

AEG OREGON NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2026

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 5



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A Bridge to Somewhere
(Polychrome Bridge Launch)

[RSVP here.](#)

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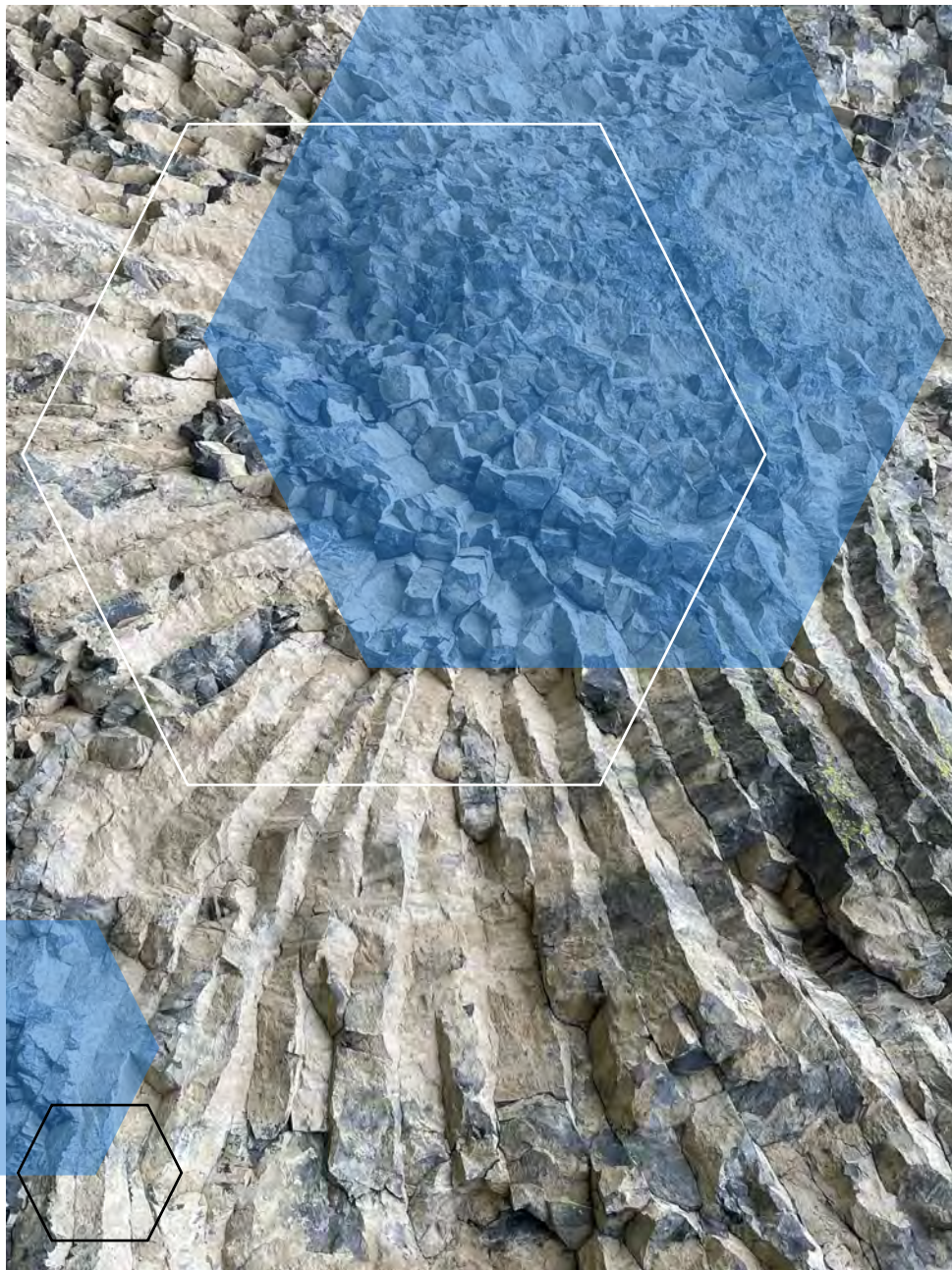
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Take care this season

AEG Oregon Bulletin

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UPCOMING MEETINGS

JANUARY 20, 2026

ASCE/AEG Joint Meeting
Douglas Anderson, Evan Garich, and Gary
Conner

A Bridge to Somewhere
(Polychrome Bridge Launch)

FEBRUARY 17, 2026

Special Event!

