

Focal Point

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



May 2025

**The next Chapter meeting will be held on
Thursday, May 1st, 2025**

**Come join us at Riley's on Sutter, 702 Sutter Street in
Folsom, CA. Mike Woodel will be giving a presentation
on JAVAD equipment, workflow, and project solutions.**

President's Message

Annette Hovorka, PLS

2025 Sacramento Chapter President

Spring has Sprung

I do not often take the time to discuss weather and safety , but I felt a little inspired to do talk about the special hazards in Spring.

First, it is important to consider your crew readiness. Spring can be a time of folks to transition from office work to field work as the need for field staff increases. Spring is a great time to give the personal safety equipment a once over to make sure that it is in a state of readiness. It also is a great time to do equipment inspections and maintenance.

The following could be some additional consideration:

1. Spring rain: Spring rain can lead to muddy and slippery conditions, especially in areas with clay-rich soil. Crews should wear sturdy, slip-resistant footwear and exercise caution when navigating uneven or wet surfaces. Spring rain also encourages snow to melt and run off. This means rivers and streams are swollen or coming into existence. Water can be swiftly moving as well as colder than later in the year. Extra precautions should be given if near these hazards.

(Continued on page 3)

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 2025:

Annette Hovorka PLS	President	Andrew Tapley PLS	Board of Directors Representative
Morgan Thalken PLS	Vice President	Vacant	Board of Directors Rep. <i>Alternate</i>
Andrew Tapley	Secretary	Sherry Toutges PLS	State TrigStar Coordinator
Laird Nelson LSIT	Treasurer	Morgan Thalken PLS	Editor Focal Point

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- 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 mthalken@reyengineers.com

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President's Message

Continued from page 1

2. Changing weather conditions: California's spring weather can shift rapidly, with sunny mornings giving way to sudden rain showers or gusty winds. Dressing in layer and carrying lightweight rain gear can be useful.
3. Blooming: Blooming plants and pollen are increasing during spring, which can trigger allergies or obscure pathways. Protective clothing and antihistamines can help mitigate these risks, along with regular site inspections to clear overgrown vegetation.
4. Creature Feature: Spring awakens various pests and wildlife, including ticks, snakes, and bees. Be especially aware working in rural or wooded areas should wear protective gear and conduct regular tick checks.
5. Here comes the Sun: Spring sun can be useful in helping acclimate field crews to warmer weather that is just around the corner. It can also bring some unexpected extra warm days. Now is a great time to practice being ready by remaining aware of warm weather conditions and having the necessary water and shade protection ready for deployment as needed. Being part of those folks that require extra sun protection, I always encourage sunscreen, brimmed hats, and proper sun resistant clothing. (Remember, a tee shirt is about the equivalent of SPF 8, ball caps expose your ears, and sunscreen needs more than one application.)
6. Shake it: While not exclusive to spring, seismic activity is a constant consideration. Be sure to have an emergency plan in place for this for work and for reaching family after.

By staying proactive and prepared, surveyors can navigate spring hazards effectively and focus on staying well! You cannot share events in our chapter if you are not serious about this.

Annette Hovorka, PLS
2025 Sacramento Chapter President

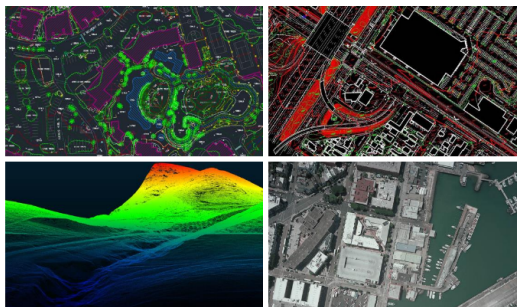
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Editor's Message

Well, as I sit here typing this message, I can just imagine my feet sitting in a pair of ridiculously sized boots under my table. While flattered that Carl has left me to fill in as the editor of the Focal Point, he is certainly a tough act to follow. I have not written anything to be published since my 20's when I did some writing for fly fishing publications off and on. Those skills have certainly dulled in the last twenty years, but hopefully this will give me the opportunity to sharpen those back up and help gather and provide some interesting content.

That being said, I encourage everyone to not be shy and provide me with articles, rants, or ideas. Nothing is too long, too short or too silly. I would like this to be a publication that we are all involved in.

I look forward to help make this a fun and interesting rag for all to be a part of and enjoy.

Thank you,

-Morgan Thalken

Upcoming Speakers

May 1	Mike Woodel of JAVAD
May 31	Chapter Summer Picnic Johnson Springview Park Rocklin. Survey Olympics! Disc Golf! Splash Pad!
June	Brian Frazier & Justin Cisneros from El Dorado County Surveyors office



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P S O M A S

Chapter Meeting Minutes

The meeting of April 10, 2025 was held at Riley's on Sutter in Historic Folsom and called to order at 6:17pm by Vice President Morgan Thalken.

Vice President's report (Morgan Thalken):

1. Our annual picnic will be on May 31st, 2025 at Johnson-Springview Park, same location it was held last year. The address is 5480 5th St, Rocklin, CA 95677. More information is to come on the picnic but he will send out an Evite and put together a sign-up sheet. The Chapter will provide burgers, hot dogs and maybe bottled water but the sign-up sheet will be for side dishes, sodas, chips and other items for everyone to bring. They do allow alcohol, but the Chapter will not be providing it, so bring your own favorite drinks.
2. Encourage everyone to make suggestions for guest speakers or topics for our monthly meetings. Have El Dorado County booked for July and it would be great to get some of the other counties to come and support the Chapter.
3. Morgan Thalken is temporarily taking over as the editor of The Focal Point for Carl C. de Bacca, so he encourages people to send him articles, information, content, rants. He'll fill the roll for the remainder of the year and then we'll revisit it at the end of the year to see who else can help out.

