

ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL & ENGINEERING GEOLOGISTS
Southern California Section

"Connecting Professionals, Practice, and the Public."

NEWSLETTER – February 2006

Officers

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Meeting Date: **Wednesday, February 15th**

Location: Steven's Steak House, 5332 Stevens Place, Commerce, California

Time: 6:00 p.m.-Social Hour; 7:00 p.m.-Dinner; 7:45 p.m.-Presentation

Cost: \$30 per person with reservations, \$35 at the door, \$15 for students with a valid Student ID

Reservations: Please call (323) 889-5366 or email rmunro@mactec.com

Speaker: Miles D. Kenney, Ph.D.

Topic: **Late Quaternary deformation and sedimentation history, Coachella fan area located between the Mecca Hills and Indio Hills, and northeast of the San Andreas fault, eastern Coachella Valley, California.**

Abstract:

Evidence provided by fault trenching and geologic mapping over 5400 acres within the Coachella fan area located northwest of the Mecca Hills, southeast of the Indio Hills and northeast of the San Andreas fault indicates variations of sedimentation, erosion, and seismically induced deformation during the Quaternary. Sedimentary units in the region include (from oldest to youngest), a middle to lower member of the Palm Spring Formation, a member of the Canebrake Formation, upper member of the Palm Spring Formation (mid-Pleistocene), Ocotillo Conglomerate (late Pleistocene), and younger fan deposits within current drainages (latest Pleistocene to recent). Small exposures of faulted and steeply folded middle or lower Palm Spring Formation suggest that transpressive deformation similar to deformation seen in the Mecca and/or Indio Hills occurred between these two localities prior to and or during deposition of the mid-Pleistocene Canebrake member. The transpressive style deformation subsided prior to deposition of the upper Palm Spring Formation which consists of low energy fluvial and lacustrine deposits that crossed east of the current location of the San Andreas fault. Soon after deposition of the upper Palm

Spring Formation (~700,000 years ago), the unit was tilted toward the southwest, which coincides with deposition of coarse grained overlying Ocotillo Conglomerate upon the deformed upper Palm Spring Formation. Just prior to and during deposition of the Ocotillo Conglomerate, a series of closely spaced (10s of feet), dominantly southwestern dipping normal listric faults striking approximately parallel to fan contours accommodated southwestward transport. The normal faults appear listric with basal shear surfaces within clay and liquefiable zones in primarily Palm Spring Formation. Contemporaneous tilting and folding occurred as these units as they moved toward the southwest (downslope) and buttressed up against the northeastern side of San Andreas fault down slope. The lateral spreading along normal and stacked parallel to bedding basal shear surfaces along weak zones was likely attributed to a combination of factors including down-slope dip of the Palm Spring Formation, unit composition, abundant groundwater during the Pleistocene, and strong local ground shaking. This style of deformation decreased dramatically in the latest Pleistocene but continues on a few relatively widely spaced (100's feet) oblique strike-slip normal faults suggesting either deeper basal shear surfaces (deeper groundwater) utilized for southwest transport during lateral spreading, and/or tectonic faults associated with local kinematics. Thus, the majority of the late Pleistocene faults in this region are associated with gravitational and ground shaking forces, and to a lesser degree to tectonic far-field forces.

Speaker Bio

Ph.D., 1999, Geological Sciences, University of Oregon.

Bachelor of Science, 1989 Geological Science with emphasis in Chemistry, San Diego State University (graduated cum laude)

Dr. Kenney has over eight years of project experience in the performance of geotechnical engineering investigations and over nine years of experience in geological research and investigations with an emphasis on seismic hazards. Areas of extended study included Quaternary geology, structural geology, igneous and sedimentary petrology, geomorphology, seismology, kinematics, fault hazard evaluation, and neotectonics.

Dr. Kenney has managed many fault hazard investigations throughout southern California, which have included trenching, field mapping, evaluation of morphostratigraphic terrace and fan deposits, surveying, drilling, fault slip vector determinations, estimates of anticipated moment magnitude and slip per event, and aerial photograph interpretation.