MARCH 24, 2026

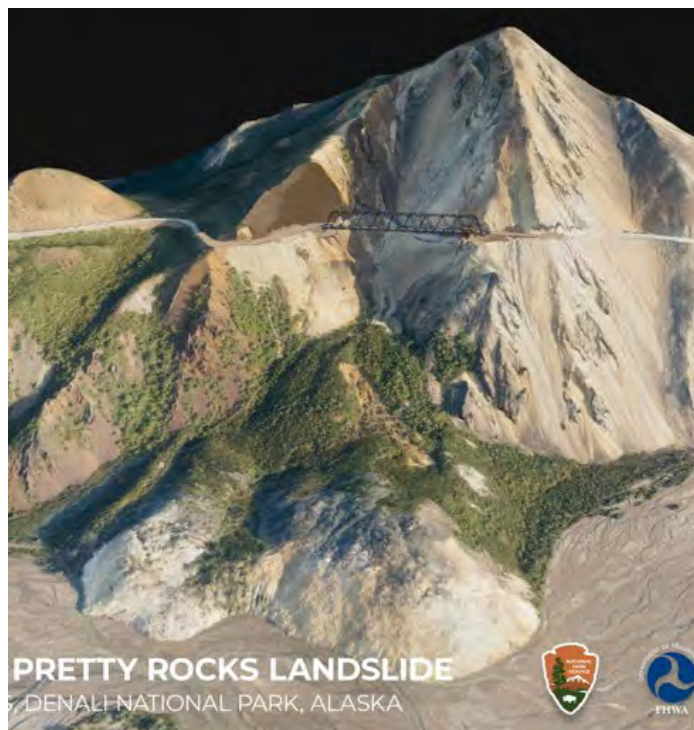
Chris Stohr, Richard H. Jahns Distinguished
Lecturer

APRIL 13, 2026

Paul Weaver, AEG President

MAY 19, 2026

Student Night



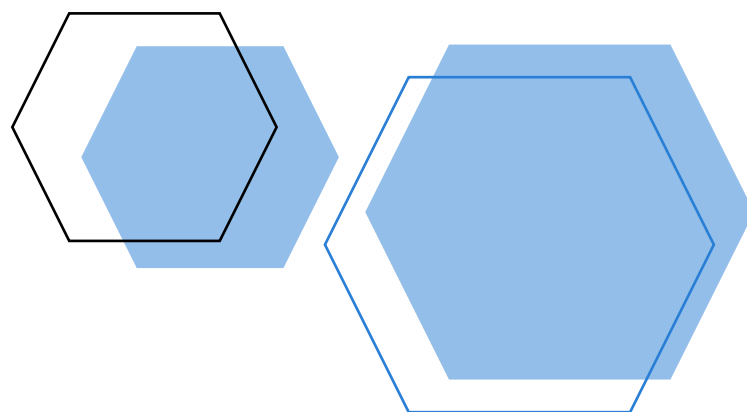
JANUARY MEETING

A BRIDGE TO SOMEWHERE

Reconnecting Nearly 47 Miles of Denali National Park Road and the Community of Kantishna in Alaska

This project represents a proactive, multidisciplinary engineering and environmental effort to adapt critical transportation infrastructure to evolving geologic and climatic conditions while balancing safety, environmental stewardship, and public access in a dynamic wilderness setting within the Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska.

