

# Focal Point

A publication of the Sacramento Chapter  
of the California Lands Surveyors Association



August 2023

## Guest Speaker for August 3 meeting: CLSA President-Elect Kevin Nehring PLS

### President's Message

Hello Chapter!

August is upon us, and the heat is officially here!

The chapter's BBQ was a scorcher, but we all made it out with smiles on our faces, good memories, and great conversation. The event started with a round of 9 holes of disc golf, followed by burgers and dogs grilled up by the grill master Russ. Due to the heat, we shifted the time from 12:00 - 4:00 to 10:00 - 2:00, which was definitely the right call. A light breeze kept the temperatures down, but by about 1:30 it was agreed to pack it in. We learned a few things, but overall, I'd say it was a success. Thank you to CSDS for sponsoring the event, and congrats to the winners of the "Guess the Distance" competition!

August's meeting will be a good one! We'll have Kevin Nehring, the State President-Elect joining to discuss his vision for next year. I hope you can all make it out.

Looking ahead to September's meeting, we will be calling for nominations for next year's chapter officers. If you've been considering getting more involved, this is a great opportunity to give back to the industry. I know I've sure enjoyed the last 4 years and am excited to see who steps in next. If you have any questions regarding what's involved, what the commitment looks like, or what the requirements are, please don't hesitate to reach out to any of the chapter officers.

Justin Lambert, PLS

2023 Sacramento Chapter President

The **Focal Point** newsletter is a publication of the Sacramento Chapter of the California Land Surveyors Association. Check us out at <https://www.sacramento-clsa.org>

### Who's Who in the Sacramento Chapter for 2023:

Justin Lambert PLS     President  
Russell Smith PLS     Vice President  
Annette Hovorka PLS     Secretary  
Adam Foster PLS     Treasurer  
Cameron Clark PLS     Board of Directors Representative  
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Carl C.de Baca PLS     Editor Focal Point

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If you would like to sponsor a student dinner, the fee is \$25 and that comes with 1 month of Business Card placement.

The Focal Point is offering advertisements to our business partners, suppliers and other supporters with the proceeds going to our education fund.

- Business Card     \$100/year
- 1/4 page ad     \$250/year
- 1/2 page ad     \$325/year
- Full page ad     \$400/year

You can post job ads in the Focal Point for \$100 and they will run for a maximum of 1 year. And, you can take home one of our attractive slate CLSA coasters for a \$10 donation!

Contact the Focal Point editor at [focalpointeditor@gmail.com](mailto:focalpointeditor@gmail.com)

