

NEWSLETTER

February 2007 • P.O. Box 41225 • Raleigh, North Carolina 27629-0399 • 919-850-9669 Fax 919-872-1598

Boards meet at DENR regions to discuss improving applications Quality of permit requests reviewed

Over the last several months, representatives from the licensing boards for geologists, engineers and land surveyors, soil scientists and landscape architects met with the environmental regulatory agencies in the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) seven regional offices.

The purpose of the visits was to better inform the regulatory agencies of the role of the licensing boards in policing the quality of application submittals for environmental permits by licensed professionals. Jim Simons, Secretary Treasurer of the North Carolina Board for Licensing of Geologists, and David Evans, Assistant Executive Director for the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors, attended all the meetings while various local representatives from the other boards attended.

Board's 2007 Meeting Dates

At its December, 2006, meeting the NC Board for Licensing of Geologists set the following meeting schedule.

In addition to the dates listed here, the Board may call for a telephone conference call at any time during the year. Notice of such called meetings will be sent to the Secretary of State.

January 11

IES Solutions, Raleigh NC

April 12

Kimley Horn, Cary, NC

August 2

NC A&T University, Greensboro NC

November 1

Upton Associates, Raleigh NC

The DENR regulatory agencies have had a chronic problem with submittal of substandard applications, often by licensed professionals. This leads to multiple resubmittals and permitting delays, usually resulting in frustration by both applicants and permit reviewers.

The board representatives solicited the help of the regulatory agency personnel in informing the boards of unlicensed practice or grossly inadequate professional work on applications. It was noted by the board representatives that DENR regulatory personnel were considered an important source of complaints.

It was also noted that cooperating with the licensing boards might improve the quality of the work submitted. The meetings also provided an opportunity for each board to tell a little about the purpose and activities of that board. The meetings appeared to be well received by the DENR regulatory personnel.

Keep your address current with Board

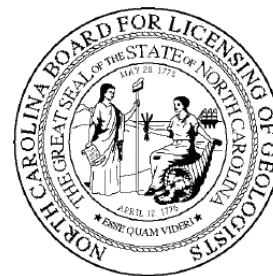
From the rules of the Geology Board, Chapter 21 NCAC 21 .0203

"Every individual licensee has the continuing responsibility of keeping the Board currently advised of the licensee's proper and current mailing address and the name or names under which the licensee is practicing. Each licensee shall immediately notify the Board of any and all changes of association or address."

Currently you may check the information on your address at the Board's web site, ncblg.org.

Also, the Board has established online renewal of registrations. Now that this is up and running it is possible to renew online, paying with a credit card.

Contact the Board at ncblg@bellsouth.net for an easy change in your address.



Chairman's Message

An active year for the Board

The Board has been quite active during the past year! You are undoubtedly aware of the issues that we faced last Fall in our attempt to change the format of the renewal registration process. For a wide variety of reasons, many of you failed to complete the registration and renewal process in a timely fashion. The most common complaint was that the Board failed to adequately notify each Licensee in a timely manner, but this was clearly not the case. The Board and our Administrator changed the format of the renewal notification from a letter-style notice to a card-style notice. This format change obviously caused some problems with many geologists, and we apologize for any inconvenience that this change may have caused. I am very proud of our Board for responding to this issue in a responsible and timely manner. We had several conference calls, proposed a plan of action, and our Administrator did a superb job of dealing with each individual case!

Renewal reminder

Now, I do not want to be too harsh in this reminder, but it is the responsibility of each Licensee to renew his/her license in a timely manner! Our License expires on July 1st of each year (See the Rule, 21NCAC21.0107(d)1, and it is our (yes, Board members have to renew also!) responsibility to renew in a timely fashion. The Board, however, remains

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NC Licensed Geologists by specialties

The records kept by the Licensing Board for Geologists do not specifically indicate licensees' specialties within the professional practice of geology. However, in preparation for a presentation to a university geology department, Secretary Treasurer of the Board, Jim Simons, reviewed the roster of licensees in 1986 and in 2006 to determine any employment trends that could be useful for the aspiring geologists. From personal knowledge and place of employment listed in the roster, the following estimates were derived of the percentages of licensees by the general specialties of the licensees:

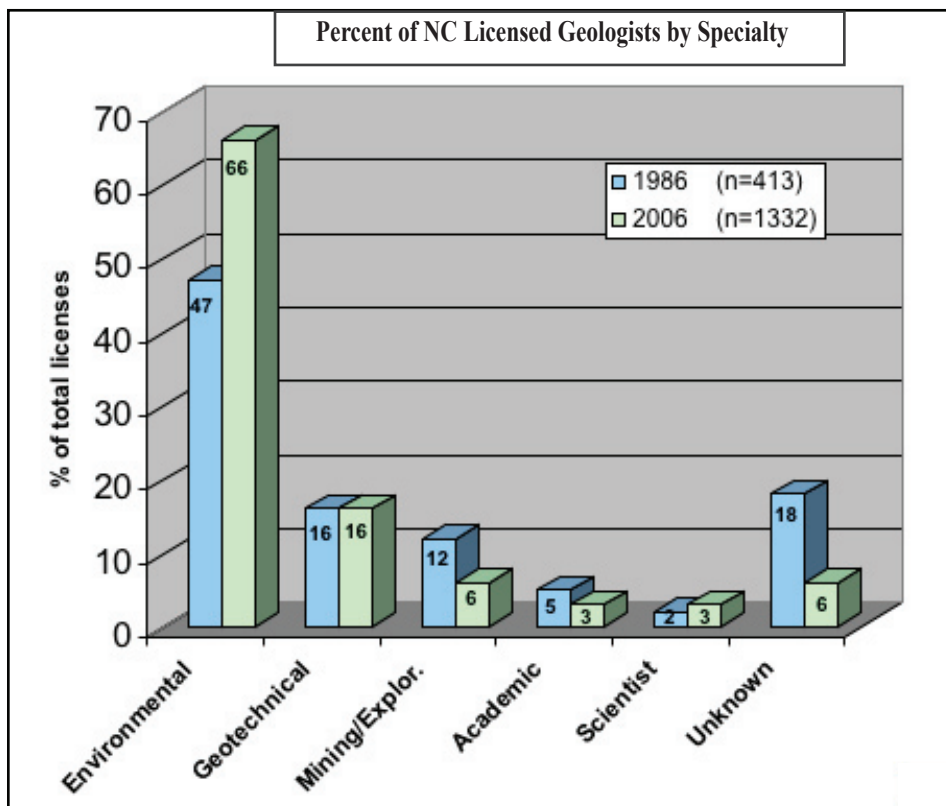
	1986 (%) (413 total licensees)	2006 (%) (1332 total)
Environmental	38	59
Geotechnical	13	12
Mining/Exploration	12	6
Governmental	14	14
Academic	5	3
Unknown	18	6

If government is further divided into specialties categories:

	1986	2006
Environmental	47	66
Geotechnical	16	16
Mining/Exploration	12	6
Academic	5	3
Geologic Mapping	2	3
Unknown	18	6

These percentages are unofficial. Overlap in specialties exists, particularly among environmental and geotechnical fields.

It is apparent that North Carolina is following a national trend in the increase in the numbers of licensed geologists who are working in the environmental field.



Geology Forum meets in state

Over 200 participants from 28 states and seven foreign countries attended the 42nd Forum on the Geology of Industrial Minerals held at the Crown Plaza in Asheville on May 7-10.

The Forum consisted of a number of field trips – both local and statewide, and papers on geology and industrial minerals. The North Carolina industrial minerals were showcased, but the papers included topics from across the nation, Canada and the Middle East.

Western North Carolina Congressman Charles Taylor provided the welcoming address. The field trips included a chartered ride on the Great Smokey Mountains Railroad to the field trip localities, a tour of the Spruce Pine Mining District with a nighttime search for fluorescent minerals, and a three-day trip across the state to see several mine sites, including the huge PCS Phosphate operation near the coast.

Next year's meeting of the Forum on the Geology of Industrial Minerals is in Colorado.



North Carolina Board for Licensing of Geologists

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 Godfrey Gayle, Vice Chairman
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Kenneth Taylor is appointed to lead State Geological Survey

Dr. Kenneth Taylor has accepted the position as the Chief Geologist of The North Carolina Geological Survey effective March 1. The announcement of the position was made by State Geologist James Simons.

Taylor previously served as the Chief Geologist before becoming the Director of the Division of Emergency Management, and later coordinating the Department's Hurricane Recovery Program for Western North Carolina.

He has a B.S. in Geology from UNC - CH, a M.S. in Geology from the University of South Carolina, and Ph.D. in Geophysics from the University of St. Louis in St. Louis, MO.

In addition to his geological and emergency management background, he brings a variety of administrative skills and a lot of energy.

Taylor has maintained close ties with the Geological Survey and will hopefully have some time to catch up with Tyler Clark on current projects. Simons said he anticipates a smooth transition when Clark leaves at the end of February.

"Tyler has done a great job leading the Survey these past four years and promoting the relevance of geology and the work of the Geological Survey to society. I am sure Ken will build on this work," Simons noted.