President's report (Annette Hovorka):

1. Meeting minutes from last month are in The Focal Point.

Director's report (Andrew Tapley):

1. The next Board of Directors meeting will be held virtually on April 26, 2025, from 9:00am until we finish around noon. If anyone would like to attend the meeting as a guest, let us know and we'll forward the Zoom invitation to you.

Secretary's report (Carl C. de Bacca):

No Secretary's Report

Treasurer report (Laird Nelson):

No Treasurer's Report

Announcements (Jon Scarpa – Sacramento County Surveyor):

1. Last January 30th the County held a Surveyor's Round-Table Discussion and we're going to have another one in May. We haven't picked a date yet but probably on a Thursday from 9:00am to noon, maybe on May 22nd, but we'll try to get more information about it to Morgan and to everybody.
2. Sacramento County will be hiring people for everything from Engineering Aide, which is entry level, all the way to my position (County Surveyor).

Break taken for dinner.

Dan Moreno and Shelli Moreno gave a presentation describing their very successful consulting firm "Finish Line Development Consulting".

Meeting was adjourned by President Annette Hovorka.



DISASTER RELIEF FUND

In the past few years we have seen several horrendous wildfires in California. Santa Rosa, Paradise, Grizzly Flats – those are just some of the places that have been devastated by wildfire. But we have never seen anything like what has just happened in and around Los Angeles.

As these communities begin the long road to recovery from this conflagration, it is important to point out that many surveyors have no doubt had their homes or businesses destroyed and they need our help.

Please consider donating to the NSPS Disaster Relief Fund. The funds go to surveyors and their families as they try to sustain their businesses and rebuild their lives.

THE NSPS FOUNDATION DISASTER RELIEF FUND HELPS THOSE IN NEED AND EVERY PENNY YOU DONATE GOES TO THOSE THAT HAVE BEEN AFFECTED.

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Donations of any amount are being accepted to the fund as we try to build it back-up after disbursements are made. You can donate online or make checks payable to the NSPS Foundation and write Disaster Relief Fund in the memo field. Mail to:

NSPSF DR Fund. 21 Byte Court, Suite H, Frederick, MD 21702

Thank you in advance for your support of the Foundation and your fellow surveyors.

<https://www.nsps.us.com/page/DisasterRelief> Questions: Email us - info@nsps.us.com

IT'S THE LAW!

As Professional Land Surveyors, we are all aware, or should be, that there are a suite of related laws and regulations in the LS Act and the Board Rules that govern how we deal with the subject of monument preservation. But are you aware of the various suite of laws that govern how defacing or destroying survey monuments is handled in the courts? Destroying a monument is defined as a crime in California Penal Code and also in Street and Highways Code. Just don't forget that failing to protect or perpetuate a monument is a crime, too.

California Penal Code § 605

Every person who either:

1. Maliciously removes any monument erected for the purpose of designating any point in the boundary of any lot or tract of land, or a place where a subaqueous telegraph cable lies; or,
2. Maliciously defaces or alters the marks upon any such monument; or,
3. Maliciously cuts down or removes any tree upon which any such marks have been made for such purpose, with intent to destroy such marks;

--Is guilty of a misdemeanor.

California Penal Code § 615

Every person who willfully injures, defaces, or removes any signal, monument, building, or appurtenance thereto, placed, erected, or used by persons engaged in the United States Coast Survey, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

California Streets and Highways Code

DIVISION 1, CHAPTER 3, ARTICLE 3, Section 732.

Any person who willfully injures, defaces, breaks down or removes any monument or stake placed, erected or used by the department to designate any point in the boundary or survey of any State highway or proposed State highway is guilty of a misdemeanor.



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The Rant Zone

By Right-Of-Way Ronnie and the Easements.

Researching the Public Records Best Kept Secret

For an item that affects most properties and absolutely everyone, save for a few sovereign citizens, records affecting Right of Way sure are hard to find. Legal descriptions don't always reference them, being that they are an easement. I guess that really depends on the year now doesn't it? But that's a rant for another day. Title reports seem to list in the exceptions the legalese version of "any existing roads or public use". We've all seen the APN map that shows a Right of Way width other than anything we've been able to dig up so far. Better yet, that road that we haven't seen a public record for at all. The APN may list a road number yet all questions to county are met with some version of "we don't know what that means". So why is that? Some sort of research wild goose chase I suppose that we all can have a good laugh about. That one's tough to explain when asked "why does my survey cost so much?" After many hours maybe you'll luck out and find that one survey tech that's been at the county for 25 years that still knows where the card file is that may have some of that secret information, while the rest of the surveying services have been contracted out to someone who's never even set foot in the county office or research room and has no idea where any of the records are unless they can be found online. Oh the title company you ask? Well, good luck finding anyone that knows how to research the title plant, and even a title company with a local title plant. Consolidation, "efficiency" (that means cheap employees without much knowledge), and outsourcing are putting an end to that. Additionally, many roads have existed for a long long time and the title companies digital record only go back to the 80's in many cases. Maybe the reason these records, along with the records themselves, aren't better kept has been lost to time. It sure seems to my simple mind that the APN maps would be a nice easy place to note these types of things or with the emergence of many public GIS systems an additional dataset doesn't seem like too much to ask



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