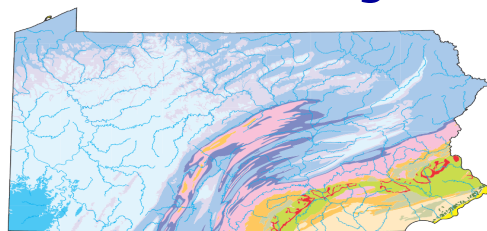




American Institute of Professional Geologists

Pennsylvania Section



www.aipg.org

June 2020

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President's Message

COVID-19: Effects On Our Profession

There is much to be learned from this COVID-19 pandemic. Lack of contact with clients and personnel, additional requirements to do field work and site investigations, as well as additional costs related to transportation are just some of the factors which will affect efficiency and completion time. Temporary loss of key personnel is an additional factor complicating project management.



All organizations (consultants, educational institutions, and nonprofits) will need to evaluate how they can change in response to another potential pandemic, as well as adapt to current conditions. The workplace and instructional environments may never be the same. A lot of people may have gotten used to working at home (teleworking), so there will be more demand for this in the future. As a result, the office environment will have to change and new communication techniques used. The knowledge of individuals and professional friendships

within an organization may be drastically affected, which may, in turn, make efficiency drop. As employees have less time to consult with other staff.

Organizations will have to identify which procedures and project management changes are permanent, and which ones are temporary. Organizations will also need to determine how employees can be protected at work and how to protect customers, as well as the public, when staff are in physical presence with them.

AGI is currently assessing these issues and collecting data to identify procedures and methods which will help the profession adapt to the future. For example, will more degrees be issued using on-line courses and thesis defenses? And what about legal proceedings?

In summary, this pandemic will affect the future of our profession. How we adapt will determine how successful organizations will become.

You may contact me, Dennis Pennington, directly at feldspar18@gmail.com.

Dennis Pennington
Section President

Photo above is from AIPG's *The Professional Geologist*, Volume 55, no. 4

Pennsylvania Brownfields Conference Recap

Contributed by Joe Kraycik

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the Engineers Society of Western Pennsylvania recently partnered for the 2020 Pennsylvania Brownfields Conference in State College on March 9-11. This year's conference was held at the Penn State Hotel & Conference Center, and was attended by nearly 400 people along with 55 vendors in the exhibit hall.

Day one began with an EPA Region 3 All Grantees Meeting in the morning. The afternoon included the Central Appalachian Regional Brownfields Summit and a mobile workshop tour to the redeveloped Bellefonte Match Factory (photo at right) and several other brownfields sites. Unseasonably warm late-winter weather made the field trip especially enjoyable. An evening reception at the Bryce Jordan Center concluded the day.

Days two and three featured over 20 technical presentations and three general sessions which included state and federal updates on Brownfields programs, a futures forecast, and an inspirational story about Crazy Aaron's "Thinking Putty," the factory and offices of which are located on a remediated brownfields site. EPA concluded this year's conference with a grant writing workshop.

AIPG Pennsylvania Section members and officers attended and participated in this year's conference. Visit this link to learn more about the 2020 PA Brownfields Conference:
<https://eswp.com/brownfields/overview/>



Contact Us:

Dennis Pennington,
President
feldspar18@gmail.com

Michael Edelman,
Vice-President
MEdelman@trccompanies.com

Joe Kraycik, Secretary
jkraycik@envstd.com

Kevin Kelly, Treasurer
kkelly@Langan.com

Cliff Dodge
Screening Chair
cdodge@pa.gov

HOLD THE DATES ~ September 13 or October 10, 2020

The PA chapter of AIPG is tentatively planning a field trip to the **Laurel Hill Cemetery** in the East Falls neighborhood of northwest Philadelphia on either Sunday, September 13, 2020 or Saturday, October 10, 2020.

The trip will highlight the geology and geomorphology of the cemetery area, as well as examine the various rock types of the headstones, among other things.

The trip will be limited to 10 participants.

More details will be provided later as they become available.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE WISSAHICKON FIELD TRIP, MAY 2019

Contributed by Mike Edelman

The Pennsylvania Section of AIPG sponsored a field trip in May 2019 to see the Wissahickon Formation as it is exposed in sections of Fairmount Park.

Fairmount Park is an extensive park that transverses the City of Philadelphia and extends into parts of Montgomery County. Our field trip focused on a Section of Wissahickon Valley Park, a component of the Fairmount Park System.



Within this approximately one-mile-long stretch of park, we observed a variety of lithologies from schist to quartzite to amphibolites to serpentinites, to name a few rock types stretching from silica-rich to ultramafic.

