Greetings from the Chair

Jim Davis, Chair, GSA Geology & Society Division
Former State Geologist of New York State and Retired State Geologist of California

Our Division is special because it is comprised of members from many geoscience subdisciplines who value using geoscience insights in developing public policy. Our efforts are more effective because of our broad representation of subdisciplines and a variety of professional experience. We have strong representation from students, academia, private sector and government employment, including some members who are K-12 public school educators. Many of our Division’s members have career experience in several different employment areas. Our membership also has diversity in ethnicity and in age that helps to serve our purpose as well.

Division Purpose and Policy Outreach Role
An important mission of our Division is outreach to our colleagues in the geosciences community to encourage them to share their scientific insights with public policymakers, especially at the local, state and regional jurisdiction levels in ways that lead to wise policies that incorporate the best available geoscience while successfully achieving the decision-makers’ intended results. It is important to make reference to one or more GSA Position Statements in these communications. GSA Position Statements are public policy consensus-based positions developed by the GSA Public Policy Committee. When ultimately adopted by the Council, Position Statements have input from the GSA membership and the Council. A list of GSA Position Statements, their texts and additional background is on the GSA website under “public policy”.
On occasion, we seek to make input at the national level in coordination with the GSA Washington Office. We also perform outreach to other Science Societies with similar interests in influencing public policy in order to coordinate our efforts, learn from each other, and to reinforce each other.

Among the ways we achieve our mission is by sponsoring and co-sponsoring sessions at GSA Section meetings and at the annual meeting where we can learn from each other. In this newsletter message I wish to call your attention to the sessions we are sponsoring and co-sponsoring at the 2010 annual meeting, and make you aware of our reception, our Distinguished Lecturer’s address, and our annual Division membership meeting.

For those members who are not planning to attend the annual meeting in Denver, we value this opportunity through this issue of our newsletter and through our website to make your aware of the details of these efforts, and to get your feedback by email. We also hope for feedback before and after the annual meeting begins from those who are attending as well. For the future, the Division is also exploring the use of web-based social networking to help provide more opportunities for members to communicate with this Division’s elected officers and with other members. Please read the articles about these upcoming annual meeting events in this issue and the complementary information on our website. Our website can be easily reached from the GSA home page by navigating to “GSA Divisions and Associated Societies” and then clicking on the name of our Division. We are providing more information about our Denver events in the article entitled “A Full Calendar of Exciting Events at The Annual GSA Meeting in Denver” in this September newsletter in order to intrigue members to further explore attending them.

We plan to summarize useful insights from these events in the next issue of the newsletter. Finally I call your attention to our website invitation to visit Policycomnet, our policy and geoscience online networking site. The website describes the uses of this valuable tool, particularly in helping geoscientists develop strategies for outreach to the public and to policymakers at the local and state/regional levels. A link to the online networking site is at the Division website.

I look forward to your questions and constructive comments before and after the annual meeting. I can be reached at jamesdavis93@comcast.net

A FULL CALENDAR OF EXCITING EVENTS AT THE ANNUAL GSA MEETING IN DENVER

Pardee Keynote Symposium P3

Sun., 31 Oct., 1:30–4:30 p.m.

Sponsored by
• GSA Geology and Society Division
• American Geological Institute
• American Geophysical Union
• Association of American State Geologists
• GSA Geology and Public Policy Committee
• GSA Hydrogeology Division
• GSA Engineering Geology Division

For our Pardee Keynote Symposium 3 we have assembled a panel of scientists who have experience in the use of science in formulating public policies, a social scientist who researches how scientists can successfully communicate natural hazard risks to lay policymakers, and a psychologist who will share his research experience about the influences on public policy decision-making. Their individual presentations will be followed by a panel discussion and
responses to questions from the audience. Visit our web site for links to the titles and abstracts of the panelists’ presentations.

http://www.geosociety.org/meetings/2010/sessions/p3.htm

Topical session T18

The GSA Geology and Society Division and the Geology and Public Policy Committee are sponsoring Topical Session T18, “Reaching New Peaks in Geoscience--Geoscience in the Service of a Sustainable Future,” at the upcoming annual meeting in Denver. This event includes both an Oral session and a Poster Session. It will explore both the science relevant to policy issues that need to be considered in order to support the earth’s growing population and how to effectively communicate science to stakeholders and societal leaders who endeavor to make the decisions that will address sustainability. The Oral Session will be held on Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 2, and will be followed by the G&S Division's annual distinguished lecture presentation and the annual business meeting of the Division.