The Pretty Rocks Landslide is a geologically active rock glacier-type landslide that intersects the Denali Park Road at Mile 45.4 in Denali National Park and Preserve, Alaska. Historically a minor maintenance issue, the landslide movement began accelerating in 2014—shifting from inches per year before 2014 to inches per day and even up to 0.65 inches per hour by 2021—largely due to thawing ice-rich perma-

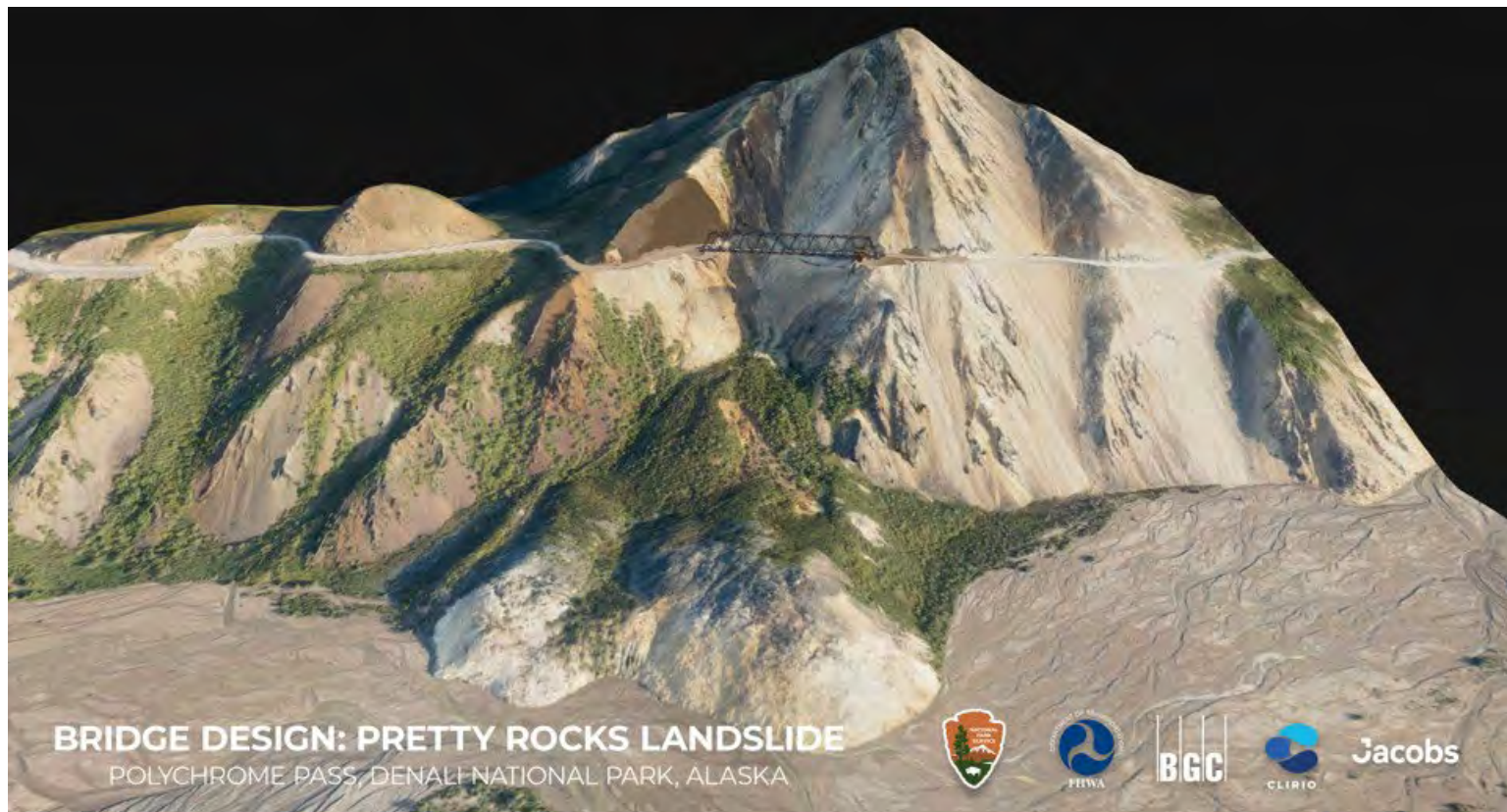


frost linked to regional climate warming and increased precipitation. This acceleration rendered traditional road repairs unsustainable and led to the closure of the park's only through-road west of Pretty Rocks in 2021, severing vehicle access to key Denali viewing, the community of Kantishna, Alaska, and other Park visitor destinations.

