

Focal Point

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



February 2025

**The next Chapter meeting will be held on
Thursday, February 6th, 2025**

**Come join us at Logan's Roadhouse in North Natomas
for a Business / Brainstorming meeting as we lay out
goals and identify topics, speakers and activities for
2025, so bring your ideas!**

President's Message

Annette Hovorka, PLS

2025 Sacramento Chapter President

I asked Microsoft Copilot about the connection between professional development and personal relationships and the following was so close to what I wanted to share with you this month, I thought I would just share it with you.

The Symbiotic Relationship Between Professional Development and Personal Connections

In the fast-evolving field of land surveying, professional development isn't just about mastering the latest technology or earning new certifications; it's also intricately tied to the strength of one's personal relationships. Both aspects form a symbiotic relationship, each enhancing the other to create a well-rounded professional.

Engage in a development journey that sharpens technical prowess and nurtures meaningful connections. For instance, attending workshops and seminars not only provides insights into emerging survey technologies but also fosters an opportunity to meet like-minded professionals. These encounters can evolve into mentorships, collaborative projects, or lifelong friendships, offering robust support systems in times of professional challenges.

Mentorship is a critical aspect of career growth. Experienced surveyors impart lessons that go beyond textbooks, sharing real-world experiences and insights that shape the future of the industry. This exchange of knowledge deepens with mutual respect and understanding, underscoring the importance of building trust and strong communication skills.

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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	Carl C.de Baca PLS	Board of Directors Rep. <i>Alternate</i>
Carl C.de Baca PLS	Secretary	Sherry Toutges PLS	State TrigStar Coordinator
Laird Nelson LSIT	Treasurer	Carl C.de Baca PLS	Editor Focal Point

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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 alidade.nv@sbcglobal.net

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President's Message

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Additionally, a solid network can open doors to new opportunities. Job referrals, project collaborations, and professional endorsements often stem from personal connections. In an industry where projects frequently depend on teamwork and collaboration, having a reliable network is invaluable. A well-maintained network also encourages continuous learning, as professionals share best practices and innovative solutions.

Land surveyors often work in varied environments and interact with diverse stakeholders. Effective communication and interpersonal skills are vital, ensuring that relationships with clients, contractors, and colleagues are productive and respectful. Such relationships are often the bedrock upon which a surveyor's reputation and success are built.

In essence, professional development and personal relationships are two sides of the same coin. Investing in one inevitably enriches the other, creating a virtuous circle that propels land surveyors toward both personal and professional fulfillment.

In addition to this, I would like to bring to your attention what a great opportunity belonging to our chapter and to CLSA gives you in fulfilling the ideas set forth in this article. In that light, I would also like to remind you that conference is just around the corner, and it is among the best ways to create relationships and get some great learning opportunities.

See you at the meeting!

Annette Hovorka, PLS
2025 Sacramento Chapter President

Editor's Message

Take a minute and pray for the people in Los Angeles affected by the Palisades, Eaton and other fires ravaging the mountainsides down there right now. Our guest editorial this month by Mike Quartaroli is eerily prescient with respect to fires, disasters, monumentation and surveying in California. Take a minute to think about all this and figure out a way to get involved in helping California establish some sensible policies for monument preservation after these types of disasters. And please donate to the NSPS Foundation's Disaster Relief Fund! -ED

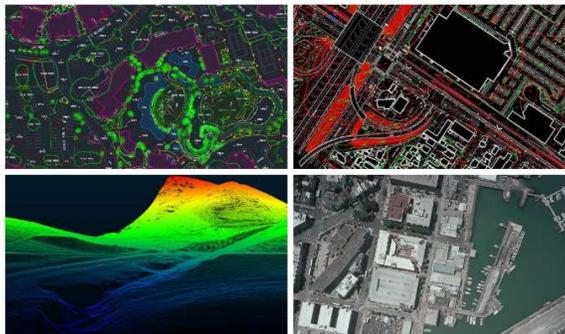
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Sacramento Chapter, CLSA

Minutes for meeting of January 9, 2024

The meeting of January 9th, 2025 was held at Logans Roadhouse in Natomas and called to order by President Annette Hovorka at 6:00 PM.