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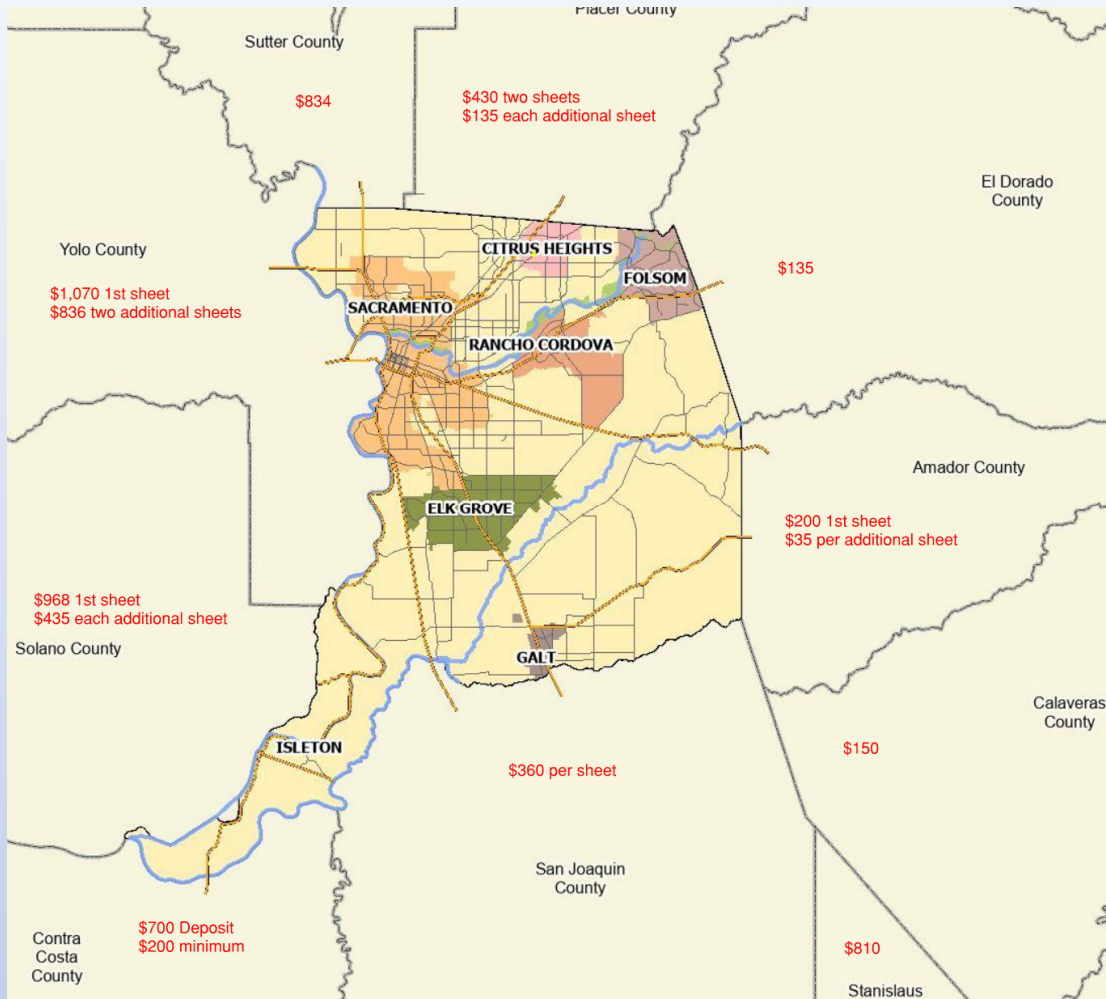


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# Fee Structure – Map Reviews in the Local Region



*Starting on the next page is the draft letter for the “Collaborative View of the Sacramento Chapter of the California Land Surveyors Association” for the initiation of a Flat Fee for the Sacramento County Surveyors Office Review and Approval of a Record of Survey.*

## Editor’s Message

*There was no regular meeting of the chapter in July. Instead, we had a terrific barbecue and picnic at Johnson Springview Park in Rocklin! We have included a brief write-up and a few pictures from the event. If you missed this one (and it was a hot one!), we are giving you plenty of time to plan on attending the next one in 2024! This month we are taking a look at the fee structure of map reviews in the surrounding counties and previewing a letter that will be sent to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors asking for revisions to the fee structure hereabouts.*

*Please note that the “Ask a Title Officer” column is going to be on hiatus for some time. You can still contact Tom Bolinger at Fidelity title (916) 952-9800 with title questions.*

Sacramento Chapter of the  
California Land Surveyors Association  
P.O. Box 162167  
Sacramento, CA 95816

Attn: Sacramento County  
RE: Record of Survey Flat Fee Request

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is set forth to represent the collaborative view of the Sacramento Chapter of the California Land Surveyors Association (Sacramento Chapter), that the County of Sacramento should initiate a Flat Fee for the Sacramento County Surveyors Office Review and Approval of a Record of Survey.

In May of 2023, Sacramento County staff were consulted regarding the costs and averages of time and expenses associated with the Review of a Record of Survey. Below are the responses:

Typical Review Time spent for a one sheet map: 1<sup>st</sup> Review takes 3 to 5 hours, 2<sup>nd</sup> Review takes 0.5 to 2 hours, 3<sup>rd</sup> Review takes half an hour, 4<sup>th</sup>+ Review takes less than half an hour. Most Maps take between 3 and 4 Reviews to complete approval.

Sacramento County staff also mention that in some instances, it is apparent that some Surveyors are using the County Surveyors Office as a “second set of eyes” for their map. This can be good for the community and also can be bad for the community. If a competent Surveyor is producing “Good” Maps, and is using the county as a “second set of eyes” for completeness and conformity to the PLS Act and Standards of Professional Practices, then the County’s Review as a “second set of eyes” is beneficial to the Community. But, if a Surveyor is Incompetent, and/or producing “Poor” Maps, this then becomes burdensome both to the Survey Department and the Community for time spent. These “Poor” Map Submittal situations are why limits to the number of reviews for a set fee should be enacted.

