

# FAPG FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGISTS

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# We Have A Lot of Work To Do!

by **Jonathan D. Arthur, P.G., Ph.D.**

Would it baffle or perhaps annoy you to hear that a bill is before the Florida Legislature that involves mining, aquifer recharge or sinkholes; however, the bill does not include PGs among the qualified professionals to do the work? Regarding sinkholes, it happened this year! Thankfully, an amendment now exists to add PGs to the list. There are many issues and concerns regarding the proposed sinkhole bill, and you can be assured the FAPG will be at the table as the issues are being addressed.

There is an important take-home message from this: We as a profession have a lot of work to do regarding education of the public, various industries (e.g., insurance) and our elected officials regarding what we do and why it's so important! This education effort cannot be a one-shot deal. It must continue, because the "audience" is ever changing. On your behalf the FAPG and our lobbyist, Laura McLeod and Associates, are making sure the voice of PGs will be heard by those working to improve the sinkhole bill.

What else are we doing as your advocate? The FAPG has expanded its leadership base and formed several committees to become a more efficient and effective organization:

### Legislative Action

First and foremost, **we now have a bill before the 2005 session to address a longstanding inequity and oversight in the Water Resources Act** (Chapter 373 F.S.). Put simply, the bill (HB 1289) adds PGs as an identified professional qualified to participate in water-resource related activities under the jurisdiction of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Water Management Districts. House Bill 1289 and its Senate companion, SB 1988, are now about to move through the legislative committee process thanks to our sponsors, Senator Burt L. Saunders (R-Naples) and Representative Stan Jordan (R-Jacksonville).

House Bill 1289 is needed because local, regional and state government agencies have denied PGs full recognition to propose or sign off on water-resource activities even though we are recognized in Chapter 492, F.S., as appropriate professionals licensed to perform the work. In some cases PGs currently do the work, but other professionals are required to sign off on the work. Moreover, interpretation of Chapter 373, F.S., by some counties has led to development of "Consulting Services" lists that do not include geological services except for those listed under "Professional Engineering Services."

It is important to note this bill is in no way intended to allow any licensed or registered professionals to practice outside the bounds of their professions. With the help of our lobbyist, the bill language was crafted with input from Water Management Districts and the Florida Engineering Society. The bill's concept has received support from these groups as well as Florida Department of Environmental Protection's staff.

*See President's Message on page 3*

## Session 2005: Help Us Help You!

During the 2005 legislative session as we work to follow PG-related bills, we need your input and your action! Regarding input, please let us know what you think of the following bills (most of which have a House or Senate counterpart):

HB 365	Sinkhole Investigation Reports
HB 1185	Florida Springs Protection Act
SB 1670	Relating to Oceans & Coastal Conservation Act
HB 0727	Water Management District Planning and Reporting
SB 0098	2020 Water Study Commission
SB 0444	Relating to Water Resource & Supply Development
HB 1289	Relating to Professional Geologists (effort led by the FAPG)

... and any others of interest to our profession.

Regarding action, we need you to pick up the phone and call your local senator or representative and tell them you support our bill! Please note that SB 0098 does not reference PGs and should. Although we are working on this, your voice needs to be heard, especially if you live in the district of the bill's co-sponsors (Senators Saunders and Dockery).

To find contact information about your local senator or representative, visit [www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com). On the lower right part of the page, simply enter your zip code and click "search."



**Executive Committee  
2005  
www.fapg.org**

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# We Want Your Ideas!

To promote public awareness of Florida's geologists and the importance of our work, the FAPG is considering a bumper sticker or static cling decal for members only. We also hope it will help with member recruitment. Here's our general idea:



We could substitute "Radiate" for "Rock" or a different phrase like "I brake for rocks." We need your ideas and feedback. Please contact the FAPG secretary (see contact information at right) with any thoughts by May 1, 2005.

## Participate in FAPG Committees

Opportunities exist for individuals to learn about the leading-edge trends, legislative efforts and government administrative actions affecting professional geologists. By serving as a member of an FAPG committee you will be among the first to know about developing issues in our industry and be one of the first individuals invited to participate in the solutions. To maximize efficiency and productivity, each committee is limited to five participants. Volunteers will be assigned on a first-come, first-preference system. Please reply right away to assure you are placed in the committee that most interests you.

