

the channel

Spring 2007

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Director's Message

By Gene Talmadge, AEP State Board Director at Large
Nicole Carter, Channel Counties Chapter Director

The January 6, 2008, AEP State Board meeting was held in San Diego at the Omni Hotel, site of the 2008 AEP Conference. Nicole Carter and other new chapter directors were introduced and welcomed to the Board. Our Vice President of Finance, John Jaquess, resigned his position due to workload issues and will be replaced by Michael Hendrix (from the Inland Empire Chapter). The overall membership of AEP is up from previous years; 1,604 total members with 1,305 regular members, 108 sponsor members, and 191 students! Our student chapters are really doing well and expanding. The overall financial status of the organization is excellent with sufficient funds in prudent reserves. The 2007 Budget was presented and approved with minor adjustments.

Mel Willis, Chairman of the Channel Counties AEP 2007 Conference Committee, provided a written report on the conference. This year's conference was held at Shell Beach from April 29th to May 2nd. Details on the conference are on the state's website. We are encouraged by the support and interest in the conference. We received more abstracts for papers and presentations than could be accommodated at the conference! On the financial side, pledges for sponsorships exceeded budget estimates. We were able to offer many opportunities for companies to participate in the conference with booths, tables, and underwriting expenses for meals and other events.

As I mentioned above, the AEP 2008 Conference will be held in San Diego from March 25th to 28th at the downtown Omni Hotel near the Convention Center and Petco Park. The conference will be a joint conference with NAEP so attendance will be about double the normal AEP Conference. Stay tuned for further details. (In case you really want to think ahead, the 2009 conference is in the San Francisco Bay area, date to be determined.)

We have just finished up the Spring CEQA Advanced Topics series of workshops throughout the state. We had 9 venues and the total attendance was 700, a 10% increase from last year. The Channel Counties had an attendance of 66, also an increase from last year. Well done to all involved for a great job! This will mean additional revenue to the state and the local chapters as well.

The state board has also awarded a contract for web services. You can see the results of this work in a more responsive web page for the state and the 2007 Conference information. Further enhancements are forthcoming so keep checking the sites for information. In the future, we hope to have greater flexibility in the use of credit cards for paying conference registrations, membership dues, and other expenses.

Finally, there is a major initiative growing out of work done by a committee from the San Diego Chapter. The initiative is looking at re-doing the CEQA Initial Study (IS) Checklist. This effort has been picked up by a state committee, chaired by Michael McCormack (Monterey Bay), to formulate an AEP position and draft a new IS Checklist to be submitted to the state officials for adoption and use. There are items in the current IS Checklist that are no longer relevant and new issues that need to be addressed when considering CEQA actions – like climate change, carbon footprints of actions, oak tree assessments, etc. Brian Smith of our chapter will be representing us in that effort. Brian is also the State Director liaison to NAEP.

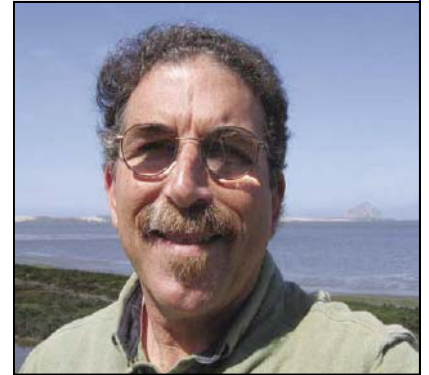


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President's Message

David Wolff, Channel Counties Chapter President



Our Chapter is in full swing and headed to summer following our successful hosting of the State Conference. We hope that our Chapter membership enjoyed the conference as it was right in our backyard. The feedback on all aspects of the conference has been very positive and it looked like all at the conference welcomed the opportunity to take a brief break from our busy schedules in the resort setting to connect with colleagues, generate networking opportunities, and learn some new tricks from the concurrent technical sessions. A special thanks to Mel Willis and the conference planning committee for all the time and hard work given for the excellent conference.

