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August 2009

# AASG

Association of American State Geologists

The Association of American State Geologists (AASG) membership consists of the leaders of geological surveys in each of the 50 states and Puerto Rico. The objectives of the AASG are:

- to advance the science and practical application of geology and related earth sciences in the United States and its territories, commonwealths, and possessions;
- to improve the effectiveness of state geological surveys through the interchange of ideas pertaining to their administrative organization, programs, and applications to economic change and other geologically related issues;
- to improve methods of assembling and disseminating data and information to the mining, energy, agriculture, utility, construction, insurance, and banking industries, educational institutions, civic and professional organizations, legislators, governmental agencies, and the public; and
- to effectively coordinate activities with federal and state agencies working in related fields.

The responsibilities of the various state geological surveys differ from state to state, depending upon the enabling legislation, the traditions under which the survey evolved, and each survey's administrative position within state government. All function as basic scientific information sources for the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of their state governments. Some have regulatory responsibilities for water, oil and gas, land reclamation, and related matters.

## Major programmatic interests

### Geologic mapping

The AASG strongly supports geologic mapping as a vital part of essential government services for the good of the public. Geologic maps are the basis for a wide range of economic, environmental, and health and safety applications. Federal and state agencies have clear roles in supporting geologic mapping. The AASG is pleased that Congress reauthorized the National Geologic Mapping Act and urges funding at the fully authorized levels. The peer-reviewed, competitive STATEMAP component has produced more than 4,000 geologic maps since 1992 and is matched dollar for dollar by states. The peer-reviewed EDMAP component helps train the geologic mappers of the future and is matched by participating colleges and universities. The AASG supports revision and maintenance of digital and analog 1:100,000- and 1:24,000-scale topographic quadrangle maps, which are needed as bases for geologic maps.

### Energy and mineral resources

In view of the Nation's continued, growing dependency on foreign imports, the AASG strongly supports adequately funded programs to investigate domestic energy and mineral resources within the relevant federal agencies, including the Departments of Energy and Interior. Such programs are essential for sound energy, mineral, and environmental policy decisions as well as for national security, and, whenever practical, should be conducted on a cooperative basis or contracted to state geological surveys for maximum cost effectiveness. Up-to-date, accurate geologic mapping is critical to the government assessment of and the planning for responsible development of energy and mineral resources.

### Water resources

The AASG supports a cost-efficient federal stream-gaging program. The AASG supports the USGS efforts to make stream gaging a national priority and encourages other federal agency users to support this effort. Through the USGS Water Resources Cooperative Program, regional, state and local governments and appropriate private entities should financially support additional gages that they need for site-specific issues. The AASG supports programs at the federal, state, and local levels to map the distribution and characteristics of aquifers and their recharge and discharge zones, monitor their status, and analyze the impacts of groundwater use as critical steps in assuring sustainable resources for the nation's freshwater needs. The AASG recommends a grant program similar to the National Cooperative Geologic Mapping Program as a cost-effective way to leverage USGS, state geological survey, and other state and local funding in this effort.

### Hazard mitigation

The AASG advocates the use of geologic information, including hazard maps, for mitigation of natural disasters, such as landslides, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and floods. Mitigation should occur prior to a natural disaster because prediction, planning, and avoidance can significantly reduce risk and cost. Geologic maps are the basis for most natural hazard maps, which are needed to effectively reduce risks to people and property. The AASG urges support of the National Earthquake Hazard Reduction Program, including an advanced national seismic research and monitoring system, research focused on the geology of the USA, and language that stresses the usefulness of geologic information in legislation concerning hazard mitigation.

### Geoscience data preservation

The AASG supports cooperative federal and state funding for the acquisition and preservation of geoscience samples, data, and information vital to economic growth; responsible development of energy, mineral, and water resources; reduction of risks from natural hazards; and environmental protection.

### Research and education

The AASG supports federal and state funding of basic and applied research in the geological sciences and related fields. The AASG also supports earth-science education on many fronts, including education of the public about mineral, energy, and water resources, geologic hazards, conservation, and environmental protection. The AASG encourages rigorous training of the next generation of geologists, particularly in field techniques, to meet workforce needs in industry, government, and academia.

## Cooperation with federal agencies

The AASG and its members have worked collaboratively with many federal agencies, including the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Energy, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Justice, State, Transportation and EPA, FEMA, NASA, and NSF. The AASG has current memoranda of understanding with OSM, NASA, NRCS, USFS and the USGS.

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Or visit the AASG Web site at www.stategeologists.org for:

- Copies of AASG Position Papers on programmatic interests;
- Links to all state geological surveys;
- AASG Journal and AASG Factbook;
- and much more.