Policy-Related Sessions Cosponsored by the Division

Our Division is also co-sponsoring a very diverse group of 18 other sessions at the Denver meeting. A means of navigating to a list of our co-sponsored events with access to titles, authors and abstracts is on our website

http://www.geosociety.org/divisions/gSoc/

Distinguished lecture presentation and annual business meeting

The Geology and Society Division will hold its annual reception, distinguished lecture presentation and annual business meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 2, in room 107/109 of the Colorado Convention Center. The reception will be set up in the room shortly after technical session T18 ends and will begin at about 6 PM. There will also be a cash bar available.

Dr. Bruce Molnia, the Division’s Distinguished lecturer for 2010, will address the Division’s members at 7 PM in Room 107/109 of the convention center.

Dr. Molnia has authored or co-authored more than 200 scientific papers. His interests include coastal and marine processes, remote sensing, glacial geology, and the impacts of changing climate. In addition to teaching at several universities, Dr. Molnia has worked at the U. S. Geological Survey for more than 35 years where he has served both as a research scientist and a program manager. He has also held several staff science advisory positions.

The Division’s annual business meeting will begin about 8 PM, immediately after Dr. Molnia’s lecture. The agenda for the meeting will be added to the Division’s website in the near future. Please come, meet the officers and share your ideas.

SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORTS

STABLE FINANCES AND MEMBERSHIP

Jon Goodwin
Illinois State Geological Survey

The Division’s financial position at the close of Fiscal Year 2010 was described to the Management Board recently by the Secretary-Treasurer, as “reasonably strong and stable.” Dues revenues collected for the Division by the GSA during the fiscal year that ended June 30 totaled $1,821.99 and total expenses totaled $1,671.21, resulting in a net increase in total assets of $654.78. The total assets now held for the Division by the GSA totals $3,099.47. The Secretary-Treasurer noted in his report to the Board that he was unable to explain why the dues income reported by GSA included 99 cents, since the dues amounts are all in whole dollar amounts, but that’s what GSA’s financial summary reported. The Division’s expenses for fiscal year 2010 were unusually low because the Division did not host a
reception at the annual meeting in Portland. The Division’s Distinguished Lecture by Patricia Woertz, the CEO of Archer-Daniels-Midland Co., was selected to be one of GSA’s noon-time highlight lectures, and the Division’s management board chose not to hold a reception in connection with either the distinguished lecture or with the annual business meeting later in the week. This year we will again host a reception on Tuesday evening starting at about 6 PM in Rooms 107/109 of the Denver Convention Center. The reception will immediately precede the Distinguished Lecture presentation by Dr. Bruce F. Molnia of the US Geological Survey.

Since the Division was first organized in 2003, membership has grown fairly steadily. In 2004, the division had 229 members. This year the membership is at 348. The maximum number of members was 378 in 2008, and the number of members fell back to 338 the following year. This year’s membership rolls include 55 student members, 24 recent graduate members, 4 teachers and 4 affiliate members (all of whom are charged $4.00 per year for membership), 156 members/fellows (who pay $8.00 per year in dues) and 105 Senior members/fellows who may or may not pay any dues to the Division (it’s up to them to decide).

The members of the management board have carried out various activities to try to encourage GSA members and student members to join the division. In particular, we have mounted exhibits in cooperation with the Geology and Public Policy Committee at every Section meeting for the past four years and will continue to do so next year. The redesigned exhibit, unveiled this year at the joint meeting of the Northeast and Southeast Sections in Baltimore, features many colorful pictures of geologists interacting with public officials in various ways, both in running field trips for them to introduce them to geological concepts, and in meetings with them in the halls of Congress and in public meetings held around the country to discuss local issues. We hope you’ll drop by exhibit booths 136 - 138 at the upcoming annual meeting to see the new exhibit and talk to representatives of the Division and the GPPC.