As a member of the Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS), and a Certified Professional Wetland Scientist with the SWS, I wanted to note some important news on the wetland delineation and wetland regulatory front. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has recently issued the Arid West Supplement to the 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual. It provides a new data sheet that better captures the California climate that while dry much of the year has a long growing season. More than anything, it solidifies through formal methods the interpretations California delineators have been making under the 1987 Manual to fit California into the methodology developed with mostly the southeast U.S. in mind.

Bruce Henderson, of the Corps Ventura office, presented an overview of the new supplement to an ad hoc group of approximately 40 public and private sector professionals in San Luis Obispo (SLO) on March 15, 2007. We conducted a brief field exercise on the Chevron (formerly Unocal) SLO Tank Farm and then convened for lunch and a Power Point presentation at the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) conference room. It was great to have the cooperation of both Chevron and RWQCB to offer their respective "spaces" for this important training. About the time you receive this newsletter, we will have convened a session in Ventura with Bruce at the helm to review the Arid West Supplement, as well as (hopefully) the newly issued guidance on the Supreme Court Rapanos decision. I hope to provide an overview of the new Nationwide Permits (NWP) too (see below). AEP is collaborating with the SWS Western Chapter as co-sponsors of this event.

In other fast breaking wetland news...

The Corps has reissued the NWP effective March 19, 2007, and these NWP will expire on March 18, 2012. The following is drawn from the March 12, 2007, Federal Register and the full text of the reissued NWP can be downloaded from the Corps' Regulatory Branch website. The Corps is reissuing all existing NWP, general conditions, and definitions, with some modifications. The Corps is also issuing six new NWP, two new general conditions, and 13 new definitions. The effective date for the new and reissued NWP will be March 19, 2007. The NWP are intended to protect the aquatic environment and the public interest while effectively authorizing activities that have minimal individual and cumulative adverse effects on the aquatic environment. **Grandfather provision for expiring NWP** includes activities authorized by the NWP issued on January 15, 2002, that have commenced or are under contract to commence by March 18, 2007; March 18, 2008, is the deadline to complete the activity under the terms and conditions of the 2002 NWP. Be sure to check the full NWP preamble, definitions, terms and conditions for specific interpretation for your projects.

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Important Questions Regarding Global Warming Analysis in CEQA Documents by Leanna Struzziery

Last year, Governor Schwarzenegger signed the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32), which requires California to roll back its carbon emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The emerging issue of global warming, combined with this recent State action, has prompted the push to include global warming analysis within CEQA documents, which, in turn, has raised questions of how to address global warming within CEQA documents. Deciding on the appropriate scope of global warming analysis and potential mitigation measures is not without its challenges. Global warming would truly be the most cumulative of environmental impacts potentially addressed under CEQA.

Some questions that should be considered in addressing the issue include:

- How should environmental documents measure the global warming impact of a single project, and what thresholds should be used to determine if a project's contribution is either significant or cumulatively considerable?
- Where appropriate, could alternatives be considered to projects that lessen greenhouse gas emissions (e.g., alternative energy sources) and still meet the project's objectives?
- How should the vast bulk of projects that may not be either significant or cumulatively considerable be addressed?
- Should project analysis focus only on the impacts of direct greenhouse gas emissions such as project specific construction and operation (i.e., construction and long term traffic emissions)? Alternately, should the analysis include indirect effects such as greenhouse gas emissions from generation of electricity needed to serve new homes?
- Can or should the CEQA process be used to exact mitigation from projects for a globally cumulative impact where the necessary nexus of a project-specific or cumulatively considerable-finding may be difficult to ascertain?

These questions and more will be a focus of the environmental planning community for years to come, and will prove particularly challenging where local and state policy guidance or standards may be lacking or unclear.

AMEC Earth and Environmental is currently under contract with the California State Lands Commission to prepare a Draft EIR that will include an analysis of a project's potential global warming impacts. This project is for the recommissioning of a State oil and gas lease off the coast of Goleta, California. The Draft EIR is scheduled to be released for public review in April 2007. For questions, please feel free to contact Leanna Struzziery at (805) 962-0992.