Going around the table, the following people made self-introductions:

Annette Hovorka, Dan Beever, Brandon Bickley, Jimmy Byrum, Carl C.de Baca, Brett Clarke, Sean Davis, Joey Desjardins, Adam Foster, Bob Mackenzie, Jason Paris, Roger Perez, Jonathan Rohrs, Ben Scholes, Russell Smith, Mike Swafford, Andrew Tapley, Morgan Thalken, Jim White and Sherrie Zimmerman.

President's Report (Annette Hovorka):

1. Regarding the LS Review class, the education group has decided to move the class (starting this year) to later in the year so as to focus on the Fall LS Exam, rather than the Spring exam. This will eliminate the perception that we are competing with the San Diego Chapter, who also put on a Spring LS Review course. The group is also looking into developing an L.S.I.T. review course as well, which could run in the spring.

Vice President's Report (Morgan Thalken):

1. After informally polling some of the membership, Morgan would like to explore having 3 or 4 chapter meetings in 2025 closer to the center or east side of the metro area. He is looking at a couple different restaurants in the Sunrise area and will report back within the next two weeks.

(Continued on page 10)

Upcoming Speakers

1st Quarter of 2025

February	Roundtable discussion of Chapter Business
March	Dallas Sweeney of BPELSG variety of topics
April	Dan & Shelli Moreno of Finish Line – title services and the Land Surveyor

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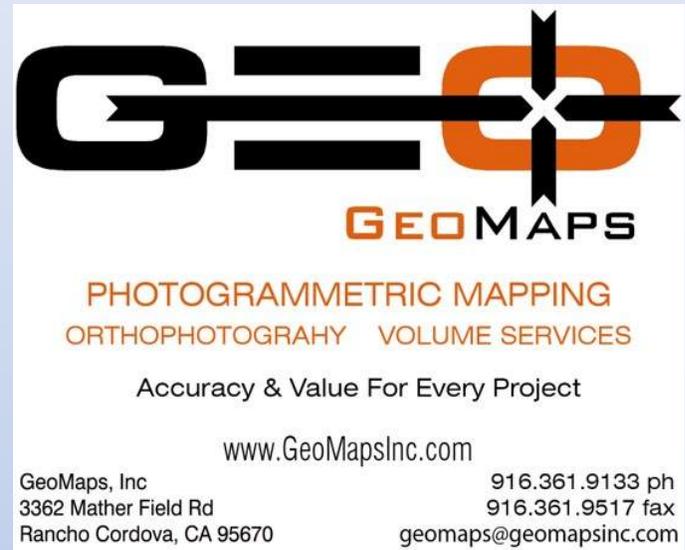
PSOMAS

Survey Monument Preservation Prior To Wildfire Prevention & Restoration Projects

By: Michael L. Quartaroli, LS

One aspect about wildfire prevention and restoration projects is that they consistently overlook the preservation of survey monuments. While the fires themselves may contribute somewhat to the destruction of survey monuments, it is typically the uncontrolled cleanup and restoration efforts that destroy survey monuments. Wildfires introduce many categories of prevention and restoration projects as seen below:

1. Roadway Wildfire Debris Removal
2. Roadway Utilities Restoration
3. Roadway Utility Undergrounding
4. Roadway Fuel Reduction
5. Roadway Hazard Tree Removal
6. Private Lands Fuel Reduction
7. Private Lands Fuel Break
8. Private Lands Hazard Tree Removal
9. Private Lands Debris Removal
10. Public Lands Fuel Reduction
11. Public Lands Fuel Break
12. Public Lands Hazard Tree Removal
13. Public Lands Debris Removal
14. Rangeland Fence Restoration
15. Fire Salvage Timber Logging



All of these categories put survey monuments in jeopardy of being disturbed or destroyed.

