

January 2021

NISQUALLY CHAPTER OF THE  
ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL &  
ENGINEERING GEOLOGISTS

The Official

# AEG Nisqually Chapter Newsletter

## November Meeting Details

Tuesday, January 5th

### Location: Go To Meeting

6:00 Presentation

Dinner: At your home

**FREE for Member or Non-Member**

### Upcoming Meetings:

## Emergency Rockfall Assessment & Mitigation, US-95, MP 188 near Riggins

US 95 at MP 188, about 5 miles south of Riggins, Idaho, has experienced repeated rockslides, including several notable failures since December 2012. Highly persistent and adversely oriented joints within this 250-foot tall rock slope create the potential for large-scale wedge and planar failures. This presentation discusses emergency response and slope mitigation efforts in response to two large-scale rockfall events that occurred in July 2020. Combined, these failures deposited between 17,000 and 20,000 cubic yards of rock on US 95, blocking it the highway and causing significant mobility delays.

McMillen Jacobs was contacted by the Idaho Transportation Department on July 4<sup>th</sup> and mobilized to the site to provide initial response on July 5<sup>th</sup>. Emergency response to these failures included interim scaling, berm construction, and monitoring efforts focused on reopening US 95 prior to design and construction of more complete mitigation of the slope. Mitigation of the slope was performed in several phases: 1) emergency scaling and berm construction (mentioned above), 2) trim blast removal of an approximately 14,000 cubic yard unstable wedge, 3) post-blast scaling, rock dowel/bolt reinforcement, installation of a cable-net drape, and design of a rockfall catchment system.

Highlights of this work include the extensive use of roped access methods and drone technology for data collection required for design, the use of telemetered instrumentation to maintain worker safety and reopen the route during on-slope mitigation work, the impact of naturally occurring asbestos on the project, and blast design for large-scale block removal.

### Meeting Info:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/982090581>

You can also dial in using your phone.  
(For supported devices, tap a one-touch number below to join instantly.)

United States: +1 (408) 650-3123  
- One-touch: <tel:+14086503123,,982090581#>

Access Code: 982-090-581



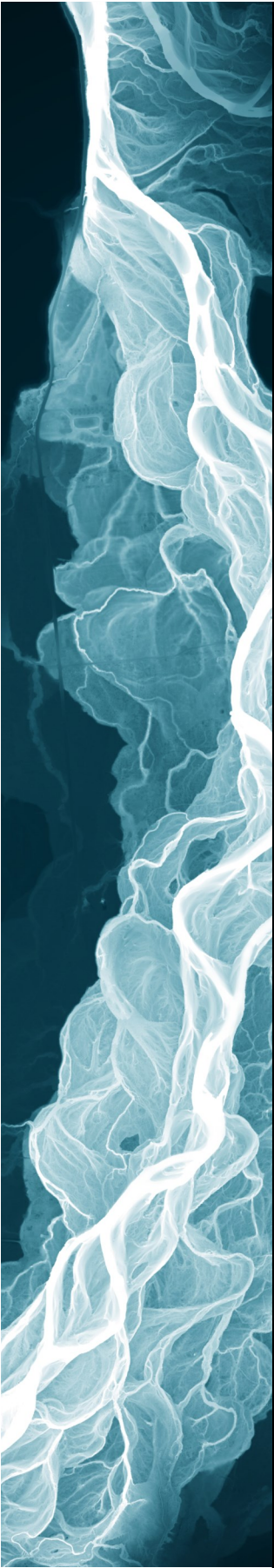
## Bio: James R. Struthers LEG

Senior Associate Engineering  
Geologist, McMillen Jacobs  
Associates

B.S./1991/Geologic Sciences,  
University of Washington

Jim is an Associate Engineering  
Geologist at McMillen Jacobs  
Associates and has worked as a  
geotechnical professional in the  
Pacific Northwest for in excess of 25

years. He has enjoyed a varied career that includes work on landslide and rockfall mitigation projects as well as on the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and Alaskan Way Viaduct Programs. Jim has a BS degree in geological sciences from the University of Washington with an emphasis on structural geology and tectonics and is a member of the Association of Engineering Geologists, the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute, and the Seismological Society of America. He is currently a member of the Washington State Board of Geologist Examiners and contributed to the development of the Washington State Engineering Geology Specialty Licensure examination.



## Message from the Chair

### Back Into the Light

Greetings, AEG Nisqually! The Solstice has now passed by and the light gradually returns. I hope everyone has managed to stay safe and is enjoying the winter holidays. With a vaccine right around the corner (yeah, science!), we hope to be seeing each other in person by the time summer arrives.