As of April 2023, the ten counties listed below which surround Sacramento County have the following fee structures:

<b>Sutter County</b>	\$834 ( <i>flat fee</i> )
<b>Placer County</b>	\$430 two sheets, \$135 each additional sheet ( <i>flat fee</i> )
<b>El Dorado County</b>	\$135 ( <i>flat fee</i> )
<b>Amador County</b>	\$200 1 <sup>st</sup> sheet, \$35 per additional sheet ( <i>flat fee</i> )
<b>Calaveras County</b>	\$150 ( <i>flat fee</i> )
<b>Stanislaus County</b>	\$810 ( <i>flat fee</i> )
<b>San Joaquin County</b>	\$360 per sheet ( <i>flat fee</i> )
<b>Contra Costa County</b>	\$700 deposit, \$200 minimum, ( <i>billed hourly</i> )
<b>Solano County</b>	\$968 1 <sup>st</sup> sheet, \$435 each additional sheet ( <i>flat fee</i> )
<b>Yolo County</b>	\$1,070 1 <sup>st</sup> sheet, \$836 two additional sheets ( <i>flat fee</i> )

*Continued from Page 3*

It should be noted that nine of the ten counties charge a flat rate fee. Only Contra Costa County and Sacramento County have hourly rate fee structures.

The Sacramento Chapter is in support of a Three (3) Sheet Set, Four (4) Review process for a Record of Survey Review with Flat Fee. Any Record of Survey over a three sheet set and/or in need of more than four reviews to complete, will be billed at a time and material rate.

Professional Surveyors and Property Owners are not in favor of a Time and Materials based charge for a Record of Survey Map Review. “Good” Maps should be the norm throughout the surveying profession. A set Fee for a set number of reviews will encourage “Good” Mapping to be submitted.

The main focus of the Sacramento Chapter for the implementation of a Flat Fee for the Review of a Record of Survey in Sacramento County is to bring Continuity and Clarity to the cost of Delineation of Parcel Lines for the “Ma and Pa” members of our Community.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. The Sacramento Chapter of the California Land Surveyors Association welcomes further conversations on this topic and encourages further discussions for the benefit of the community to stimulate Professional Practices and promote Sacramento County Citizens’ Property Boundary identification needs.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

[Justin Lambert](#), 2023 President

Russell Smith, 2023 Vice President

Annette Hovorka, 2023 Secretary (*Acting*)

Adam Foster, 2023 Treasurer (*Acting*)

Sacramento Chapter of the California Land Surveyors Association



**Morrow**  
**Surveying, Inc.**  
LAND SURVEYORS

# 2023 CLSA SACRAMENTO CHAPTER BARBECUE!



On July 15, close to twenty hearty surveyors and family members braved the heat for some cold drinks, hot burgers and dogs, good conversation, and a round of disc golf. CSDS provided the meats and a wide assortment of refreshments and a good time was had by all.

Sadly, it got too hot for the planned Survey Olympics, but there's always next year!

Thanks to CSDS for food and fun!



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# The Rant Zone

## One Way Street

Let's say you are employed by a company that is signatory to the union agreement. You deploy "union" field crews as many of us do. From time-to-time you send our aspiring LS candidates out with these crews to get the field experience they will need to qualify for the LS exam. Maybe they just graduated from a school with a baccalaureate degree in Geomatics, or maybe they have just been a diligent technician that has risen through the ranks over the years. That difference doesn't matter here in California. Regardless of the path they took to get there, a license is available if certain requirements are met, including field experience. There is an official process for aspirants to get that field experience in a union company. The firm merely designates an individual as a management trainee and that person can get the necessary hours of field time, with the caveat that no union member (apprentice or chain person) sits at home while the designee works, (and only one designee at a time, please). This process is straightforward and reasonably fair. But what about the converse? Suppose you employ a union party chief who aspires to be a licensed land surveyor like you? What does that process look like?

There is no equivalent designation to bring field people in the office, nor does there need to be. However, the candidate, who has been earning a union party chief salary and benefits may have, practically speaking, priced himself or herself out of the running for an office technician position. It would be the rare individual who would take a 33% pay cut, (or more) to come in and get the skills needed to become a professional. A firm willing to bring such an individual into the office without a huge pay cut is probably much rarer still. So, it seems there is a glass ceiling over the union party chief and it looks like bulletproof glass at that.