More and more, County Resource Districts from wildfire vulnerable communities are forming partnerships with other County, State, and Federal agencies to propose and execute wildfire prevention and restoration projects. The size of these prevention and restoration projects may overshadow all other capital improvement projects these communities may have. There are currently no standardized guidelines in forming these partnerships and who to include in the partnership and who to notify of the proposed projects. The scale and popularity of these projects is a new phenomenon and project sponsors are slowly learning that these projects are affecting many unforeseen County departments. Two significant and important unforeseen County departments not typically included in the partnerships or notified by the partnerships, are County Surveyors and County Engineers. County Surveyors and County Engineers must remain alert for announcements of these projects. Consequently, County Surveyors and County Engineers must assert their needed involvement, as **advisors**, if not previously included or notified by the partnerships. Eventually, partnership standards and protocols must be developed and adopted that would automatically include County Surveyors and County Engineers.

(Continued on page 7)



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.

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION TODAY!

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.nsp.us.com/page/DisasterRelief> Questions: Email us - info@nsp.us.com

Survey Monument Preservation *(Continued from page 5)*

It is imperative that County Surveyors and County Engineers work closely with all wildfire prevention and restoration project partners to promote and oversee the successful completion of survey monument preservation whether these projects are located on public or private lands. The fundamental professional function and responsibility of County Surveyors and County Engineers is to ensure that property rights and public welfare are protected by providing survey monument preservation **oversight** for projects that put survey monuments in jeopardy of being disturbed or destroyed. It is incumbent on County Surveyors and County Engineers to **advise** the project partners of their obligation to designate a licensed land surveyor to be in “responsible charge” of necessary land surveying services and of survey monument preservation for the project areas. Designated land surveyors can evaluate the ground disturbing potential of the project and determine which survey monuments are in jeopardy of being disturbed or destroyed, and must be referenced and preserved. Equally important, designated land surveyors would also establish property lines and road right-of-way lines that limit and define the project on public or private lands.

Wildfire prevention and restoration projects on Public Lands are typically accomplished with the use of a “USFS Stewardship Landline Survey Agreement.” But local agencies such as County Surveyors and County Engineers must be included to facilitate the orderly and timely approval of these agreements. County Board of Supervisors have typically been approving Master Stewardship Agreements (MSA) with the USDA and the Forest Service. These Agreements give the County authority, for a period of time, to work with the USFS to conduct prevention and restoration projects and land surveying activities on the National Forest Lands within the County boundaries. These agreements include proven detailed survey specifications for identifying and marking the lines between public and private lands and to preserve survey monuments.

The inclusion of County Surveyors and County Engineers in partnerships is crucial for the administration of State and Federal grants. Grant money must have a set aside to account for the preservation of survey monuments and County Surveyors and County Engineers must promote and monitor that crucial need.

Wildfire prevention and restoration projects, if implemented without a concurrent survey monument and boundary identification and preservation plan, will result in the loss of many historic cadastral survey monuments. Land surveyor’s sacred trust to society is that they are stewards of the nation’s property boundaries. As such, the land surveyors have been entrusted with maintaining and protecting property boundaries. Property boundaries are defined and marked by survey monuments. Survey monument preservation is at the heart of the most important **duty of every land surveyor**. Protecting and safeguarding the “Property of the Public” is the paramount message of Board Rule 475 and 476 – Code of Professional Conduct. “Property of the Public” includes all survey monuments in the Public Domain.