Dr. Kenney's geotechnical experience includes slope stability evaluations and mitigation, large to small scale diameter drilling, geologic mapping, percolation rate determinations, seepage evaluations, cross-sections, drafting, report preparation, and large and small rough and post grading projects. Specific client experience has included residential, commercial, educational, transportation, and municipal projects.

Chair Column

Charles Nestle

AEG So Cal Section Legislative Committee Chair, Joe Cota and I joined Tony Sawyer, the Board for Geologists and Geophysicists' Technical Advisory Committee Chair at the January 20, 2006 Board meeting to discuss the California-Specific Exam (CSE) Focus Group and other issues. The CSE Focus Group had been established under the guidance of the Office of Examination Resources (OER) to address the effectiveness and validity of the CSE. They were charged with determining if the exam was relevant, and if not, to recommend how to make it so. If it were determined that that was not possible, then the recommendation would be to eliminate the Exam. The Focus Group did recommend elimination of the CSE according to a letter prepared by the OER dated November 15, 2005 (See AEG So Cal Section January Newsletter), and the Board approved this recommendation during their December 2 meeting.

Based on the limited documentation available, a lot of questions were raised about the process that the Board and the OER went through in setting up and administering the Focus Group. I presented a three-page letter expressing my concerns (attached below) at the meeting and discussed each point. Joe Cota followed with additional concerns of his own. One public member, a consulting geologist in Northern California, added that he attends almost every Board meeting and had supported eliminating the CSE, but after listening to the potential problems Joe and I presented, now agrees that a certain amount of doubt exists that proper procedures had been followed.

Having been hammered out over only a couple of days, the letter is a little rough, but the message it conveys is clear: that questions remain unanswered about the functioning of the Focus Group *and the Board itself*.

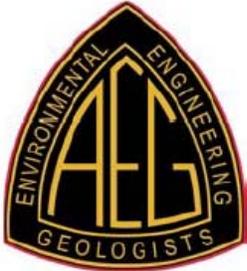
The California-Specific Exam was not an agenda item – we spoke about it during the public comment period – but the performance appraisal of the Board's Executive Officer was; and these two topics are not necessarily unrelated. Several people were at the meeting to discuss the performance of the Executive Officer, but not all spoke. Following a closed session, the Board chose to continue the performance appraisal until they've had time to interview current and former staff members, and then render their decision at the February meeting. No decision on the CSE Focus Group was made because of its relevance to the Executive Officer's performance appraisal.

Upon my return I found among the many emails received that day one from a member of the Focus Group. His message alleviates several of the concerns expressed in my letter, and adds credence to the validity to the process. Nevertheless, having this function occur out of the public eye brings on suspicion (this is the great distinction between a Board and a Bureau). Obviously, detailed discussion of examination materials cannot be held in a public forum, but the Board's own Examination Committee members discusses their closed session work at public meetings prior to Board approval. Having the Focus Group members themselves present their findings at a Board meeting, as the Examination Committee does, would have gone a long way toward gaining acceptance of their controversial conclusion, and would more than likely have assuaged many of our concerns.

I wasn't originally planning on attending, or sending anyone else to this Board meeting; and this was discussed at our January Section meeting. What I've learned from this is that AEG So Cal must have a representative at each and every Board meeting because not only is it difficult, if not impossible to tell from the meeting agenda exactly what will be discussed, but that AEG can and does have an impact on Board decisions that affect us all.

New (old) Newsletters on the web site!

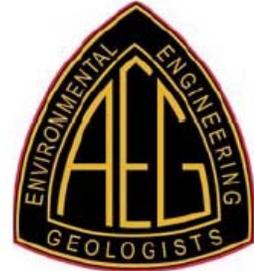
When I was the newsletter editor way way back in 1994-96, Jerry Treiman of the California Geological Survey (then Division of Mines) donated his and the survey's collection of back issues of the Section newsletter to the Section. Jerry's intention was to make this historical collection available to the membership. Well, after a long weekend of scanning (who needs a life when there's AEG?), the newsletters, going back through 1982 and one issue from 1979, will be placed on the Section's web site in PDF format. This may be done over a period of time, as we work out storage space and bandwidth issues, so check the web site periodically for updates. And by the way, if you happen to have back issues that are missing from the web site please send it to me for scanning (I'll return it), or scan it yourself as a PDF and email to our web master. Happy reading!