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Conferenced Out???

Naturally our 2007 AEP Conference in Shell Beach was a high priority for you all to attend but here is another opportunity for the technical specialty minded that may be of interest.

Society of Wetland Scientists International Conference — June 10–15, 2007, Sacramento. Check out the details at www.sws.org for details.

Whale Watching

by Hannah Muller



On Saturday March 10, 2007, students and professionals had the chance to get away from their desks and enjoy a beautiful sunny day out on the Santa Barbara Channel. The UCSB Bren School Student Chapter of AEP hosted a whale watching event that drew over 55 AEP members and guests. Participants enjoyed a cruise on the Condor Express, and were treated to views of migrating and mating grey whales, as well as frisky Dall's porpoises.

Altogether an excellent way to spend a Saturday afternoon! The Bren School officers were inspired to work to make this whale watching trip an annual event!



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Las Virgenes Municipal Water District

By Gene Talmadge, Planning Manager
(and AEP State Board Director at Large)

So, you ask, "What is special about a Special District?" In this case, what is Las Virgenes Municipal Water District? A 'special district' is recognized by the State of California as a legal self-governing entity on the same level as a city (but without police powers.) It has an elected Board of Directors responsible to their constituents with the powers to make their own rules (their own Code), set their own rates for services, exercise eminent domain, act as a Lead Agency or Responsible Agency for CEQA actions, and many other responsibilities. Las Virgenes Municipal Water District (the "district") provides these basic services to its customers:

◆ Potable water treatment ◆ Storage and delivery ◆ Wastewater treatment ◆ Water reclamation

The district covers about 122 square miles in the western area of Los Angeles County, generally to the west of the City of Los Angeles and north of the City of Malibu to the Ventura County Line. There is an extensive water distribution system of pipes, pump stations and storage tanks. The district operates its own 10,000 acre-foot reservoir (over 3 billion gallons) used to provide seasonal storage of water for operations or emergencies. The district is 100% reliant on imported potable water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. This water comes primarily from the State Water Project (via the Sacramento-Bay Delta).

But the real story of interest for the environmental community is in the wastewater business (nasty as that may sound!). The Tapia Water Reclamation Facility ("Tapia") is a state-of-the-art treatment plant that treats the wastewater and produces recycled water treated to tertiary standards (not quite drinkable, but OK for body contact). It also produces treated biosolids (nice word for "sludge", or solids). The recycled water produced by Tapia is beneficially reused in the community as irrigation water for golf courses, parks, school grounds, and other landscaping needs. The district meets over 20% of its overall water demand with recycled water. So this vital resource is recycled back into the community and put to good use – this also lessens the demand on imported water.

The biosolids disposal is an item of real interest. Here, the notion of 'beneficial reuse' of a resource really comes home. Biosolids are typically collected and hauled to an approved landfill that may be near the wastewater plant or as far away as the San Joaquin Valley in Kern or King County. Instead of hauling their biosolids, the district built a full in-vessel composting facility. The facility mixes the Tapia biosolids with an amendment and then cures the mixture to make high quality compost. This compost is safe for use in gardens and lawn areas at customer's houses and is provided to customers free of charge. They only need to bring a trashcan or truck to fill up and use in their yards. (We say we are #1 in the #2 business; composting is our way of giving back to the community that which they gave so freely to us!)

Tours of district facilities are arranged all the time. Just contact me and we can arrange a tour of the facilities that can be very educational and enlightening. Environmental concerns sit at the top of our list to make sure we conduct our business in a responsible manner and our impact on the environment of the Santa Monica Mountains is minimal. We strive to be sure that resources are beneficially re-used to the maximum degree possible.

About the Author

Gene Talmadge is currently the Planning Manager at Las Virgenes Municipal Water District. He is responsible for water resource planning, master planning of facilities, capital improvement planning, CEQA document preparation/review and compliance, new development monitoring, and GIS Program Manager. He has been with the district for 17 years in similar capacities.

