

Focal Point

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



October 2023

October 5 meeting: Vendor's Night!
Join us at Federalist Public House
2009 Matsui Alley, Sacramento

President's Message

Happy Fall!

I hope this message finds you well. I know there's been a lot of sickness starting to pop up, so I hope you're all able to stay healthy.

Last month, we were successful in filling 3 of the 4 officer positions for the Chapter for next year, so I want to thank Annette Hovorka (President), Andrew Tapley (Secretary), and Laird Nelson (Treasurer) for stepping up and volunteering. Cameron Clark and Andrew have also agreed to stay on as directors. Thank you to you all, I look forward to seeing you continue to grow the chapter! We do still have a vacancy at Vice President/President Elect, so if this sounds like a position that you might be interested in volunteering for, please let us know.

We were also able to fund all seven of the Chapter's scholarships this year, so we will be sending the CLSA Education Foundation \$3,250 to be provided to the awardees. \$250 of that will be matched by the Education Foundation, resulting in a total of 7-\$500 scholarships.

October's meeting brings Vendor's night, which is always one of our most popular meetings, so I hope to see you all there!

Take care,

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
Andrew Tapley PLS Board of Directors Representative
Sherry Toutges PLS State TrigStar Coordinator
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

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Proof That Inflation Is Real

James F. Trout
Manager, State Lands Program

December 17, 1968

W. O. N-0252
S. & O. Survey No. 1062
Sacramento County

Dredging Trespass Investigation
Seven Mile Slough
Owl Island

Based on the results of the coordination meeting held on Friday, December 6, 1968, relative to subject trespass investigation, the following is an outline of the requirements for a field investigation and cadastral survey of the subject lands.

In general, a resurvey of the patented lands is required pursuant to Sections 7951-7958 of the Public Resources Code. Your attention is directed to Section 7956 which provides for the apportionment of costs between petitioners.

Based on the results of our meeting, the scope of the survey should include that portion of Seven Mile Slough from its confluence with the San Joaquin River to the land fill or dam at the junction of Jackson Slough constituting approximately 1½ miles of slough bed, encompassing five tule barns or islands of marsh lands.

A map and survey of the existing area and ground conditions is required. The estimate of engineering services required is:

(1) Base map prepared under contract by photogrammetry-----	\$ 400.00
(2) Ground control and local property ties -- estimate at 10 crew days-----	3,000.00
(3) Travel expenses and per diem-----	440.00
(4) Office engineering, computations and delineation -- 10 Mondays-----	750.00
(5) Title research and documents-----	<u>200.00</u>
TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS-----	<u>\$4,790.00</u>

JAMES N. DOWDEN
Supervising Land Surveyor

JND/dj

The Rant Zone

Inquiring Minds Want to Know

1. Why are ALTA/NSPS surveys the poster child for high liability/low price surveys?
2. Should engineers have an easy path to licensure as surveyors?
3. Why hasn't Surveying formulated a winning strategy for youth recruitment?
4. In states where it is a requirement, what has the 4-year degree done to the ranks of the profession?
5. How does the profession plan to combat the mounting threats against it? Do we have a champion?
6. Why is it so hard for some to comply with the requirement to file a Record of Survey?
7. Are borderline-punitive County Surveyor technical reviews part of that problem?
8. Is it really Photogrammetry if you load up some drone photos, push a couple buttons and out pops a surface model?
9. How confident are you that this totally automated software does what your education and experience say it should?
10. How have you given back to your chosen profession?
11. Are you a Surveyor, a Land Surveyor, a Professional Land Surveyor, or do you use the 'G' word? How do you answer that question when someone asks what you do for a living?
12. Why do some agencies have categories that go to 6 for engineers but only to 4 for surveyors? Are the engineers having a 'Spinal Tap' moment?
13. Do you support continuing education? Enough to participate in getting some or is it more... theoretical? What if it was mandatory as a condition of licensure?
14. Are you a mentor?



Editor's Message

The October Meeting saw Michael Quartaroli speak to the chapter about Monument Preservation and how the law relates to monuments endangered by both disasters and county-funded disaster prevention measures. There was lots of discussion amongst the attendees regarding this important and timely topic. Mike is doing great work on behalf of surveyor and on behalf of land owners whose property rights can be severely impacted by the loss of key monuments. Thanks Mike!

-ED.

Sacramento Chapter, CLSA

Minutes for meeting of September 7, 2023

President Justin Lambert opened the meeting at Logan’s Roadhouse at 6 pm. The meeting started with self-introductions and the following were in attendance:

Caleb Koeppen, Justin Lambert, Adam Foster, Brian Briar, Dario Mello, Warren Smith, Carl C. de Baca, Annette Hovorka, Mike Quartaroli, Laird Nelson, Ben Sanchez, Sherri Zimmerman, Dan Beever, Russell Smith, Andriy Buchko, Branden Bickley, Roger Perez, Bob MacKenzie, Kyle Brook, and Andrew Tapley.