Proactively, Denali National Park began funding road centric unstable slope asset and performance management studies to support mitigation funding requests along with remote sensing and mapping, geophysical surveys, and subsurface geotechnical investigations with near real-time and traditional landslide monitoring from 2016 through 2019. These geotechnical asset evaluations, teamed with remote and traditional surface and subsurface geotechnical investigations, were then used to further evaluate the Polychrome Pass Area. In 2020 and 2021, the existing alignment was compared to a south and north by-pass alignment as part of an expert-based risk assessment (EBRA) conducted virtually with innovative HoloLens Technology by Clirio. This fed critical "road segment probability values and engineering estimate" information to the subsequent and required Value Assessment conducted by the National Park Service (NPS) in 2021.



In response to the road closure in August 2021, the Polychrome Area Improvements project, a collaboration between NPS and the Western Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration with closely integrated engineering support from a Jacobs and BGC design and construction team, aims to restore reliable access and infrastructure resilience to the increasing changes at the site and through the design life of the preferred bridge alternative eventually selected by NPS. Ultimately, a Contractor Manager/General Contractor contract was awarded to Granite Construction in 2022 for constructability feedback and innovative brainstorming to accelerate design and construction of a 475-foot-long steel truss bridge to span the active landslide zone, accompanied by slope stabilization measures, strategic earthwork, road realignment, and thermosyphon installation to mitigate permafrost thaw. Construction began in 2023, with phased work planned through 2026. While construction has uncovered some challenges, the design and construction project team has worked diligently to achieve critical construction milestones. Although the bridge has been launched across the chasm and the associated stabilization of the roadway approaches leading to the new abutments will largely be complete in 2026, the nearly 47 miles of Denali Park Road will require spot rehabilitation and road bed and ditch grading and shaping prior to public access in Spring 2027.



MEETING DETAILS

Date:

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

Agenda:

5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., Social
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., Dinner
7:00 p.m., Presentation

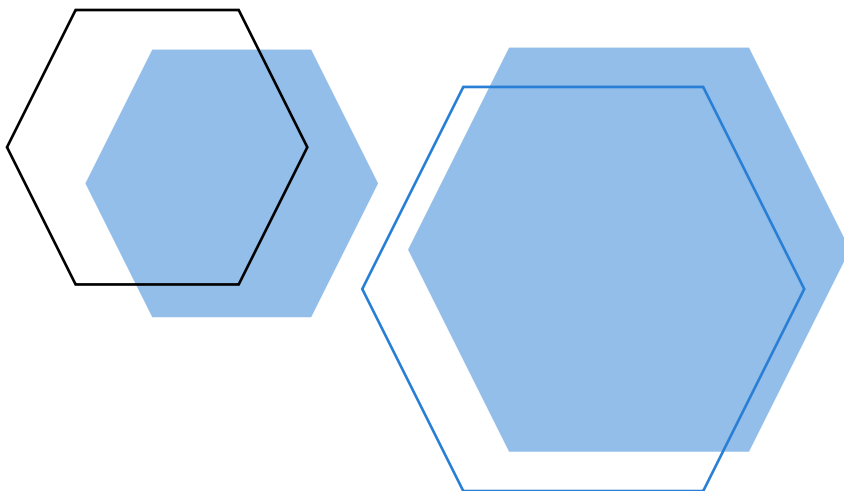
Location:

Old Market Pub
6959 SW Multnomah Boulevard

RSVP:

Ticket prices vary. Use cash or check to pay at the door.

If you want to pay with card, [RSVP here](#).





MEET THE PRESENTERS

DOUGLAS ANDERSON, LG, LEG

Doug retired in the fall of 2025 with more than 30 years working as a geopractitioner in the transportation and associated facilities/utilities industry. He worked his way up to the GEO Team Manager at the Western Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration in Vancouver, Washington, in 2020 after serving as a senior-level engineering geologist on the GEO Team since early 2013. Prior experience included supervising one of two engineering geology design and construction groups as the Assistant Chief Engineering Geologist at the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in Tumwater, Washington, after working his way up the career ladder from a staff engineering geologist. He worked for WSDOT from 1999 to 2013 and also dabbled in interesting and complex private property landslide projects with Kenneth G. Neal & Associates in Olympia, Washington, as a side-hustle during his time with WSDOT. Prior to joining WSDOT, he worked as a geologist in the Mt. Hood National

