



## TBPG Winter Newsletter - December 2025

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### What's New!



**Welcome Our New Chair and Board Members!**



**New Emeritus and Distinguished Texas P.G. Status Incoming!**



**View Texas P.G. Ethics Videos Available On Our [YouTube Channel!](#)**

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### A Message from the New Board Chair!

It is an honor to be selected by Governor Greg Abbott as Chair of the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists this past October. Along with my appointment, Governor Abbott also announced the appointment of three Members to our Board:

- Eric Anderson, Ph.D., P.G. of Hallsville, Texas
- Rusty Branch, P.G., of Fort Worth, Texas
- Jeremy Ransom of Georgetown, Texas

More information about our new Board members is included in this Newsletter.

It has been my privilege to serve on the TBPG Board since 2018. During that time, three excellent geoscientists chaired the Board. Each of them led the Board differently, but they all followed the same principles, showing concern for the health, safety and welfare of the people of Texas, and consideration for our licensees, the profession of Geoscience, and the TBPG staff. I am committed to do the same.

The Board members will continue to follow these principles and to complete the initiatives begun by our predecessor, Chair David Prescott, P.G.. Early in 2026, the Board will address some specific initiatives, such as:

- Implement the Emeritus and Distinguished PG recognition programs;
- Develop additional training opportunities, such as test preparation materials for the ASBOG and Texas Geophysics exams, as a way to increase the number of licensed geoscientists in Texas;
- Seek more opportunities to discuss professional licensure with college and university geoscience students and department heads;
- Establish TBPG workgroups to address new areas of interest for our licensees;
- Continue our outreach to local and statewide professional societies.

Some of these initiatives require a specific process for implementation, but we will continue to work diligently on these important initiatives. The Board, along with our talented and committed Agency staff and Executive Director, will also continuously work to further identify and implement strategies aimed at achieving our mission to protect public health and safety through licensure and provide the highest level of service to the public and our licensees in Texas.

We at the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists extend our gratitude to every Texas Professional Geoscientist serving the public through responsible practice.

Best wishes for the Holidays and Happy New Year,

**Mark Varhaug P.G., C.P.G.**



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**Please Welcome Our Newest Board Members!**



**Eric Anderson, Ph.D., P.G.**

**Mr. Anderson is from Hallsville and is the president of Mitigation Resources of North America and is certified in soil science by the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists. He is a member of the Ecological Restoration Business Association and the James F. Taylor Masonic Lodge 169. Anderson received a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science and a Master of Science in Forestry from Stephen F. Austin State University and a Doctor of Philosophy in Soil Science from North Carolina State University. His term is set to expire on February 1, 2031.**



**Rusty Branch, P.G.**

**Mr. Branch is from Fort Worth and is the vice president and senior geoscientist at Gehrig, Inc. and is certified by the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists. He has served as a local, state, and national leader in many non-profit and community organizations, including Scouting America, formerly known as Boys Scouts of America, Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists, and the American Society of Civil Engineers Geo-Institute. He is a member of the Fort Worth Community Emergency Response Team. Branch received a Bachelor of Science in Earth Science from Tarleton State University, a Master of Science in Biology from Baylor University, and a Master of Business Administration from The University of Texas (UT) at Arlington. His term is set to expire on February 1, 2031.**



**Jeremy Ransom**

Mr. Ransom is from Georgetown and is a strategic relationship director at Bluespring Wealth Partners. He is a former board member for Hospice Austin and Make-A-Wish Central and South Texas, and a current board member for The Legacy Ranch Youth Football and Cheer. He was Honorably Discharged from the United States Marine Corps. Ransom received a Bachelor of Science in Personal Financial Planning from Texas Tech University, a Master of Business Administration from Baylor University, Master of Science in Technology Commercialization from UT Austin, and a Juris Doctor from the Mitchell Hamline School of Law. His term is set to expire on February 1, 2031.



### ASBOG Results October 2025 Computer-Based Examinations

Below are the Texas and National Summaries of Statistics for the October 2025 ASBOG Examinations

Texas Results October 2025	Total Number of Candidates	Number of Candidates Passing	Percent of Candidates Passing
FG Exam	84	29	34.5%
PG Exam	51	37	72.5%

National Results October 2025	Total Number of Candidates	Number of Passing Candidates	Percent of Candidates Passing
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<b>FG Exam</b>	923	530	57.4%
<b>PG Exam</b>	448	361	80.6%

## **Upcoming ASBOG Examinations March 2026**

The Spring exam dates are **March 19th and 20th, 2026**; TBPG staff are currently receiving and reviewing applications for these examinations.