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**GEOLOGY AND SOCIETY 2009-2010 BEST STUDENT PAPER AWARD**

*Craig Cooper, Division 2nd Vice Chair*  
*Idaho National Laboratory*

The 2010 annual meeting is just around the corner, and it’s time to “whet your appetite” by announcing the winners of the 2009 student paper competition. If you will all please envision a geologist, in full field kit, standing at a remote field site with snow-capped mountains soaring behind, with a large brass band behind him/her, calling for a canyon-splitting drum-roll, and the 2009 winners are... Kate Mickelson and Luke Bowman! Kate hales from Portland State University, and is receiving honors for her presentation entitled *Landslide Differential, Inventory, and Susceptibility Mapping using LIDAR Imagery for the Panther Creek Watershed in Yamhill County, Oregon.*

Luke is pursuing his degree at Michigan Technological University, and is receiving honors for his presentation entitled *Community Hazard Perceptions and Disaster Preparedness before and after the 2005 Eruption of Santa Ana (Ilamatepec) Volcano, El Salvador.* Both students earned this award for their presentations at the 2009 annual meeting in Portland; and you can read more about their work in this newsletter as well as in upcoming editions. You can also congratulate them in person and raise a toast to their excellent work at this year’s G&S Division meeting on Tuesday, 2-November.

The annual student paper competition is one of G&S Division’s premier events. It’s a chance for students from around the world to showcase their research and their understanding of how their work helps provide service to society. This award helps recognize our students, and encourage them
to pursue careers where societal service is an important part of their professional endeavors. The only requirement for entry is that the student gives a presentation in a session sponsored or co-sponsored by G&S Division. The G&S Division officers arrange for each of the oral presentations to be graded by a panel of anonymous judges; with the final score representing a balance between technical excellence, quality of communication, and awareness of the societal impact of their work. The judges are given score sheets for each presentation they agree to judge, and careful instructions on how to grade the presentation according to the criteria in the score sheet.

The student papers cover a wide range of geoscientific topics, and we recruit technical experts in each of the subdivisions to judge papers within their realm of expertise. The wide array of topics and the diversity of criteria make for challenging judging; and we take special precautions to ensure that all technical topics receive fair and balanced consideration. One thing that helps tremendously is having plenty of judges!

In closing, we have a special request for our members. We need judges, lots of judges. We need enough judges to make a brass band big enough to produce the epochal, earth-shaking drum roll you gave to Kate and Luke. Please volunteer. It’s fun, rewarding, and helps to inspire the next generation of geologists. You can learn more about how to help with this event by contacting either myself (craig.cooper@inl.gov) or Larry Davis (rldavis@newhaven.edu). Please drop us a line, and we look forward to seeing you at GSA.

2009 BEST STUDENT PAPER AWARD WINNER

Kate Mickelson, Portland State University

“LIDAR-BASED LANDSLIDE INVENTORY, PANTHER CREEK WATERSHED, COAST RANGE OREGON”

Landslides in the Panther Creek Watershed of the Oregon Coast Range impact the drinking water supply of the city of Carlton, Oregon which obtains its water from Carlton Reservoir. In 1999, a landslide flowed into the reservoir, resulting in a 50 percent decrease in the reservoir’s capacity. Due to this event, an assessment of the potential for future landslides in the watershed was deemed necessary.

LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) derived high-resolution digital elevation models (DEMs) allow the detection of subtle geomorphic features like landslide head scarps, flanks, internal scarps, and toes. LIDAR elevation data was collected in the Panther Creek Watershed in December and September 2007 and March 2009. LIDAR derived images from the March 2009 dataset were used to map pre-historic, historic, and active landslides in the area. Each mapped landslide was characterized as to type of movement, head scarp height, slope, failure depth, relative age, and direction. The LIDAR bare earth DEMs were subtracted from each other resulting in a differential dataset to examine changes in ground elevation. Areas with significant elevation changes were identified as potentially active landslides. 29 landslides are considered active based upon differential LIDAR and field observations. A total of 140 landslides were mapped and then field checked in the 23km² study area. Deep-seated earth flows and rotational landslides are the most common slope processes with a mean estimated pre-failure slope of 27°. For this project, deep-seated landslides are defined by a failure depth greater than 4.5 meters.
A historic record of landslide activity in the study area was created using aerial photography. Aerial photographs for the Panther Creek Watershed range from 1944-2009 and were taken every 5-7 years. Mapping landslides on serial aerial photography expanded the landslide inventory and provided accurate dates of movement for several landslides. A shallow-seated landslide susceptibility map was generated using the landslide inventory, calculations of factor of safety, and buffers. The results of the susceptibility map indicate that 29% of the study area is highly susceptible to landsliding and 54% is moderately susceptible. Due to the high number of deep-seated landslides, a deep-seated susceptibility map will also be created.