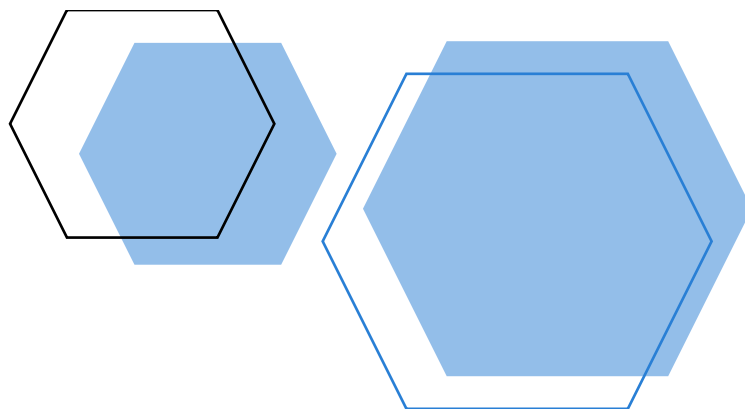
Forest and in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area from 1995 to 1999, where he met his lovely wife, Jo. Doug graduated from Portland State University in 1995 and has been a member of AEG since 1994!



MEET THE PRESENTERS

EVAN GARICH

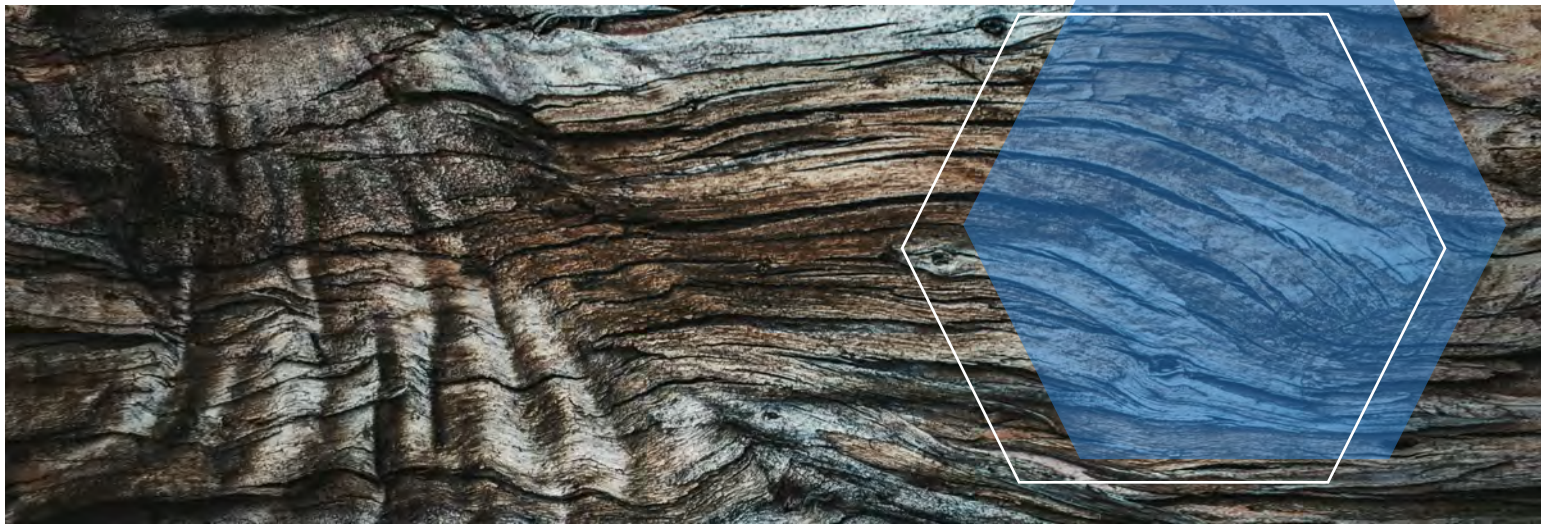
Evan Garich is the Pacific Northwest Geotechnical & Tunneling Manager at WSP. From 2016 to May of 2025, he was a geotechnical engineer at the Western Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration in Vancouver, Washington. There, he performed geotechnical work to support the design and construction of roadways and bridges in national parks and other federal lands, including Denali National Park. Evan graduated from Portland State University and Texas A&M University with degrees in civil engineering.