### Legislative Action

**Chair - Charles Drake, Hartman and Associates**

**Vice Chair - Jorge R. Caspary, Levine Fricke Recon**

### Legislative Finance

**Chair - Mark Hurst, Independent Geological Services Inc.**

### Membership & Communications

**Chair - Merv Dale, Tetra Tech NUS Inc.**

**Vice Chair - Tracy Thrift, QORE Property Sciences**

### Education

**(Volunteer for chair needed)**

If you are interested in profiting from firsthand knowledge of industry trends, professional contacts and legal changes by serving as an FAPG committee member, please complete the information below:

Committee Interest \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer by completing this form and sending it to the FAPG office:**  
Robert Skrob, Executive Director  
Florida Association of Professional Geologists  
850/222-6000 • 850/222-6002, fax • Robert@FAPG.org

## Education

This is a two-pronged effort, the most important being the upcoming **FAPG Legislative Day** at the Capitol on April 4 and 5. You have received information about this in the mail, and there is more information about it in this newsletter. It is critical that we spend time face-to-face with elected officials and their staff members regarding our bill as well as other concerns, such as the sinkhole bill.

The second prong involves education of our members and the public. The FAPG is still seeking a volunteer to chair this committee. Aside from chairing or serving on this committee, what can you do? You can visit the Florida Board of Professional Geologist's website ([http://www.state.fl.us/dbpr/pro/geolo/geo\\_index.shtml](http://www.state.fl.us/dbpr/pro/geolo/geo_index.shtml)), where you will find a link to pages titled "TRADITIONAL TASKS PERFORMED BY PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGISTS." You can take a more active role in striving to educate others on "what geologists do!" starting with your local elected officials.

## Membership and Communication

The FAPG is working diligently to improve communications with our members and promote continued growth of the organization. After all, there is strength in numbers. There's something, however, for you to consider as an FAPG member: How is it that there are PGs in your office who are not members of the FAPG? Have you told them what we have been accomplishing in recent years? Are they the type to say "I'll let other people worry about that stuff"? Let them know we need them, not only as members, but as active participants! There is much work to do in the coming years to strengthen our profession and provide benefits to our members!

Under this heading I should emphasize our new Regional Coordinator system.

These individuals are your voice on the FAPG Board of Directors. They are also promoting communication by taking the lead in planning regional FAPG meetings. They need your help with suggestions for speakers, and vendors willing to sponsor events. Please contact them with your ideas. Who knows, you may get a free dinner if you bring a prospective member with you!

## Legislative Finance

The FAPG is at full throttle, and this takes a lot of fuel. The problem is that lobbyists don't work for free, and now we clearly understand that legislative success means having a good lobbyist at the Capitol nearly every day of session to be our voice and watchdog. Our lobbyist worked at a discounted rate last year. Although dues were recently raised, it was a long-overdue adjustment to help our organization stay afloat and improve member benefits and activities. The FAPG has many hot topics on the legislative radar, such as (but not limited to) addressing the problem with the Consultants Competitive Negotiation Act, establishing a CEU requirement for PGs, establishing a "Geologist in Training" program and addressing the Florida Lien Law. For these reasons, we are in need of your financial contributions to support our legislative efforts.

Please take note of other features in this newsletter: contact information for those who are working hard for you, the FAPG Board of Directors, which includes the Executive Committee and the Regional Coordinators; requests for feedback on various activities; the calendar of events; and a list of 2005 Legislative Defense Fund contributors. Please do what you can to join that list! I encourage you to become more active with the FAPG as we continue to serve you and Florida through legislative action, regional meetings, committee activities, etc. Put in your two cents worth and make a difference!



## Regional Coordinators

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## Mark Your Calendar

**FAPG Legislative Day  
at the Capitol**  
April 4-5 • Tallahassee

**Florida Water Resources  
Conference**  
April 24-27 • Jacksonville

**Board of Professional  
Geologists**  
April 27-28 • Key Largo

**Florida Groundwater Association  
Annual Convention & Trade Show**  
May 5-7 • Sheraton World Resort-Orlando

**SEGS Spring Fieldtrip**  
May 6-7 • Live Oak

**Florida Association for  
Water Quality Control  
2005 Conference:  
"A Natural Disaster"**  
June 15-18 • Registry Resort, Naples

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