1. Presidents Report
 - a. Justin Lambert
 1. Thanks for your participation in this evening.
 2. Discussion of Santiago Canyon College’s develop a 4 year degree with information from Mark Counts
2. Vice Presidents Report
 - a. Russ Smith
 - i. Vendors Night will be next month at Federalist Pizza in Downtown Sacramento
 - ii. November meeting will have a Board presentation.
 - iii. Holiday Party will be at Old Spaghetti Factory and the details were discussed.
3. Secretary’s Report
 - a. Annette Hovorka
 - i. Nothing to report
4. Treasurer’s Report
 - a. Adam Foster
 - i. Chapter funds total \$9191 Current obligation are up to \$100 for card draw, Scholarships \$2500; detailed treasurer’s report available
 - ii. Scholarship report: The chapter will be funding 7 of the scholarship funds
5. Director’s Report
 - a. Cameron Clark & Andrew Tapley nothing to report. Next meeting in November.
6. Focal Point
 - a. Carl C De Baca
 - i. Please send Ideas/Contributions for newsletter
7. Old Business
 - a. Officers signed document and an email was sent to the Sacramento County Board Supervisors regarding the Record of Survey Flat Fee
 - b. Santiago Canyon College is looking to start an online four year survey related degree to include: build Digital Twins, 3D Records of Survey, and Augmented reality experiences, using their traditional resolved boundaries as the foundation.

Continued on Page 6

Santiago Canyon College (continued)

1. Santiago Canyon College has submitted their application to the college to become a 4 year program. Sad to say that we were not able to submit a letter of support in time, but I talked to Mark Counts and if they don't get approval, they can appeal the decision. At that point, they will be looking for support again. I know Kevin Hills (State) and Brian Mundia (OC CLSA) were also contacted so hopefully they were able to submit a letter. Psomas also missed the deadline but did provide a letter in case they need it in the future.
2. Committee for scholarship review
 - a. Carl C.deBaca, Andrew Tapley, Adam Foster, and Ben Sanchez

8. New Business

- a. Sacramento City College Update: Classes started 16 student 1 Elementary survey class- recruitment event coming up- September 23- at Air Show
 - b. Sept 16 presentation of archaeological evidence of surveying Steven Hughey; Dean hopes more funding will be available; reaching out to vendors; requesting 6 steel tape Seco 100 foot tape carl motion seconded discussion up to 300 dollar; 2-3 optical auto level; 2-3 philly rods; 2-3 TSE controller; Kevin Akin and Jill Van Houton volunteer on Saturday; Motion was made for the chapter to provide the steel tapes. Motion was seconded and passed.
 - c. Chapter Officer nominations
 - i. Treasurer
 1. Laird Nelson
 - ii. Secretary
 1. Andrew Tapley
 - iii. Vice President
 - iv. President
 1. Annette Hovorka
 - v. Director
 1. Cameron Clark
 2. Andrew Tapley
 3. Curt Burfield alternate
9. Mike Quartaroli spoke on Monument Preservation. He and Carl C. de Baca discussed the current discussion they were facilitating with survey officials in Hawaii after the volcano disaster.

Respectfully submitted,

*Annette Hovorka, PLS
Secretary 2023*

Recent Presentation at SCC

On Saturday, September 16, instructor John Wilusz arranged for Stephen Hughey, PLS, PhD. to speak to the Sac. City College survey students on the topic of Surveying in ancient history. Dr. Hughey, whose daytime job is in Right of Way for CalTrans, discussed his work in Mesopotamia (modern day Syria and Iraq) which revolves around archeological studies of evidence dating from 1000 BC all the way back to beyond 5000 BC. Hughey used the example of irrigation canals and how the Mesopotamians had mastered the art of determining grade and building aqueducts in order to achieve canals as long as 80 km. In addition to the remnants of these canals, which still exist, he showed cylindrical tablets with cuneiform writing that documents feats of Surveying and even evidence that Pythagoras was about a 1000 years late in developing the right triangle theory. The presentation was fascinating and really pushes back the art and science of Surveying to the very edge of prehistory. These people started with an ambitious to-do list some 2000 years before the recognized beginning of the Bronze Age: 1. Domesticate plants; 2. Irrigate plants; 3. Invent surveying to facilitate irrigation. Amazing!



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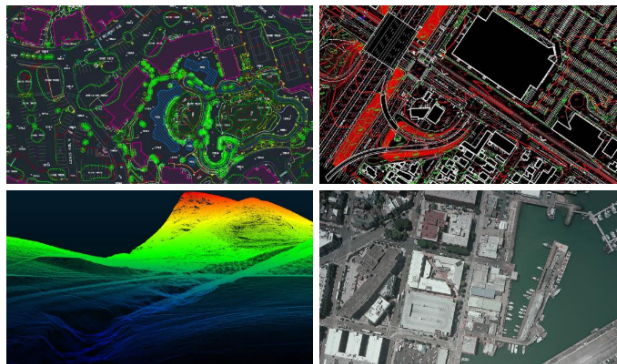
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On the Topic of Communication

Surveyors have an imperative to write and speak clearly and effectively. Unfortunately there are altogether too many examples out there of us not living up that imperative. Why is that?