GARY CONNER

Gary Conner is a Senior Bridge Engineer, Project Manager, and Transportation Business Manager for Jacobs with 36 years of bridge design and construction experience. He has Bachelor's and Master's of Science degrees from Oregon State University. His recent work includes serving as the lead bridge engineer on projects in Oregon, Washington, and Alaska.





LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

TAKE CARE THIS SEASON

AEG Oregon,

I am writing this to you the day before I take two weeks off for the holidays. I always have mixed feelings about taking off that much time off from work. On one hand, I like to be busy. My preferred state of being is “almost overwhelmed.” It’s like I need to push myself close to the edge of the abyss to stay mentally stimulated. Trust me, I know how that sounds. My therapist and I are working on it.

On the other hand, I am tired. To say this year has been tumultuous is an understatement. And, as much as I enjoy my work, I recognize the need to get away. One of the things that drives me is the tremendous fulfillment I get from helping others succeed. But if I can’t take care of myself, I can’t take care of others. As the saying goes, if you don’t make time for your wellness, you will be forced to make time for your illness.

I hope you all took care of yourselves and tried to get away from it all this holiday season. On January 20, 2026, we will have Douglas Anderson, Evan Garich, and Gary Connor presenting on the Polychrome Bridge Launch. This is also the annual joint meeting we have with our local ASCE Chapter. It promises to be an exciting night, and I hope to see you all there.

Regards,

Nicholas Farny, AEG Oregon Chair





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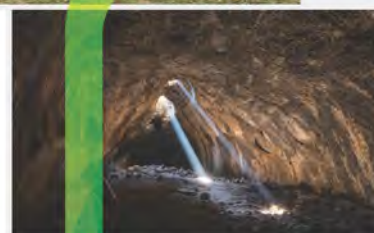
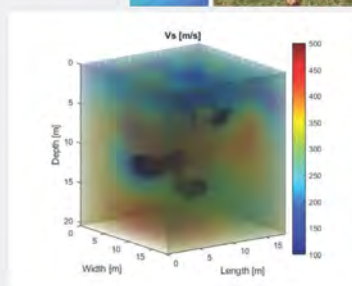
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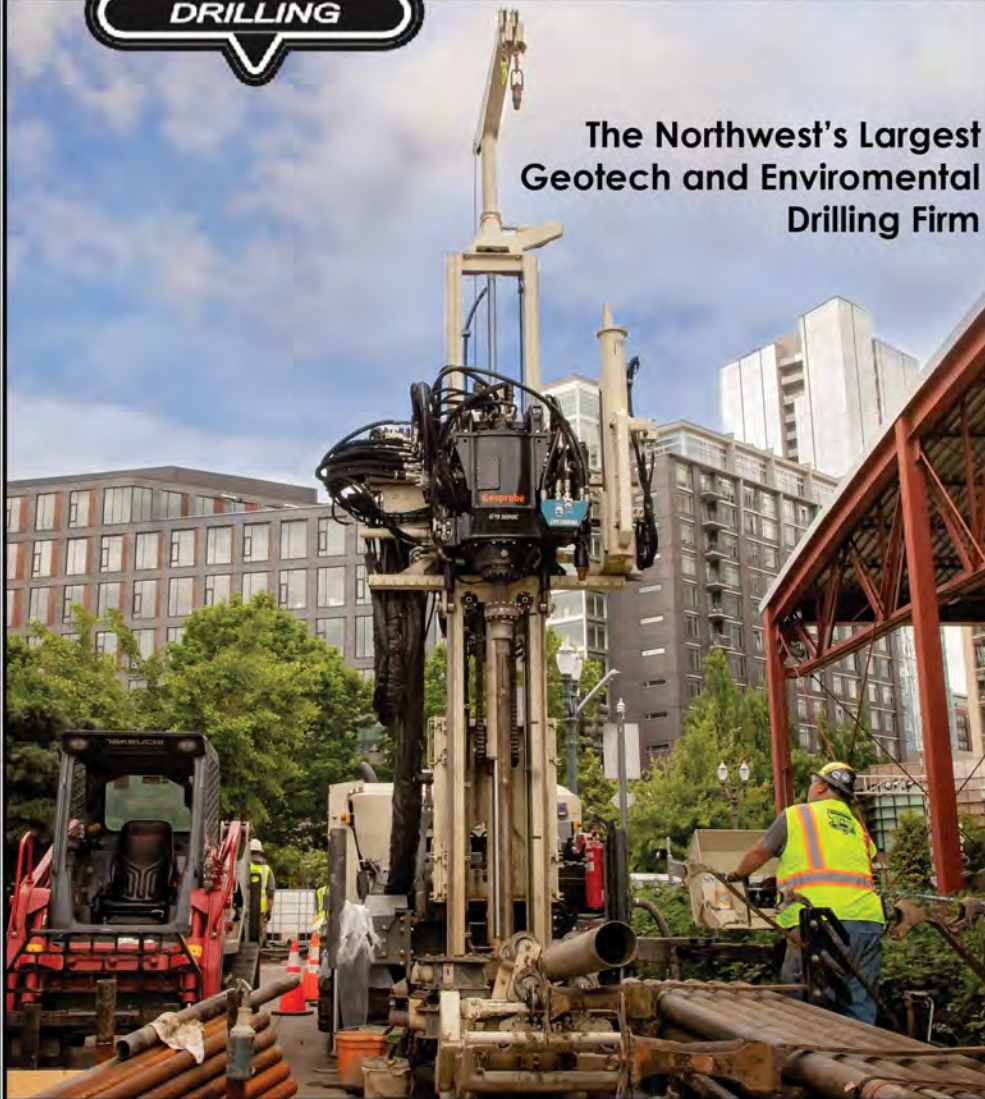
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AEG OREGON BULLETIN