Gene received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Southern California and a Masters in Urban Planning (with certificate in Urban Design) from the University of Washington. He is a registered architect and has practiced planning for over 25 years.

Gene is married and has two grown children; a daughter and a son. He and his wife reside in Camarillo. His main hobby is fly-fishing for trout in the Sierras ("catch and release" only) but he also enjoys watercolor painting, working in the yard, light reading, and numismatics. Gene is dedicated to restoration and preservation of the environment, especially native and wild fish habitat.

His professional affiliations include: Association of Environmental Professionals (currently serving as a State Board Director at Large), American Planning Association, Geospatial Information Technology Association (GITA), Association of Water Agencies for Ventura County, Sespe Flyfishers, and Conejo Valley Flyfishers, Graduate, LEAD San Diego Class of 1987, and Military Officers Association of America (State Board Director)

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Student Success Story

Jessica Viramontes

The following is provided by Jessica Viramontes, Cal Poly AEP Chapter Officer, Channel Counties Chapter Student Scholarship award winner, and now environmental professional with Christopher A. Joseph & Associates in Oakland. Jessica also assisted with our Chapter newsletter editing and production during her senior year at Cal Poly. We asked Jessica to provide a few paragraphs for our newsletter on her path to becoming an environmental professional. This is a great success story that makes us proud and validates the importance of our role in fostering networking opportunities with student chapters and our chapter professionals.

Deciding to take on a new major at Cal Poly after spending two years in the English Department was scary. Graduating with a degree in the environmental field was even scarier. What made both transitions easier for me was the Cal Poly AEP Chapter. While finishing up my degree in Environmental Management and Protection, I was the Secretary of the Cal Poly AEP Chapter. As it turns out, this was not just another activity to add to my resume. Under the tutelage of Dr. James Vilkitis, I was able to meet like-minded students who were motivated to prepare for their future and help other students do the same. In addition, I was able to interact with local professionals who provided guidance and sometimes internship or career opportunities.

My big break occurred when I was hired by LSA Associates in San Luis Obispo to be an intern last summer. This "real world" experience in environmental consulting cemented in my mind that this was something I love to do and, with practice, something I could become good at. That practice consisted of attending CEQA Workshops and the State Conference for free or at reduced rates in exchange for volunteering to help with the events. These activities not only got me more acquainted with the skills of an environmental professional, but also made me feel more at ease speaking with professionals. About a month before graduation, this experience paid off.

It was time for the dreaded interviews! My networking experience with AEP made me feel more calm and confident in speaking with potential employers. After seven interviews and five job offers, I was able to have my pick as to where in California I wanted to work and what kind of company I wanted to work for. That kind of freedom is something that I worked hard to earn and something that AEP invaluablely helped me to achieve. About two months ago, I started working for Christopher A. Joseph & Associates in Oakland as an Assistant Environmental Planner and I am going to be filling the vacant Secretary position on the AEP San Francisco Bay Chapter Board. So far, my dream job has been just that.

Thanks!

Jessica Viramontes

Assistant Environmental Planner
Christopher A. Joseph & Associates
Environmental Planning and Research
www.cajaeir.com

AEP Student Chapter Activities for Spring Quarter 2007

Spring has arrived and like busy bees, Cal Poly's AEP student chapter will be very active. Along with gaining new members and holding monthly meetings, the club participated in Cal Poly's Open House from April 19–21; we sold popcorn at our booth to advertise and fundraise for the club. We also sent a large group of student volunteers to the annual AEP Conference in Shell Beach on April 29–May 2, 2007. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for Cal Poly students to gain exposure to CEQA and to network with many environmental professionals. Finally, speaker Brian Mooney of Jones and Stokes Environmental Consultants, along with a couple of other professionals from the firm will speak at the AEP club meeting on May 2. Mr. Mooney will discuss Sustainability in General Planning. This will be an excellent opportunity for Cal Poly students to hear first hand information about the professional environment.