According to a recent discussion with union representatives, the union does not want to hold back the aspirations of their members, but they also do not want to see that member leave the union. There is no specific process on their end to allow field personnel to work at a non-field position for a negotiated salary. But there is no prohibition of it either. The firm would need to continue to pay the complete benefit package, which is probably 150% of a non-union employee's benefits and includes contribution to the pension trust fund. There is a waiver form available to employers who want to bring someone into the office. It merely says the employer acknowledges they have paid contributions to the trust fund on behalf of the union member for their field work waives the payment of benefits for non-covered work. This protects the trust fund from any claims by the employer that may arise later.

This waiver form is not explicit in any way with respect to how to go about bringing the person into the office and fairly compensating him or her, which implies that it is up to the firm to make a worthwhile offer. However, to put it bluntly, why should the firm pay the incoming chief more than it pays an already working office technician, and not only more, but substantially more, if they are to do the same job? And why should the party chief be expected to take a huge pay cut to fit into the firm's billing structure? The only real roadblock to allowing a party chief to come in and get responsible charge experience, Cadd experience and research experience, etc, is the level of compensation that a firm is willing to absorb and the level of salary pain the chief is willing to accept.

For those of us who advocate promoting talented staff, no matter where they come from, this situation is very frustrating. Firms are in business to make money and salaries are tied to bill-out rates, period. Meanwhile, the union is motivated to both protect their members and to not lose them. The only argument you, as advocate for the advancement of a party chief is that it would be a temporary situation while the chief matriculates. Essentially you must ask your company to make a sacrifice on behalf of an individual, which is always a gamble. The case for making such a sacrifice could only be made successfully for someone deemed 'extraordinary'. And the problem with that scenario is that you probably aren't the 'deemer'. It is likely to be your CFO.

This topic deserves more attention and more discussion. Feel free to send in your two cents worth.



4th Women Land Surveyors Summit. The Women Surveyors Summit, hosted by Future Surveyors Foundation is held to support and promote diversity in the land surveying profession. There are 8-10 PDH's available.

[Women Surveyors Summit 2023 Registration, Thu, Oct 19, 2023 at 3:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

October 19-23, 2023 Stillwater, MN

This in-person event is the 4th Women Surveyors Summit. This is a "for women, by women" event and will include opportunities for continuing education. 8-10 PDH's will be available.

### NOTICE:

Sacramento City College is recruiting applicants for the Surveying Adjunct Teacher pool. The closing date is August 19, 2023.

<https://jobs.losrios.edu/postings/22552>

The advertisement for PSOMAS features a blue sky with white clouds and a mountain range in the background. In the foreground, a white PSOMAS van is parked on a dirt road with a surveying instrument on a tripod. The text "Survey &amp; Geospatial Services", "Civil Engineering", "Construction Management", and "Environmental" is displayed in white. Below the image, it says "Northern California Offices in Auburn &amp; Roseville". At the bottom, there is a blue bar with the phone number "916.788.8122", the website "www.Psomas.com", and the PSOMAS logo.



Hello FNG, welcome to the world of Surveying. Here are some rules to live by when out in the field:

- All dogs bite. The smaller ones smile and wait for you to try to pat them on the head.
- Cows will go ten miles out of their way to eat a flight cross, or worse...
- Wild horses will not let a base station remain standing.
- Bears will not leave the area if they smell a surveyor.
- Scorpions love old section corners, the rock mound provides nice housing.
- Rattle snakes don't rattle when they hear surveyors.
- Ticks are not repelled by repellent. They just plug their noses and dive in.
- Cholla cactus will find a way into your legs even if you avoid it by ten feet.
- Black widow spiders' favorite spot is the lid of a well monument.
- Poison Oak can leap across a five-foot span to lash you in the face.
- Wasps and rear lot corners both seem to like old wood piles.
- Blackberry brambles are mean, generally have a bad attitude and don't give up corners easily.
- DEET doesn't do much about mosquitoes but it does keep loved ones away.
- Greasewood can puncture any tire, any time, especially when you are out of cell coverage.
- Sun block doesn't.
- All ants bite but the ones on your leg right now, well they bite worse.

Enjoy your new job!



*That's definitely the ¼ Corner but what the heck is that scribing?*



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