Report on national ASBOG meeting

The National Association of Boards for Licensing of Geologists (ASBOG) held the annual meeting in late October in Park City, Utah. I represented our Board as the voting delegate to the meeting, and I offer this synopsis of the major issues and events. First, a bit of information about the organization:

ASBOG was formed to serve as a connective link among the individual State Boards. In this capacity, it will offer advice and counsel; coordinate and facilitate the planning for, and preparation of, uniform procedures; and in every way be concerned with protecting the public

in matters of geological practice.

ASBOG is not a professional-advocate organization. It is important to emphasize that ASBOG provides a forum for discussion, debate, and resolution of issues related to the operation of individual Member Board states which register/license geologists – ultimately, to encourage Member Boards to work toward similar approaches to registration, where permitted by individual state law and/or policy, and to facilitate that process.

North Carolina is a Member Board in ASBOG, along with approximately 30

other states, and Puerto Rico. As such, our Board has the opportunity to send a voting delegate and a representative to the Council of Examiners (COE) as a Subject Matter Expert. In our last newsletter, I outlined the detailed process of operation of the Council of Examiners, and I will not provide those details here. Generally, the Council of Examiners works closely with psychometricians to design, evaluate, and continually improve the ASBOG exam. Our representative participated in the two-day COE process.

The ASBOG national meeting is an opportunity to discuss important issues and to establish policies for the organization. Among the major decisions reached by the voting delegates were:

- Development of an ASBOG Foundation, designed to provide financial support for the organization
- An increase in ASBOG exam fees from \$150 to \$200 for the Practice of Geology Exam, effective October, 2008
- Offer statistical information to Geology degree granting Universities and Colleges regarding exam performance by former students

I am particularly interested in the issue of compilation of statistical information regarding exam performance. Most US Universities, and especially those here in North Carolina, are being asked to address the effectiveness of their degree programs. The process of evaluation and demonstration of success is often called "assessment". One interesting assessment tool that ASBOG has proposed is the sharing of statistical data regarding exam performance with Geology degree-granting Universities and Colleges. Our plan is to provide statistical data on performance of graduates in various subsets of the exam. For example, we should be able to educate Geology Departments about the success of their graduates in areas like Mineralogy/Petrology/Petrography, or Structure/Tectonics/Seismology. Individual Geology Departments can then use these data as assessment tools in a variety of ways.

There is a lot of interest in the ASBOG



View east towards U-shaped glacial valley of Little Cottonwood Canyon, Utah

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Disciplinary Action

Decision reached in James King case

On March 10, 2006, the Board of Licensing of Geologists served a copy of the final agency decision in case 05 BOG 0149 on James W. King.

This Final Agency Decision adopted in full the Proposal for Decision of Judge Morrison in that case. Judge Morrison issued a Proposal for Decision proposing a suspension of James W. King's license for one month and issuance of a letter of reprimand in James W. King's file for violations of Board Rules under N.C. Admin. Code tit. 21, r. 21.1101(b)(1), r. 21.1101(b)(2), and r. 21.1101(d).

The Board of Licensing of Geologists has accepted the surrender of license card, seal and wall certificate # 1398 from James W. King.

— James P. Longest, Jr. "Ryke" Special Deputy Attorney General N.C. Department of Justice

ASBOG field trip described

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organization to encourage academic Geologists to seek and obtain Licensure. In many ways, ASBOG is an organization that links the academic experiences of Geology graduates with the real world of the practicing Geologist. I think that it is extremely important for academic Geologists to be involved in the ASBOG process. If you are an academic Geologist and decide not to seek Licensure for personal, economic, or other reasons, there are still ways that you can be involved. For example, every five or so years ASBOG re-evaluates the applicability of the subject matter content of our exam by distributing questionnaires to Geologists on a national scale. The response to our questionnaire by academic Geologists has been nothing short of terrible! Participation even at this level is extremely important, and I encourage each of you and your academic colleagues to consider an increased in-

volvement in the process.

ASBOG put on another outstanding field trip this year. We first visited the Sunderville Basin, and evaluated a case study of water supply development in the desert where property values are high and water is limited. We visited the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon, a prominent glacier-carved valley in the Wasatch Range, we viewed evidence of Pleistocene glaciers and prehistoric normal faulting on the Wasatch fault, and we discussed the rise and fall of Lake Bonneville. From a geotechnical perspective, we visited the Sherwood Hills subdivision, which is built on a large landslide complex near Provo, and it has experienced dramatic and visible damage to infrastructure and buildings. Our final stop was at Bridal Veil Falls along the Provo Canyon Scenic Byway on the Provo River.