SPRING FIELD TRIP

Planning in Progress

If you have any suggestions for possible field stops, please email your ideas to Joe Cota, joe@radiusmap.net





Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists Southern California Section

"Connecting Professionals, Practice, and the Public"

January 20, 2006

Craig A. Copelan, President
 Dr. Robert A. Matthews
 William E. Black
 Jeffrey Todd Schmidt
 Cecilia L. Yu
 Board for Geologists and Geophysicists
 2535 Capitol Oaks Drive, Suite 300A
 Sacramento, CA 95833-2926

RE: Rescission of the California-Specific Examination

Mr. Copelan:

Upon review of the documents associated with the Focus Group that was convened to review the effectiveness of the California Specific Examination (CSE), questions are raised about the composition, appropriateness, bias, and validity of the Focus Group, their conclusions, and recommendations. Individually, these comments may seem to be of minor importance, but collectively they indicate a process that may not have been conducted in a proper manner, that a bias may have been introduced into the Focus Group, and that the members may not have been appropriately chosen.

- 1) ***Are the seven Focus Group members representative of geologists practicing in California who work for clients requiring the protections afforded by the Board? What is the nature of the practice that these geologists perform, and who are their clients?*** One Focus Group member is a CEG, two are CHGs, and the remaining do not have a specialty license. Geologists practicing in the environmental industry will typically have clients who range from large industrial corporations to small businesses. The work generally entails contaminant remediation, and is otherwise not a life-safety-related practice. There is no danger of site or structural collapse in this type of work, and it could be argued that these clients, being business-oriented, are more sophisticated consumers of consulting services than the average property owner building a home.

A Focus Group established to review the effectiveness of the CSE should be composed of geologists whose dominant type of geologic practice is providing services to the relatively unsophisticated consumer of geologic services.

- 2) ***Not one Focus Group member is a member of AEG. Where is the organizational representation on the Focus Group?*** Members of AEG, CCGO, and other recognized geologic organizations were not specifically requested to participate in the Focus Group.

- 3) **Do the Focus Group members have sufficient experience to effectively evaluate the CSE?** Three of the Seven members were licensed within months of being on the Focus Group. Is this considered sufficient experience to evaluate the effectiveness of the CSE? The licensing dates are as follows: June 2005; May 2005; April 2005; May 2003; May 2001; Feb 1995; and May 1994.

The November 15, 2005 Memorandum by Nancy Linn of the Office of Examination Resources states that three had been licensed since 2000 by passing the ASBOG, three were licensed between 1990 and 1999 under the Board-administered exam, and one was exempted based on reciprocity with Florida. **This statement is not correct.** Four of seven passed the ASBOG, and only two were licensed under the old exam. This means that 5 of the seven were licensed relatively recently.

- 4) One of these recent licensees was granted his license in May under the Section 7847 out-of-state exemption. **Can it be reasonably expected that this geologist would have concluded that the CSE is necessary after being granted a license without it?**
- 5) **Were the Focus Group members as unbiased a sample as could be found?** This same licensee is quoted in the May 20, 2005 BGG meeting minutes as saying "as a small business person [I believe] the CSE must be eliminated." This geologist was then placed on the Focus Group.
- 6) The sole CEG on the Focus Group practices in an area of relatively low population, and of hard rock geology with no active landslides, very rare fault activity and even rarer volcanic activity. This area is otherwise lacking in the need for the sophisticated engineering geological knowledge and ability required in coastal areas with soft, weak rock, where rampant development is occurring. **Is this geologist representative of the state of practice?**
- 7) **Why was the Board's existing Technical Advisory Committee not requested to address the effectiveness of the CSE?** The Board's TAC is charged with addressing technical issues for the Board to act upon. This is exactly what the Focus Group was set up to do, and appears to be redundant. The existing TAC members appear to have significantly more experience with standard of practice issues than the Focus Group members, and may be better able to judge the effectiveness of the CSE.
- 8) **The Focus Group functions as an ad hoc TAC.** During the December 2, 2005 Board meeting Mr. Gary Duke, legal counsel to the Board, determined that the TAC must abide by the requirements of the Bagley-Keene and Brown Acts. Therefore, there should have been public notification of the Focus Group meetings, and they should have been held in facilities open to the public. Proper process must be followed for the Focus Group's work to be considered valid.
- 9) The California Building Code defines Engineering Geologist as: "a geologist experienced and knowledgeable in engineering geology." And this is in Appendix Chapter 33 which is **not** required to be adopted by local jurisdictions.