For more information on the Cal Poly AEP student chapter, please visit: <http://aep.calpoly.edu/>

AEP Student Representative Profile, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

Jasmine Meijia

Background

My interest in the environment began while taking an environmental science class my junior year in high school. During this year I learned about the different types of pollution impacting the health of the environment. My educational career at Cal Poly started as an Environmental Horticulture student; however, once the Environmental Management and Protection program started I switched over because I realized my interest was the environment as a whole.

Education

I'm currently finishing my fourth year at Cal Poly as an Environmental Management and Protection major with a minor in City and Regional Planning. Since my interest lies in environmental law I have been trying to take as many environmental related law classes as possible.

AEP

I joined AEP during my third year at Cal Poly because I was interested in meeting professionals and fellow students in the field. The association exposed me to CEQA before I was able to take the class at the university. This helped me get my internship at the Water Board as the CEQA Coordinator. Working at the Water Board extensively with CEQA has been a great way for me to get experience, and I try to continue my learning by attending CEQA workshops with AEP.

For my fourth year of university, I was elected president of the Cal Poly AEP chapter. The experience running the club has been a great one. I also enjoy meeting and interacting with people from other AEP chapters in the area. I would definitely recommend that anyone interested in the environment join AEP. In addition to people in the Forestry and Environmental Management and Protection majors, I would like to see our chapter reach out more to people in the Civil and Environmental Engineering majors, as well as City and Regional Planning majors.

Future

After I graduate Cal Poly, I hope to work for an environmental consulting firm for a few years. Then, I plan to attend Law School to get a degree with an emphasis on Environmental Law.



Current Job Openings

www.califaep.org

ESA

ESA has multiple positions open for professionals with a desire to work on challenging, often precedent setting projects throughout the state of California. Join our team in one of our seven California offices: San Francisco, Oakland, Petaluma, San Diego, Sacramento, Los Angeles, and Woodland Hills. We have an incredible work backlog and are actively looking for experienced professionals committed to team-oriented, solution-focused environmental consulting for the following:

- **Managing Associates** with experience and interest in major urban planning and community development, water resources, energy, or resource management. We're looking for professionals who are talented and enthusiastic about managing CEQA and/or NEPA analyses, planning studies, and environmental permitting projects. Candidates should have a bachelor's or master's degree in planning or a related field, five plus years of planning and CEQA/NEPA-related experience, and excellent writing and communication skills.
- **Senior Associates** with broad-based scientific and/or planning knowledge and experience, and who are well versed in environmental technical issues. Candidates should have a bachelor's degree in a science or planning-related discipline and a minimum of four years in the consulting industry. A working knowledge of CEQA and NEPA compliance preferred.
- **Air quality and/or noise specialists** with experience in airport planning and air quality/noise assessment. This associate-level position requires a bachelor's degree in physical or environmental sciences, excellent technical skills, effective problem-solving ability, excellent writing skills and the ability to work both independently and with a team.
- **Associates** with two to five years experience in the preparation of CEQA and NEPA documentation, environmental planning and a background in any of the following disciplines: geology, hydrology, water quality, air quality, noise, biology and/or land use. Candidates should have at minimum a bachelor's degree in the environmental sciences.

ESA

225 Bush Street, Suite 1700
San Francisco, CA 94104
ATTN: Human Resources
hr@esassoc.com

AMEC Earth & Environmental

Project Manager (San Francisco Office). Requirements for this position include BA/BS or higher in Environmental Studies / Engineering or related field. Ideal candidate will have 10+ years experience in environmental planning industry, including 5+ years with project management experience. Requirements include working knowledge of CEQA and NEPA requirements, processes, and procedures; excellent writing skills; and demonstrated fiscal / schedule management capabilities. Desirable is knowledge of coastal environmental issues and associated regulatory requirements and permit application processes. Salary DOE.