STUDENT NIGHT

Student night will be May 21, 2026. This is an opportunity for students to present their projects and mingle with industry professionals. And there are prizes! It's never too early to start thinking about what you might present.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan. 9, 2026: Geological Society of Oregon presents Bill Burns, "Landslide and Debris Flow Hazards using Multitemporal Lidar." 7:30 p.m., PSU (Portland), Cramer Hall, Room 53

Jan. 22–23, 2026: Leapfrog Geo Fundamentals training course. Seequent Vancouver Office.

Jan. 27, 2026: Central Oregon Geoscience Society presents Kellie Wall, "The Wax and Wane of Volcanism in the Goat Rocks Wilderness." 5:30 p.m., Worthy Brewing (Bend)

Jan. 29, 2026: ACEC Engineering Excellence Awards Dinner. 4:30 p.m., Embassy Suites Washington Square (Tigard)

PSU STUDENT CHAPTER UPDATE

Cameron Stallcup has recently presented a poster at AGU in New Orleans! He presented research looking at thermal and structural controls on rockfall in the Gilkey Trench in Southeast Alaska with the team from the Juneau Icefield Research Program and the University of Portland, led by Dr. Kiya Riverman.

TEST DATES

January 4, 2026: 75-day application deadline for the March 20, 2026, ASBOG exams.

CALL FOR CONTENT!

We would love to hear from you! Tell us about your recent projects, career milestones, events, awards, and job postings or submit articles and visual elements. Send newsletter contributions to Sarah Norton at snorton@gri.com.