Landslides are one of the most prevalent and destructive natural hazards in Oregon. To reduce threats to infrastructure and inhabitants, landslide inventory maps need be created to locate hazardous areas. This inventory can then be used to develop susceptibility maps to classify areas at risk for landslides in the future. Differential LIDAR allows geologists to identify active landslides by detecting elevation changes between repeat surveys over the same area. Once an area is deemed active, appropriate mitigation strategies can be emplaced. The results of this study include a detailed landslide inventory including pre-historic, historic, and active landslides and a set of susceptibility maps identifying areas of potential future landslides. The methods and procedures developed in this study will hopefully be expanded to include other areas at risk to landslides.

Since many of you do not know me, I’d like to take this opportunity to introduce myself and talk a bit about my hopes for the Division.

First, the “vitals.” I am in my 20th year of service as Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences and University Research Scholar at the University of New Haven. Prior to that I was Senior Hydrogeologist with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES). I have also held teaching positions at several other colleges. I am probably one of the few people of my vintage who actually did their MS and PhD theses in the field of environmental geology. For my MS, I looked at nitrogen transport under tiled agricultural fields in East-Central Illinois and for my PhD, I looked at the effects of urbanization on very small watersheds and ground water near Rochester, NY. My current research involves water issues on San Salvador Island, Bahamas although I have my hand in many other “pots” including applications of geology to land use planning, public education about the importance of geology in environmental issues (more on that in a minute), and outdoor education (“no child left inside”). In regards to this last item, for the last 41 years, I have also worn another “hat”: Director of Nature Programs and Teaching at a summer camp in New Hampshire. I play the flute, was an NCAA soccer official (until my ankles went), love to cook, and I tell Down-East stories.

I have long had an interest in geology and public policy. Besides working for New Hampshire DES, I have been on two different county planning commissions, I am the science coordinator for the Northeastern Cave Conservancy, have worked with the Bahamian Government on water issues, and I am a trained climate change presenter with The Climate Project. I’ve given over 60 public climate presentations. Finally, I just completed 4 years on GSA’s Committee on Geology and Public Policy. There, I was known for my outspoken advocacy of
expanding our focus from just federal issues to ones at the state and local level where most of the environmental decisions (especially land use) are actively being made. I was joined in this endeavor by many other GPPC members and I am pleased that the Committee now has this expanded focus. However, the thing that pleases me the most about my GPPC tenure, is the part that we played in formulating and getting through Council, GSA’s new, strong climate change statement.

I come to the Division’s Board with some specific goals in mind. The most important of these is to expand our activities beyond the annual and section meetings. I think that the Division ought to be interacting more with society in general, not just the Geological Society. Possibilities include a series of public presentations associated with annual or section meetings; a speakers bureau; or informal presentations by members to Sierra Club Chapters, Garden Clubs, at schools. We have an important message, but we’ve got to get it out there. I think that the Division can be instrumental in this effort. Beyond that, I am anxious to see us focus our activities so that we can explain to potential division members (especially students) just what the division does and why it is important for them to join. I think that this second goal is probably the key to achieving the first.

In conclusion, I am excited about bringing my perspectives (small school, local government, public outreach) to the Board and I am looking forward to my four-year commitment as a member. Thank you for electing me!

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**WELCOME YOUR NEW LIAISON TO THE GEOLOGY AND PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE!**

*Kathy Troost, Director*

*The Pacific Northwest Center for Geologic Mapping Studies (GeoMapNW)*

*Dept. of Earth & Space Sciences, University of Washington*

I am honored to be serving as your liaison to the Geology and Public Policy Committee (GPPC) for the next three years. Over the past 31 years my interest in integrating geology with public policy and society has grown from an idle interest while working on a permafrost map in Fairbanks Alaska to a full-blown passion while developing methodology for geological hazard mapping. Here’s a brief summary of my background. After receiving a BA in geology from Indiana State University in 1979, I started my career in St. Louis Missouri with the geotechnical firm, Shannon & Wilson, Inc. Nineteen years and two more offices later, in Fairbanks and Seattle, I had reached a senior management position with the company. My projects ranged from hydroelectric dams on remote rivers in Alaska, to soil and groundwater contamination investigations at army bases and large sports stadiums in Washington, to characterizations of low level nuclear waste sites in several states, most notably Illinois. Five years (one year on and off the witness stand) on a particularly highly contested Illinois site gave me new insights into just how important educating the public and decision makers can be.

While working in consulting, I conducted research on the side that lead to my MS in 1999 in Geology from the University of Washington (UW). Then, together with Dr. Derek Booth, I started a research center at the UW focusing on high-resolution urban geological mapping. This mapping technique allows very detailed mapping in urban areas where outcrops are few but thousands of geotechnical boreholes and LIDAR data are available. The Center was funded by City, County, State and Federal
grants and contracts for new geological maps and a borehole database, assistance with ordnances, hazard maps, aquifer susceptibility maps, and the like.