Senior Analyst (San Francisco Office). Requirements include BA/BS or higher in Environmental Studies / Engineering or related field. Ideal candidate will have 5+ years experience in environmental planning industry. Requirements include working knowledge of CEQA and NEPA requirements, processes, and procedures; excellent writing skills; and demonstrated ability to work independently under tight timelines. Desirable is familiarity with coastal issues and associated regulatory requirements and permit application processes. Salary DOE.

- **Environmental Analysts/Scientists (Santa Barbara, San Francisco, and Sacramento offices)**
- **Archaeologists/Archaeologist Technicians (Santa Barbara office)**

TO APPLY: Please send your Cover Letter and Resume to Mary Tighe: mary.tighe@amec.com

For more information about AMEC visit us at www.amec.com

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Association of Environmental Professionals

Generous Sponsors

The firms and individuals who pledged and supported the Chapter Scholarship Fund include the following:

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The Channel Counties Chapter board is encouraged by the strong initial support and hopes to be able to expand the amount and scope of the scholarships in the future. For more information about the Channel Counties AEP Chapter Scholarship Fund, please contact Mel Willis, Chapter Treasurer, at melwillis@earthlink.net.

LSA

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Member Services

The Association of Environmental Professionals is proud to offer its members a full range of services and benefits. These benefits are geared toward environmental professionals who seek to improve their skills as environmental and resource managers. Download a membership application at www.califaep.org.

Individual Membership

The \$120.00 annual membership dues include all of the many services, benefits and discounts, such as a membership certificate, annual CEQA workshops, professional practice insurance discounts, annual state conference, legislative activities, regional area support, professional awards program, Environmental Monitor, Environmental Assessor, and local chapter activities.

Sponsor Membership

For dues of \$200.00, Corporate Sponsors are provided one individual floating membership, special recognition at the annual State Conference, a 10% discount on advertising, and a highlighted listing in AEP's statewide magazine the Environmental Monitor. The floating membership entitles one individual from the sponsor company to attend local chapter activities, regional workshops and the State Conference at the discounted member rate. NOTE: The floating individual may be one varied person within the company, to be determined by the company. The company takes responsibility to notify the appropriate AEP officer regarding which employee will attend a given AEP activity on behalf of the company.

Student Membership

\$20.00 annual dues include all of the individual membership services and eligibility for the annual AEP Student Awards Program. The State Conference Committee typically offers students reduced registration rates to the State Conference. In addition, AEP is an excellent resource for internship opportunities and networking with environmental professionals.

Welcome!

To Our Newest Members

Michael Boswell, Ph.D., AICP



Kerry Brown

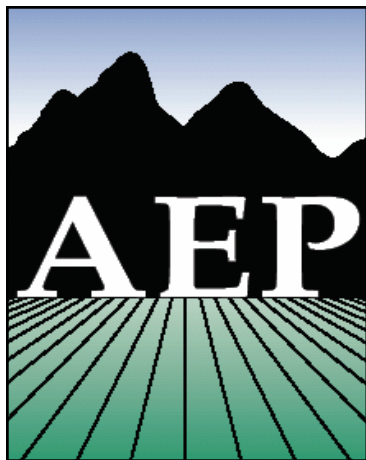


Ana Hudson



Sierra Kelso

We look forward to your involvement!



AEP Code of Ethics

As a member of the Association of Environmental Professionals, I will strive to:

1. Conduct myself and my work in a manner that will uphold the honor, integrity, and dignity of the profession;
2. Uphold the stated intent, as well as the letter, of environmental policies, laws, and regulations which are adopted by governmental bodies or agencies;
3. Not engage in, encourage, or condone dishonesty, fraud, deceit, discrimination, or misrepresentation in the solicitation, preparation, or use of work prepared by me or under my direction;
4. Fully disclose to my employers and prospective clients any economic or ethical interests which could reasonably be interpreted as a conflict of interest by them or by other affected parties with regard to my professional work;
5. Ensure a good faith effort at full disclosure, technical accuracy, sound methodology and objectivity in the collection, analysis, interpretation and presentation of environmental information by me or under my direction; and
6. Achieve the highest level of professional competency for myself and for those I supervise.

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