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Survey Monument Preservation *(Continued from page 7)*

The wildfire prevention and restoration project partners have no understanding of what survey monument preservation is and are reliant on County Surveyors and County Engineers to oversee their land surveying related actions and to **advise** them of their legal obligations. Wildfire prevention measures are expanding and evolving, and these projects may be new to many agencies. Everyone remotely involved must “think outside of the box” and be creative to make the process successful for everyone. That may include pre-approving several surveying firms to be on standby for survey monument preservation purposes. In the absence of a statewide law specifically mandating that such activities as wildfire prevention and restoration include a pro-active survey monument preservation component, it is up to County Surveyors and County Engineers to interpret less specific current laws as worthy of enforcement in the face of destructive wildfires. If County Surveyors and County Engineers do not oversee these prevention and restoration efforts, then who will? This is necessary in order to prevent the wholesale loss of survey monumentation and the subsequent boundary determination challenges such a loss would create. **It is imperative that project partnerships designate a licensed land surveyor to be in responsible charge of survey monument preservation for wildfire prevention projects and the restoration of damaged infrastructure caused by wildfires.**

The goal is for all wildfire prevention and restoration project partnerships and local agencies to work together so the results will be a safer community environment with survey monuments preserved and property rights respected.

All land surveyors must work to raise the awareness level of survey monument preservation resulting from wildfire prevention and restoration projects.



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Chapter Meeting Minutes

(Continued from Page 4)

Secretary's Report (Carl C.de Baca):

1. The recent fires in Los Angeles have pointed out the need for a Disaster Relief program for California Surveyors affected by these and other fires. While the NSPS, to which we CLSA members all belong, has a Disaster Relief Fund set up through the NSPS Foundation, It is underfunded and must cover disaster aid to surveyors across the nation. This discussion resulted in a motion, which passed unanimously, to have our Board Rep deliver this message to the State Board: We need a California-specific Disaster Relief Fund.

Treasurer's Report (Laird Nelson): No report given.

Other Business

1. Jimmy Byrum of the Sacramento County Surveyors office announced that they are hosting a round Table meeting on January 30th at the County offices located at 827 7th Street. Meeting starts at 9AM. He also announced that the County will be opening a position for an Associate Land Surveyor very shortly and will open more positions later in the year.
2. Joey Desjardins of Aerotech Mapping, as the featured speaker, gave a detailed presentation how to decide between manned and unmanned aerial mapping for a project. Thanks Joey!

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The Rant Zone

By Lou Natique

So, you are unhappy with some aspect of local Surveying standards, or practices of local surveyors, or any number of things that seem to leave you dyspeptic. You want to complain. You want an audience of offenders to hear your appeal for common sense and reason. You want these shoddy practices to stop! Most of us fellow surveyors would agree.

What do you do about it, these days? It used to be that you wrote editorials to the California Surveyor magazine, or to the various newsletters, like this one, to express your opinion or air your grievances. There was nothing wrong with that approach other than that it took more time to see if you might have results – did anyone agree? Did anyone oppose? Then, later on, the CLSA website began hosting a forum that had and has any number of threads, where you could visit, like going to a digital version of the wailing wall, and vent your complaints, your suggestions for improvement, or whatever else you wanted to opine upon. Allies and opponents would soon pop up. But then, social media took off and now, instead of writing to the newsletter, or posting on the forum, you air your subjective opinions or your sour grapes on LinkedIn. Immediate gratification is yours! Hurray!

But in so doing you are now casting aspersions on the dignity and integrity of the profession of Surveying which is okay, I guess, but you are doing it well beyond the limits of the profession. What are the non-surveyors on LinkedIn to think when you make comments that seem to indicate that some cadre of surveyors are corner-cutters, or bottom feeders? You just painted the entire profession with a broad brush and now real estate people, and attorneys, and anyone else, whether they have a dog in the fight or not, are privy to our dirty laundry, at least as you see it.

Your complaints are exactly why we have local chapters of CLSA. A better solution would be to grow up and bring your concerns and comments to the chapter, if you sincerely want to see changes made. This is how democracy works. Blathering on LinkedIn is just sniping from a covered position. Not very sporting.



CLSA/NALS REGIONAL SURVEY CONFERENCE 2025
Traversing New Peaks: Ain't No Mountain High Enough
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INFO AT: PLS EDUCATION.ORG

The banner features a stylized background with a mountain peak and a surveyor in a red jacket and yellow hard hat using a tripod-mounted instrument. The text is in various colors: green, blue, red, and yellow.

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