It was while running the Center for 12 years that I became so passionate about the importance of geology in our everyday lives and began leading efforts in many venues to help educate non-scientific agency employees. I worked with the State geologists and testified at legislative hearings, participated in fieldtrips for the legislators, took city and county decision makers on fieldtrips and gave numerous presentations about the geology and active faulting in our region. I worked alongside many engineers and planners developing ordnances for features such as buried peat deposits, landslide prone hillsides, and potential fault zones. Today, I am completing my PhD in geology from the UW, and have my own private consulting firm. I will continue the “outreach” efforts I started while running the Center.

As your liaison to the GPPC, I feel I have two main roles. One is to serve as a liaison and provide open communication between the GPPC and the Geology and Society Division and I will be looking for opportunities for the groups to enhance each other’s efforts. Secondly, I am looking forward to continuing my passion, educating the decision makers about the importance of geology in our lives, the importance of recognizing and understanding geological hazards, finding our groundwater resources and vulnerabilities, respecting our remaining mineral resources, and the importance of geological mapping and preservation. If you have any questions or comments for me, drop me an e-mail. I look forward to learning more about both groups and serving as your liaison.

GREETINGS FROM OUR 2010 DISTINGUISHED LECTURER

Bruce F. Molnia
Geology and Society Division 2010 Distinguished Lecturer

‘Communication of important geoscience insights to 2010 public policy makers from the personal perspective of having been a research investigator, a government regulator, a policy maker, a science advisor, and a congressional staffer’.

I am honored and humbled to have been asked by the Geological Society of America’s Geology and Society Division to be their 2010 Distinguished Lecturer. When I contacted Division Chair Jim Davis for guidance concerning how the Division would like me to focus my presentation, he suggested that I highlight examples of the effective communication of science that have resulted from some of the many stops that I have made on my non-linear career path. In essence, he asked me to share successful examples of how the results of scientific activities that I have been associated with have been convey to non-scientists who then used this information to make policy-related decisions.

Let me begin by emphasizing that the comments and statements that will be presented are solely mine and in no way represent the policies or practices of my employer.

For those of you who are not familiar with me, over that past 40 years, my primary career has been as a geologist and research scientist. In addition, I have also served in a number of other positions: a university professor; the west coast geological oceanographer for a federal agency that regulated continental shelf oil and gas activities; a senior staffer at a National Research Council Board; the webmaster for a Department of State Ministerial level international council; detailed to the staff of a member of the US House of Representatives where I helped organize and
operate the House Oceans Caucus; a founding Editor of *GSA Today* where I wrote or edited more than 120 articles on different aspects of government, policy, and the earth sciences; the organizer of three international workshops dealing with pollution and radioactive waste disposal in the Arctic; chief geologist for a small consulting firm that performed site surveys for the petroleum industry; an on-air science reporter for a public television network; and most recently, the executive director of an interagency committee that facilitates the scientific use of classified assets.

In the months that have followed the Division’s invitation, I have spent a lot of time reflecting on each of my career stops and searching for those unique kernels of communications success, located amongst 40 years of chaff, that I could focus on in this presentation. Discussions with Jim Davis resulted in the title of my presentation. Although it is quite a mouthful, it captures the essence of many of my career path stops. Each presented different opportunities and unique challenges in being able to communicate the message. However, a common theme that resonates through all of my involvements with respect to successfully and effectively communicating to a non-scientific audience is: what I write or say must always be understandable, unambiguous, unequivocal, reproducible, defendable, and logical.

In my Distinguished Lecturer address I will share with the audience some of my understandings which have come from on the job communication with a variety of lay individuals in each of the roles that I have served. It is crucial that all of us learn how to share our relevant scientific backgrounds with nonscientists confronted with the challenges of creating policies that rely on scientific understanding to successfully accomplish their intended purposes.

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### BEST PHOTO AWARD COMPETITION TO START

**Rob McDowell, University of Georgia**

As we all know and appreciate, geology is a highly visual science. In fact, one of my geomorphology colleagues described his field as being the “science of scenery”. Visualization is also critical in the interface between geology and society. Being worth a thousand words, a picture can illustrate for policy makers the danger posed by sea level rise, or construction near ancient landslides. Citizens are fascinated by pictures of fault scarps and fault traces in their communities. And who can forget the undersea photos of oil gushing out of the Deep Horizon well, or the massive iceberg that has recently formed in Greenland.