What this means is that jurisdictions that do not adopt Appendix Ch. 33 do not necessarily require geology or soils reports for grading projects. For jurisdictions that do adopt the

Appendix a PG license is all that is legally required to prepare geology reports for engineered projects in California.

Since the ASBOG task analysis generally lacks consideration of faults and landslides, the ASBOG exam cannot be relied upon to test the knowledge and skills appropriate to practice in California; and since a CEG specialty license is not required to practice, that exam provides no substitute coverage.

- 10) In reference to **"The California Specific Exam - A Value Appraisal"** prepared by the Board's Executive Officer, Dr. Tracy Montez of the Office of Examination Resources writes in her April 28, 2005 Memorandum:

"The occupational analysis *did* identify competencies and knowledge unique to practice in California; however, the document distributed by the BGG stated a different conclusion." ***How could such an error of misrepresentation occur?***

She goes on to recommend that "A focus group consisting of subject matter experts and facilitated by a test development expert should be convened..." ***How does the board define "subject matter expert"? And who was the "test development expert"?***

In the minutes for the May 20, 2005 BGG Meeting Dr. Montez is quoted as recommending that the Focus Group work with a psychometrician from the OER. ***Was this done? And if so, who was this person?***

- 11) ***Who from the Board participated with the Focus Group? Was this an unbiased individual with nothing at stake?*** If not, this person should not have been involved with the process.
- 12) Lastly, the CSE Focus Group summary dated November 15, 2005 was prepared not by the Focus Group, not by a psychometrician, and not by a "test development expert." It was prepared by a "Personnel Selection Consultant." ***Is the summary a true and correct representation of the Focus Group's conclusions and recommendations?***

The above comments and questions lead to the conclusion that appropriate processes may not have been followed, that a bias, however inadvertent, may have been introduced into the Focus Group, and that the Focus Group members themselves may not have been chosen in the most appropriate manner. AEG recognizes that the CSE may not be relevant; and therefore, requests that the CSE receive a fair and proper evaluation with a strong emphasis on methods to improve the relevance the exam. And until that process is completed, AEG requests that the conclusions and recommendations of the Focus Group and the approval of those recommendations by the Board during their December 2, 2005 meeting be rescinded.

Sincerely,



Charles Nestle, Chair
Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists
Southern California Section
PG 6400, CEG 2065



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The conference is co-convened by:



www.1906eqconf.org

Chapter Meetings

Inland Empire:

February Meeting: Wednesday, February 15th

Time: 5:00 to 8:30

Location: Country Garden Restaurant - Temecula

Speaker: Jim Madden

Presentation Topic: "Phase I Environmental Assessments and the New AAI Standard"

Please visit the Inland Empire web page at <http://www.aegsc.org/chapters/inlandempire/> for additional meeting information and directions.

Central Coast:

Monthly meetings will take place on the last Wednesday of every month at Rusty's Pizza in Goleta. Social hour begins at 6 pm, the meeting begins at 7pm.

For more information or to be added to the CA Central Coast Chapter email list, please contact Robert Urban via email at robert_urban@urscorp.com.