While passing through the park, we observed differing mineral assemblages that are indicative of changes in metamorphic pressures and temperatures known as “isograds” that are expressed by a transition from schist containing garnets to the absence of garnets, and from kyanite to andalusite, for example.

With so much variation within this relatively small stretch of parkland, it is difficult to imagine the overall extent of the Wissahickon Formation which covers parts of at least 4 states - Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. The geologic interpretation of the Wissahickon is that it was once part of a large mountain system formed during the Taconic Orogeny. This mountain system has since been eroded down to basement rock for the region.

A 60-mile drive from Philadelphia to Reading, Pennsylvania will take you to multiple outcrops of the Wissahickon cross-section. We are fortunate to have a park system that has preserved a section of this vast formation and made it accessible for a walking tour. When we are in this scenic Wissahickon Valley Park, looking at the formation on a small scale, it is difficult to imagine the enormity of the footprint of the Wissahickon Formation.

Photo above courtesy of Joe Kraycik

“Caves are whimsical things, and geology on a local scale is random and unpredictable.”

*-William Stone,
Pennsylvania native,
and an American
explorer and caver*

EPA Announces FY20 Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grant Awards ~ *contributed by Joe Kraycik*

On May 6, 2020, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the selection of 155 grants for communities and tribes totaling over \$65.6M in EPA funding through the agency's Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup Grant Programs. These EPA grant programs support community revitalization in under-served and economically disadvantaged communities. "Grants awarded by EPA's Brownfield Program provide communities and tribes across the country with an opportunity to transform contaminated sites into community assets" said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler.

Twenty-two communities in EPA Region 3 were selected for Brownfield Program grant funding for a total of \$8.6M. Nine of the grantees (41%) were first time award winners. The proposal success rate in Region 3 this year was 58%, well above the national average of 36%. The following is a breakdown of the number of awards per state in Region 3:

- Pennsylvania- 8 awards totaling \$3.7M
- Virginia- 6 awards totaling \$1.7M
- West Virginia- 8 awards totaling \$3.2M

Congratulations to the following Pennsylvania communities that were selected for FY20 Brownfields grants:

- Beaver County; \$600,000 Assessment
- Clearfield County Economic Development Corp; \$500,000 Cleanup
- Earth Conservancy, Hanover Township; \$500,000 Cleanup
- Greenville; \$600,000 Assessment
- Johnstown; \$600,000 Assessment
- Montgomery County RDA; \$300,000 Assessment
- Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry, and Tourism; \$300,000 Assessment
- Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development; \$300,000 Assessment

Additional information regarding the FY20 EPA Brownfields Program and the FY20 grant awards can be found here:

<https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicants-selected-fy-2020-brownfields-assessment-revolving-loan-fund-and-cleanup-0>

Call for Articles: Please submit articles or ideas for articles which you feel meet the goals of this newsletter to Mike Edelman at MEdelman@trccompanies.com.

85th Annual Field Conference of PA Geologists Postponed until 2021

Due to COVID-19 concerns, the Bureau of Geological Survey recently made the difficult decision to postpone the planned 85th Field Conference of PA Geologists until 2021. The conference will still highlight the Geology of Ohiopyle State Park and Laurel Highlands of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

The delay will allow for additional articles and research to be included in the conference guidebook.

If you have a geoscience or related topic - including geologic mapping, trail guides, environmental geology, history of geology, geoarcheology, and geologic education – please refer to the Conference’s website at <https://www.fcopg.org> for submission guidelines.

A virtual pre-conference field trip is being considered for this fall.

Pennsylvania Geological Societies – be sure to stay in touch with these geological societies for opportunities to hear interesting speakers and to network with other professionals:

Philadelphia Geological Society – <http://philageo.org>

Harrisburg Area Geological Society - <http://fcopg.org/contact-us/links/hags>

On May 14, 2020, HAGS hosted a Zoom meeting, the subject of which was “Spaceballs: The Professional Talk: Unearthing enigmatic impact ejecta from the Plio-Pleistocene shell beds of southwest Florida”, presented by Dr. Mike Meyer, Professor of Earth System Science at Harrisburg University. Dr. Meyer’s Zoom presentation is available here: <https://youtu.be/zfkwwfPOuWY>

Dr. Meyer also had an article recently published in *Discover* magazine on the same subject. <https://apple.news/AzBuUBxb0P3GBI3QF147qxQ>

Northern Alleghenies Geological Society -
<https://www.facebook.com/Northern-Alleghenies-Geological-Society-177847959291767/>

Pittsburgh Area Geological Society –
<https://www.pittsburghgeologicalsociety.org>