The Division of Geology and Society would like to initiate a photo contest, highlighting the best photo that clearly shows the relationship between geology and society. There is no shortage of topics! However, we do ask that that photos you submit be original, or if not original, correctly attributed to the photographer and/or source.

*Photo from China Daily, Sept. 13, 2010, showing mine-induced sinkhole in Hunan Province, PRC. Improper room and pillar gypsum mining in the Shuangfeng mine is believed to be the culprit. Submitted by A. Wegener, Florida Rocky Mountain College.*

The selection of the best photo will be made by voting members of the DG&S Management Board, and the winner of the
contest will have his or her Division membership dues paid by the Division. Initially, the award will be a single annual award. But I am hopeful that it will catch on and be issued every time a Division newsletter is published (3-4 times per year).

Please send your pictures to Rob McDowell at mcdowell@cvioig.uga.edu. We look forward to your eye-catching photos!

LOOKING FOR GEOLOGY STUDENTS WITH OPINIONS AND GOOD WRITING SKILLS.
*Marilyn Suiter, Natl. Science Foundation*

The Division of Geology & Society is hosting an editorial competition for students who are members of GSA.

We would like to have a series of op-ed columns on timely issues that are important in the interface of geoscience and society. Those students who are interested in guest-writing a column should propose the subject of their column in a brief statement of about 100 words. The proposal should include the key idea and the manner in which the article will address the topic. The topic should be aligned with the Division of Geology and Society mission, and be appropriate to the newsletter audience. (Remember that GSA is a very large society with many diverse opinions!) Full editorial privilege will be retained by the G&S newsletter editor (currently Rob McDowell), but final, pre-publication approval of the winning submittals will be made by the Division Chair (currently Jim Davis).

Winners will develop their one-time column (not exceeding 500 words), which will be published in the G&S newsletter. Up to four student articles will be selected per calendar year. On acceptance of the column, each author will also receive $50.00. If the author is not a DG&S member, their first year of Division dues will also be provided.

Letters that most clearly express a well thought out opinion, do not cause undue offense to readers or take a partisan tone, and most thoughtfully incorporate the mission of the Division of Geology and Society will be thoroughly considered.

*Editor’s Note: On occasion we receive requests to draw attention to conferences, etc. that bear a relation to public policy*

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MILITARY GEOSCIENCES: DESERT WARFARE – PAST LESSONS AND MODERN CHALLENGES

Military activities – past, present, and future – will always be strongly linked with a wide spectrum of geosciences. The decisive outcomes of numerous battles on land throughout history have been dictated in large part by the terrain and environmental conditions. Modern military operations rely on a range of land-, air-, and space-borne intelligence supplemented with knowledge of often variable terrain processes and conditions. The modern study of environmental sciences is critical for both evaluation of how terrain and land surface conditions may impact military equipment and operations as well as sustainable management of military reservations and installations. Further, potential increases in geopolitical instability, driven in part by decreasing natural resources and environmental impacts related to global climate change, will a factor in determining the future and fate of global military conflicts.

The 9th International Conference on Military Geosciences (ICMG) will provide a venue for military personnel, academics, and practitioners from government service and commercial enterprises to explore a wide range of military geosciences. We invite papers for this five day conference to take place in Las Vegas, Nevada (USA) from June 20 to June 24, 2011. The event will be hosted by the Desert Research Institute (part of the Nevada System of Higher Education)
in cooperation with the US Army Research Office.

The overarching theme of the 2011 meeting in Las Vegas is the role of deserts in past and modern warfare, issues with management of military lands in desert regions, and how desert environmental conditions can impact military equipment and personnel. We especially seek papers related to military operations in deserts, however, other themes and topics related to military geosciences are welcome.

The conference program will be divided between sessions of oral and poster presentations and various excursions to the surrounding desert. A day-long field trip to the Nevada Test Site with a focus on testing of nuclear weapons is planned for mid-conference. An optional post-conference field trip also is planned from June 24 to June 28 and will travel through the desert from Las Vegas to San Diego, California, and will explore military history and modern aspects of desert warfare. A book containing selected papers presented will be published after the conference. The deadline for submission of abstracts (300 words) is 15 January 2011, via the conference website. Additional information regarding registration, travel, and schedules are available at the ICMG2011 website: http://www.dri.edu/icmg.

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