San Diego:

February Meeting: Tuesday, February 21st

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: Ninyo & Moore Office, 5710 Ruffin Road, San Diego

Speaker: Werner Landry, City of San Diego Planning & Development Services

Presentation Topic: "Status of the proposed Technical Guidelines for Fault Rupture Hazard Investigations"

For the latest information visit <http://www.aegsc.org/chapters/extremesocal/>

National Business Donation

- Platinum - \$1,000
- Gold - \$500
- Silver - \$250

Company name, address and contact information are presented in AEG News and section receives 10% of donation. A national donation does not yield a line in our local section newsletter.

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▪ ⅓ Page	\$30	\$300
▪ ½ Page	\$35	\$350
▪ Full Page	\$50	\$500

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* The deadline for submitting an advertisement for next month’s newsletter is Friday, February 24th.

YEAR 2006 CONTRIBUTORS NEEDED

Contributions from corporations and individual members are greatly appreciated. Contributors will be listed in our newsletter throughout the year and can post their logo or business card in the newsletter if so desired. Please mail contributions made out to **AEG** to our section treasurer, Rosalind Munro.

2006 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

For those of you who have not yet renewed **(the deadline was November 1)**, are unsure about your membership status, or did not receive your membership dues statement, please contact AEG Headquarters at www.aegweb.org. You can renew your membership online. Please update your membership if you wish to continue to receive future issues of the newsletter.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES & ADVERTISING

Petra Geotechnical is currently seeking experienced geotechnical engineers, geologists, environmental scientists and soils technicians in our Costa Mesa, Santa Clarita, Murrieta and San Diego offices. We offer competitive salaries and excellent benefits. Please contact Linda Becker, Human Resources Manager, at 714/549-8921 or submit your resume by email to lbecker@petra-inc.com



Eberhart / United Consultants, a southern California geotechnical consulting firm serving its clients for over 25 years, has the following career opportunities:

PROJECT GEOLOGIST: position requires BS with 3 years experience in public/civil works, commercial and residential projects. Duties include field mapping, subsurface exploration, office analysis, proposal and report preparation, and project management.

SENIOR ENGINEERING GEOLOGIST: position requires CEG registration and 8 years experience in public/civil works, commercial and residential projects. Duties include managing/performing geologic investigations, field mapping, subsurface exploration, office analysis, proposal and report preparation, and project management.

We offer a competitive compensation & benefits package for qualified candidates. For immediate consideration, mail, FAX, or email your resume & salary history to:

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FAX (714) 632-0955
dre@euc-inc.com

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 Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
 (760) 934-3992; Fax (760) 934-8832



Ninyo & Moore Geotechnical and Environmental Sciences Consultants has immediate openings for Staff, Senior Staff, and Project Geologists and Geotechnical Engineers in their Irvine office. Submit resumes to: Ninyo & Moore, 475 Goddard, Suite 200, Irvine, CA 92618; Attention: Ms. Ruth Dolecki (EOE). Please visit us at our web site at:

www.ninyoandmoore.com.

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Lawson & Associates Geotechnical Consulting, Inc.

2045 Royal Avenue, Ste. 125
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 Email: kesmond@lqcgeo.com

1020 Calle Cordillera, Ste. 101
 San Clemente, CA 92673
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 Email: info@lqcgeo.com

Website: www.lqcgeo.com

LGC is looking for dynamic individuals to join our team and work on some of Orange County's most interesting and technically challenging projects. If you are an experienced geotechnical professional, or just starting your career, please do not hesitate to contact us. All inquiries will be considered in the utmost confidence. We look forward to hearing from you.



TerraPacific Consultants, Inc. is a San Diego based geotechnical consulting firm working on projects throughout the southwest. We concentrate on forensic engineering, evaluations for new commercial/industrial/custom residential construction, as well as, oversight during foundation repairs. We are seeking motivated engineers and geologists who are interested in finding solutions to challenging geotechnical problems.

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We are looking for an honest, hard working, technically minded professional to perform subsurface investigations, collect field data, perform geotechnical analysis, and write reports. Construction inspections will also be required. Qualified candidates should possess good communication skills. Field work and out of town travel will be required on regular basis. Position demands a motivated, organized, self-starter with the ability to get things done in a timely manner.