— Richard Spruill, PG



Field trip during ASBOG meeting -Geology of the Wasatch Front - Does this bring back memories of Field Camp?

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unanimous in our resolve to send reminders and to make the process as “seamless” as possible. This Spring, we will send reminder post cards AND reminder e-mails to every Licensee. Here is some more good news for all of you computer-literate Licensees. YOU CAN NOW RENEW YOUR LICENSE BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE at www.ncblg.org. You can pay by credit card, or you can download the Application for Renewal of License (and other forms) and send your fees and completed application the old fashioned way!

Competent practice

The Board continues to address the issues associated with the Rules of Professional Conduct, specifically the requirement that a licensed geologist shall perform in areas of his competence. I am including the specific language from 21 NCAC 21 .1101 below:

(C) The geologist shall perform his services only in areas of his competence:

(1) The geologists shall undertake to perform geologic assignments only when qualified by education or experience in the specific technical field of geology involved.

(2) The geologist may accept an assignment requiring education or experience outside of his own field of competence, but only to the extent that his services are restricted to those phases of the project in which he is qualified. All other phases of such project shall be performed by qualified associates, consultants, or employees.

(3) The geologist shall not affix his signature and seal to any document dealing with subject matter for which he lacks competence by virtue of education or experience or to any such plan or document not prepared under his direct supervisory control, except that the geologist may affix his seal and signature to drawings and documents depicting the work of two or more professional provided he designates by note under his seal the specific subject matter for which he is responsible.

The Board feels that it is important for every Licensed Geologist to understand and comply fully with the requirements set forward in the language above. The underlying premise is simple in design and it requires each of us to

practice what we have been trained and have the experience to practice. We must be cognizant of the licensure requirements of other professional organizations, such as Engineers and Soil Scientists, and we must take great care in all of our reports to distinguish the work performed by other licensed professionals. As a practical example, the Board feels that it is extremely important for Licensed Geologists to very clearly separate their geologic work products on a specific site from the work products of Engineers who might perform design engineering services related to the same site. The Board recommends that Geologists include the Engineer’s sealed report as an addendum to the Geological report, rather than include the Engineer’s report (or paraphrased sections thereof) within the Geological report.

Joint Board meetings

The Board has participated in meetings with other professional Boards in NC to discuss the issue of “practice in areas of competence”. While there is some obvious disagreement among professionals regarding what constitutes the practice of individual disciplines, we all seem to agree that the most important consideration must always be that Licensed professionals must have the education or experience to perform the specific task in question. One particular example of this question of the practice, and a subject of much debate by the Board, has been “Who may perform aquifer testing and analysis of aquifer test results?” After significant discussion with the Engineering Board and the Soil Science Board, we have some consensus that Geologists, Engineers, and Soil Scientists can indeed perform and interpret aquifer tests if each is qualified by education and/or experience. The average Geologist is probably no more qualified than the average Engineer to perform such tasks without proper education and/or experience! The solution to these issues remains simple and straightforward -- we should all perform services only in areas

of demonstrated competence!

I am happy to report that I represented the NC Licensing Board at the National Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG) annual meeting in Utah in late October, 2006. Please see my report in this newsletter for a synopsis of the meeting.

On a personal note

On a very personal note, I want to share with each of you my thoughts about my career as a Geologist. I wanted to be a Geologist since first seeing a kaki-outfitted Geologist on the Saturday morning TV show called Sky King (about 1957). This fellow was using a little black box to measure strange emissions from rocks – I later learned that it was a Geiger Counter, so I built one out of cardboard and “measured emissions” from every object in site, and I became a Geologist! I have always been a Geologist, and I have always been proud to call myself a Geologist. There is no profession that I hold in higher regard than the noble profession of Geology. I am sure that many of you feel the same way about the profession, and with that in mind, I encourage any or all of you to consider involvement in this organization called the NC Board for Licensing of Geologists. My involvement with the Board has been a career-culminating experience, I have great respect for my fellow Board members and Administrator, and I am convinced that Licensure is an essential aspect of the future of Geology in our society. Our meetings are held quarterly, most often in the Raleigh area, and you are welcome to attend the meetings to see how we operate. The later afternoon segments of our meeting are typically closed sessions. Visit our website for more details about our scheduled meetings.

Finally, DON’T forget to complete the Renewal of License forms in a timely manner!!!

Take Care,

Richard K. Spruill, PG, Chairman

www.ncblg.org

Online renewal is currently available on the web site
Registrants will receive a reminder card and an email in March.
Geology registration must be renewed by June 30, 2007.

License Renewal



North Carolina Board for Licensing of Geologists
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