George Orwell was one of the most precise writers ever to hit a typewriter key. In a short essay he penned called “Politics and the English Language”, (I know, it sounds boring, right?) Orwell laid out six simple rules for those who wish to be writers. And if you send emails to clients, write proposals, prepare contracts and reports, send letters to public agencies or prepare employee evaluations, make no mistake, you are a writer.

How do you communicate with your co-workers, with staff, with clients, with local agencies, with your peers? Do you get the point across or are you leaving gray areas? Can your wishes, intentions, or directions be misconstrued because of something you thought you said but actually didn't, or said so poorly that the meaning is unclear, or said so inelegantly that it sounds like an insult? Effective communication is a process and it can be mastered. It starts with writing clearly.

Orwell's six rules are not complicated, involve no grammar and are very common-sense. They hold up as well now as they did in 1947. Most of us violate two or three of these rules every day without thinking about it, especially no. 4 where we often confuse using weak verbs with being tactful or diplomatic, and no. 5, which is hard to avoid in a profession with so many technical terms. Here they are:

- 1. Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.*
- 2. Never use a long word where a short one will do.*
- 3. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.*
- 4. Never use the passive where you can use the active.*
- 5. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.*
- 6. Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.*

-ED



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Regulations We Know, (But Might Have Forgotten)

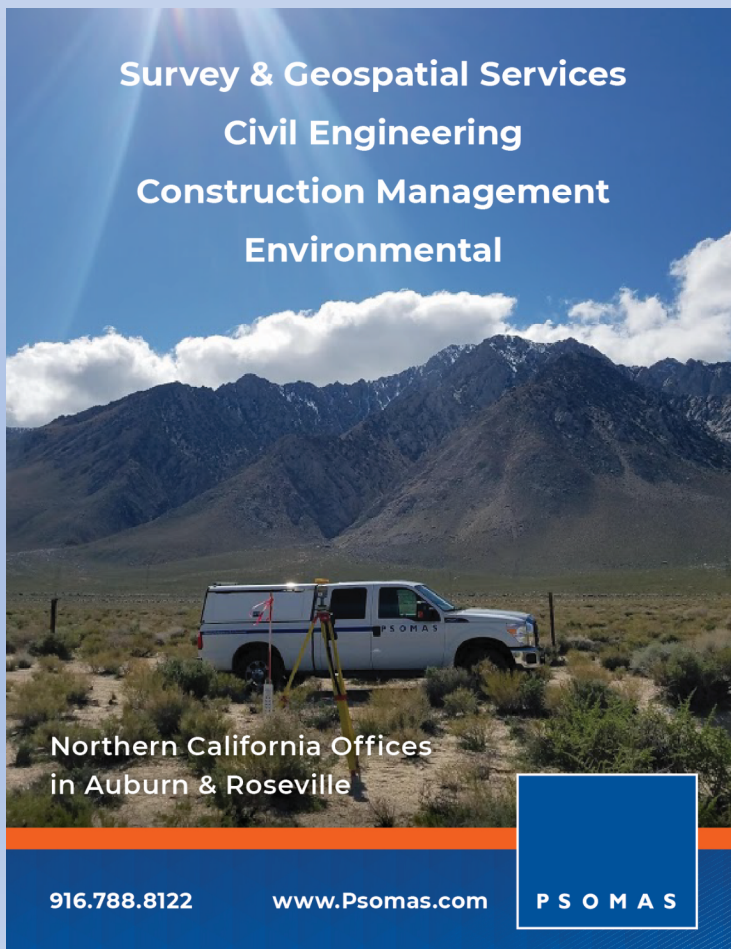
The California Board of Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologists recently disciplined a Land Surveyor for failing to file Records of Survey and to set monuments for 7 different sites in Northern California. This individual was also cited as follows: *Under Code § 8780(b) in that he was negligent and/or incompetent in the practice of land surveying in that the establishment of boundaries shown on [REDACTED] ALTA/NSPS maps indicated a practice of using a minimum of unreferenced control points and using “record” information from a single direction to establish boundary lines. This practice is reasonably foreseeable to lead to gaps and overlaps in boundaries.*

It doesn't take a high degree of speculation to guess that these were ALTA/NSPS surveys and that the offending individual worked at a firm that specializes in that service. We've all been solicited for these types of projects, usually by some regional or national clearinghouse and we all know that the deciding factors are inevitably: 1) timeframe of delivery and 2) cost, not necessarily in that order. We also know that a realistic review of many of these properties, before undertaking the work, would reveal a need to file a Record of Survey to comply with §8762. Furthermore, we know that retracing a boundary comes with a requirement to set sufficient monuments for that boundary to be retraced later.

And yet there are still firms and individuals that just quote a bottom-basement fee, produce a paper survey and move on to the next one with no worries. This recent case serves as a perfect reminder that California state law in the form of the Land Surveyors Act, trumps the ALTA/NSPS requirements, including any and all items on optional Table A.

Until all surveyors start recognizing the simple fact that we need to scope correctly and price our work accordingly, the ALTA/NSPS market will be no better than a loss leader. Professionals should not aspire to making their profit based on volume of work, but rather on successful delivery of a professional product for a professional fee.

-ED



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