adrian Montoya
SECRETARY	Monica Hinson
TREASURER	Jlynn Bowen
PAST PRESIDENT	Kari Hochstatter
WEBMASTER	Jasmin Gutierrez
HOD DELEGATE	Cynthia Huggins

Meeting dates assume the usual second Tuesday.

sanjoaquingeologicalsociety@gmail.com · Mailing-list membership through the Pacific Section, P.O. Box 1072, Bakersfield, CA 93302

ALSO IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The Section's website also links to the South Coast Geological Society (southcoastgeology.org), the Inland Geological Society (inlandgeo.org), the San Diego Association of Geologists (sandiegogeologists.org) and the AEG chapters (aegweb.org).

The Northwest Energy Association and the Sacramento Petroleum Association are inactive for now. If you would like to help restart either one, write to president@psaapg.org.

PACIFIC SECTION MEMBERSHIP

New Dues for 2026

Members approved new Pacific Section dues at the April 2026 public meeting in Bakersfield. The new rates are in effect now.



Renew or join at **psaapg.org** · Questions: **membership@psaapg.org**

PACIFIC SECTION · AAPG · SINCE 1925

Stay in the Section

Renew your membership, give to the Foundation, and bring a friend to your next society meeting.

RENEW OR JOIN

Pacific Section membership is separate from AAPG membership. The new dues are on page 23; renew or join at **psaapg.org**.

It also makes you a member of SJGS, LABGS and CGS, with no local dues. AGS and NCGS charge their own local dues.

Questions: membership@psaapg.org

YEAR-END GIVING

The Pacific Section Foundation, a 501(c)(3) chartered in 1999, pays for student scholarships, student travel to conventions, Teacher of the Year and the Imperial Barrel competition.

It runs mostly on member donations. A year-end gift goes straight to the next generation of geologists.

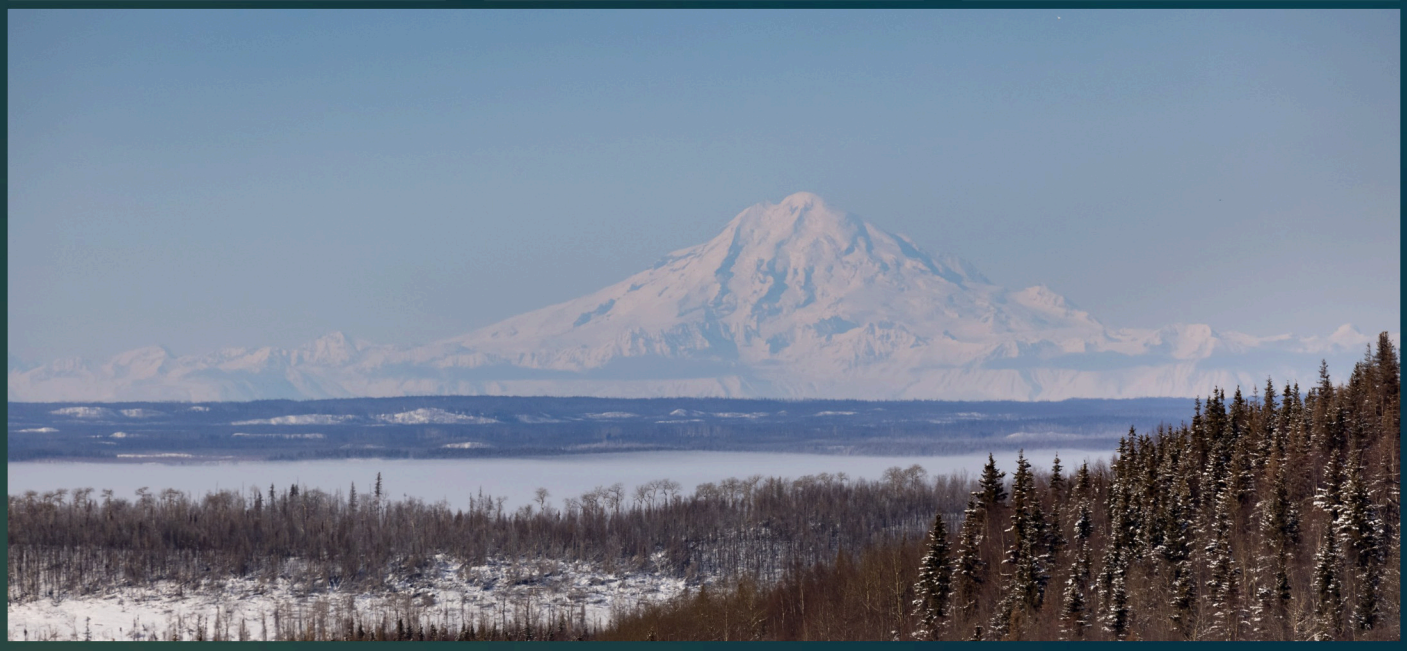
Details: Foundation page at psaapg.org

WRITE FOR US

Outcrop photos, field-trip stories, well histories, book reviews, student research, letters. If it is about the geology of the Section, we want it.

Next issue: January–February 2027.

editor@psaapg.org



Across Cook Inlet to Mount Redoubt, from the Kenai Peninsula. *Photo: Lisa Hupp, USFWS Alaska (public domain)*

Pacific Section AAPG
P.O. Box 1072, Bakersfield, CA 93302
psaapg.org

AGS · CGS · LABGS · NCGS · SJGS