2025 – 2026 CHAPTER OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS



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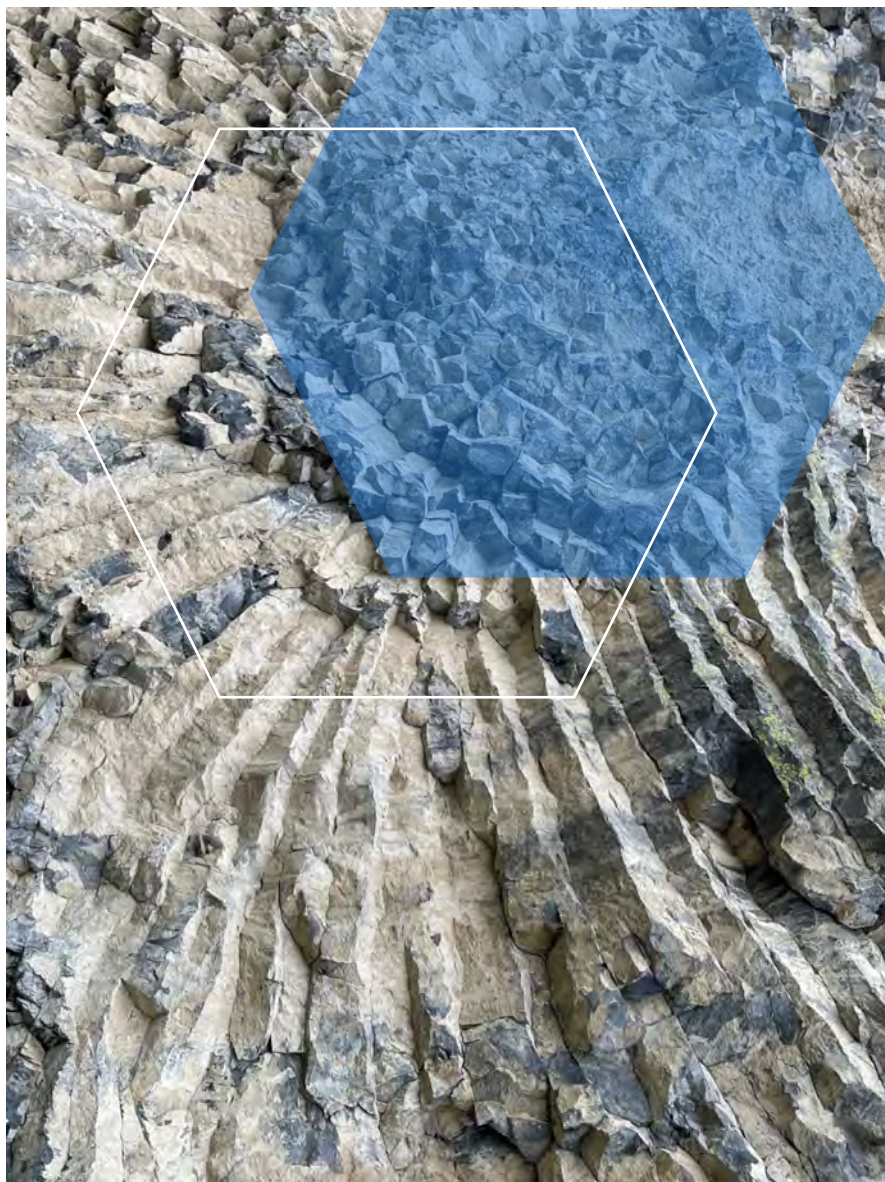
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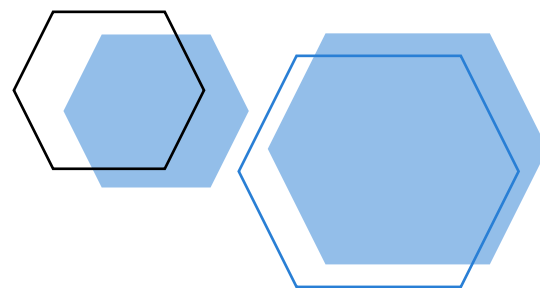
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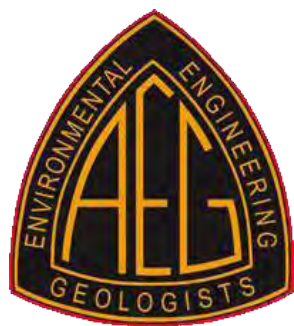


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<http://www.aegoregon.org>

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THE AEG OREGON CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

The Association of Engineering Geologists (AEG) contributes to its members' professional success and the public's welfare by providing leadership, advocacy, and applied research in environmental and engineering geology. AEG's values are based on the belief that its members have a responsibility to assume stewardship over their fields of expertise. AEG is the acknowledged international leader in environmental and engineering geology and is greatly respected for its stewardship of the profession.

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