### 'tis the season

With this season comes the rain and the geohazards! We've had some rivers overtopping and some slopes sliding already! I'd say it's time to re-up waterproofing on the boots, find the good gloves, and get some wear on those nice thick socks. To those of you who deal with this stuff: now is the time to find yourself a geohazard, get your hands muddy, do the world some good, and add a new geo-tale to your storytelling repertoire. Stay safe out there!

### Trouble for geology in Oregon

Speaking of which, have you heard about the geohazards in Oregon? I am talking about the recent landslides, yes, but also the threat to the Geologic Survey in Oregon! I would like to thank Scott Burns for ringing the alarm bell and for providing much of the information below. This is distressing news and AEG needs to advocate for the preservation of DOGAMI and for the value provided to the citizens of Oregon by State geologists.

The Oregon Governor's Budget is calling for an elimination of DOGAMI, the Oregon Geologic Survey.

DOGAMI consists of two parts. The Mining Division is in Albany and is budget neutral. Their budget equals the permitting fees received for mining. It has 11 employees. The annual budget for the mining division is about \$2 million. The Mining Division will remain. The Geologic Survey and Services is mainly in Portland with 28 positions. The annual budget for the Geological Survey is ~\$7 million, of which ~30% comes from the state general fund. The remaining funding comes from contracts, grants, and the Feds.

In the Oregon Governor's proposed budget, DOGAMI will be dismantled in the first year of the biennium. There will be reductions in positions and preparation for the following year when DOGAMI will not exist. I understand that the Mining Division will not lose any positions but the Geologic Survey will lose 17 positions. There will be 7 remaining members at that point - five geologists, a graphics person and a grants person. The name DOGAMI will be gone. No one knows where the State Geologist will go.

This elimination of Oregon's Geologic Survey is expected to "save" Oregon less than \$3 million. DOGAMI is worth that amount. AEG needs to leverage our membership and provide legislators in Oregon with an opinion. I hope to have some discussion around this at our January meeting.

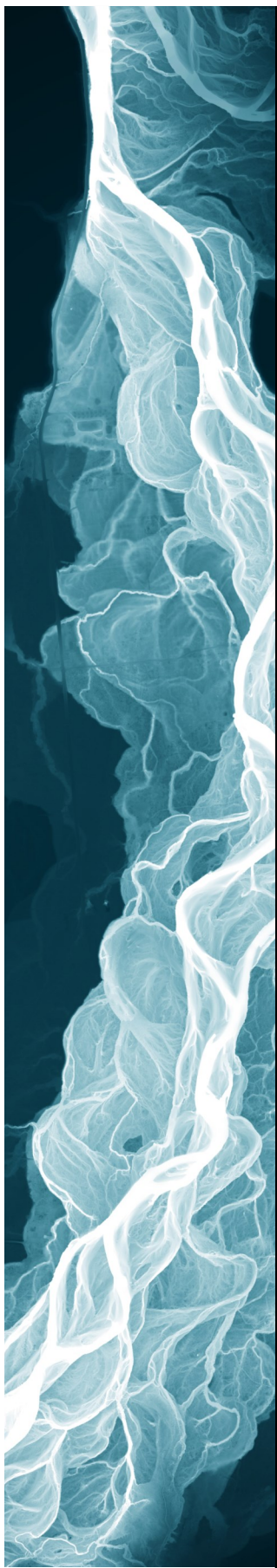
### Please make select AEG Nisqually when you renew!

When you renew your AEG membership, be sure to select Nisqually as your Chapter. It puts a few bucks into the Chapter coffers and keeps our numbers up.

It's great to be part of AEG Nisqually! I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Gabe Taylor

taylorg@wsdot.wa.gov

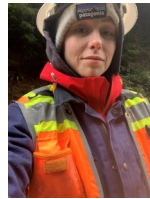




## Section Officers & Committee Chairs



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Gabriel Taylor  
WSDOT



Vice Chair:  
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Brittany.Dayley@dnr.wa.gov



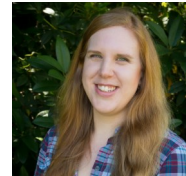
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**National AEG webpage:**  
<http://aegweb.org>

## The AEG Nisqually Chapter Newsletter

The Association of Engineering Geologists (AEG) contributes to its members' professional success and the public welfare by providing leadership, advocacy, and applied research in environmental and engineering geology. AEG's values are based on the belief that its members have a responsibility to assume stewardship over their fields of expertise. AEG is the acknowledged international leader in environmental and engineering geology, and is greatly respected for its stewardship of the profession.

AEG NISQUALLY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER is published monthly from September through April. Subscriptions are for members of AEG affiliated with the Nisqually Chapter or other Chapters, and other interested people. E-mail subscriptions are free.

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