We offer the ability to learn and grow your career by working with seasoned professionals. Please visit our web site at www.terrapac.net.

Senior Geotechnical Engineer

Position responsibilities include project management, collecting field data, analysis, report writing, and client communication. Oversight of construction inspections will also be required. Qualified candidates must be a licensed G.E., have a minimum of 8 years experience and good communication skills. At least 2 years experience in geotechnical forensic investigations is preferred. Experience in testifying is a plus.

Project Geotechnical Engineer/Geologist

Position responsibilities include project management, collecting field data, analysis, report writing, and client communication. Oversight of construction inspections will also be required. Qualified candidates must be a licensed PE (GE is a plus), PG or CEG, have a minimum of 5 years experience and good communication skills. At least 2 years experience in geotechnical forensic investigations is preferred.

Staff Geologist/Engineer

We are looking for an honest, hard working, technically minded graduate to perform subsurface investigations, collect field data, perform geotechnical analysis, and write reports. Construction inspections will also be required. Qualified candidates should possess good communication skills. Some experience in geotechnical investigations is preferred but recent graduates will be considered. Field work and out of town travel will be required on regular basis. Position demands a motivated, organized, self-starter with the ability to get things done in a timely manner.

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 3501 Pegasus Drive
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 3303 N. San Fernando Blvd., Suite 100
 Burbank, California 91504
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The San Diego office performs geologic, geotechnical and geophysical studies for tunnels, dams, highways and downtown high rise buildings. We investigate fault hazards, landslides, coastal erosion and other geologic hazards. We provide hydrogeology and ground water resource studies. Please visit our web site at www.urscorp.com to learn more about URS.

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David Schug
Principal Geologist
URS Corporation
1615 Murray Canyon Road, Suite 1000
San Diego, CA 92108
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Project Hydrogeologist: Candidate would have a B.S. Degree in Geology, and 5 to 7 years relevant experience, including experience with sampling, well installation, work plan and report preparation, project management, cost estimating and scheduling. California Professional Geologist (PG), or ability to obtain within one year preferred. Masters degree or computer groundwater modeling experience is a plus. Candidate should possess strong organizational, writing and presentation skills. Position will be based in San Diego, and will require some travel and field work. OSHA 40-hour training required.

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**Other
Offices:**
Mesa, AZ
Tucson, AZ
Dallas, TX



Environmental Geologist/Project Manager

GeoDesign Inc, headquartered in Portland, is seeking an Environmental Geologist for our Anaheim office. This position will involve scoping of projects and budgets, performing and managing/oversight of environmental field investigations, staff recruiting/development, and mentoring; business development; and managing and oversight of project work. Position includes full benefits with salary depending upon experience.

Position Requirements:

- Minimum 8 years relevant experience
- Bachelors degree in Geology or Geological/Earth Sciences
- CA Professional Geologist license
- Excellent writing and verbal communication
- Knowledge of local, state, and federal environmental regulations
- Understanding of restrictions imposed by budget, schedule, and contract stipulations

Duties/Responsibilities

- Prepare proposals and cost estimates
- Manage field portions of project tasks, including groundwater monitoring and sampling, Phase I and II site investigations, remedial investigations, and remedial action programs
- Familiarity with environmental drilling and sampling techniques
- Analysis and execution of various field operations, including groundwater monitoring, drilling, soil-gas sampling, well installation, and aquifer testing
- RWQCB and DTSC projects
- Brownfield investigations
- Interpretation of field data to produce cross-sections, contaminant plume contours, and potentiometric surface maps
- Prepare draft and final reports
- Attend client and regulatory meetings with senior staff and principals and conduct presentations
- Attend professional meetings as company representative and perform limited marketing functions
- Mentoring junior staff and technicians

Please send resumes for this position to: hrdept-ca@geodesigninc.com or fax (714) 634-3711. For additional information please see www.geodesigninc.com.

AEG Southern California Section
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