The application cutoff for the March exam date is February 20th, any deficient files will be moved forward to the October 2026 exam once they are completed.

Please be aware TBPG only processes applications for one examination at a time.

We will file, but not begin processing any applications for the October 2026 examinations until after the March examinations are complete and the results received and sent out. It takes approximately six weeks from the exam dates for TBPG to receive the exam results from ASBOG because of the extensive care and review processes that they take for each examination.

If you have applied for the October 2026 examinations, we will not contact you until after the March examinations have closed and all results sent to candidates.

Exam candidates can choose from 40+ testing locations across Texas. A complete list of current Texas testing site locations is available from Prometric by [CLICKING HERE](#) (select "ASBOG" as the organization from the pull-down menu followed by selecting either the FG or PG exam and then select a testing location in Texas).

[For more information about applying for an Exam, click here!](#)

[To APPLY online to sit for an Exam, click here!](#)

[ASBOG Examinee Candidate Handbook, click here!](#)

The ASBOG Examinee Candidate Handbook is the official guide to policies and procedures for the ASBOG National Geology Examinations. This guide will provide important information to exam candidates regarding scope; content and development of the licensure exams; a step-by-step guide to register and pay for the computer-based exams and select a testing location; and example practice questions to help prepare for the ASBOG National Geology Examinations. It was updated in January of 2024.

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## **Upcoming Quarterly TBPG Meetings**

Austin, Texas

**February 5, 2026**

Application Review and Continuing Education Committee

Financial Review Committee

Compliance and Enforcement Committee

General Issues Committee

\*These meetings may be available for public comment or participation via Zoom.

Meeting agendas including Zoom links will be available on the TBPG website at least one week prior to the meetings.

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## **Texas Granted Primacy Over Class VI Wells**

The Railroad Commission of Texas announced in a November 12, 2025 press release that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency had approved the State of Texas' application and has granted primacy for Class VI Underground Injection Control (UIC) to the state.

This approval will give the Railroad Commission of Texas primary enforcement authority for Class VI wells that will be used for the injection of carbon dioxide into deep rock formations for permanent storage.

Since 2021, the Railroad Commission has been proactively developing its Class VI program, with Commission staff reviewing permit applications alongside EPA's Region 6 office. As of the date of this announcement, the Commission has received 18 applications and is aware of additional projects that are planned by industry in Texas. A link to the full press release is located at:

<https://www.rrc.texas.gov/news/texas-granted-primacy-over-class-vi-wells/>

A TBPG Carbon Capture and Sequestration Workgroup composed of Texas industry and government volunteer Professional Geoscientists (P.G.s) completed a report to define the role of a P.G. in preparing Underground Injection Control Class VI injection well permit applications in Texas. The report can be found at:

[https://tbpg.state.tx.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/CCS\\_Workgroup\\_Report\\_for\\_TBPG-1.pdf](https://tbpg.state.tx.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/CCS_Workgroup_Report_for_TBPG-1.pdf)

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**We are pleased to introduce our P.G. In The Spotlight:  
Gil Gabaldon, Texas P.G. #4419**



**Mr. Gabaldon is employed as an Senior Project Professional at SCS Engineers.**

**He received his Undergraduate and Graduate degrees from The University of Texas at Austin (B.S., Geology) (M.A., Geological Sciences). He is also a licensed P.G. in Mississippi, and Tennessee.**

**1. When were you first licensed? Why is having a PG license important to you?**

I was first licensed on August 30, 2003. Having a PG license gives my clients confidence that when I interpret data and give opinions on geologic data that I have been vetted by a professional organization that deems me qualified to do my job as a licensed geoscientist. I have met a certain standard that qualifies me to do my job.

**2. Why did you pursue a career in Geoscience? What part of Geoscience interested you the most?**

I started in the petroleum engineering program at UT in the 80s. I did not enjoy the engineering side. I took a geology for engineers class and I really enjoyed it. I ended up switching to geology the following semester. I like that geology is so broad. Interpretation is expected unlike engineering in which formulas rule and more exact.



### **3.What is your favorite part of working as a geoscientist?**

I enjoy working on projects where geology is actually involved. This could be drilling a well, completing a pump test, or looking into remedial alternatives for a site and implementing them. I actually like being out in the field and that is where I think I am at my best.

### **4.What are your hopes for the Geoscience industry in Texas?**

I hope that the politicians that could determine the fate of the professional geology program realize how important it is to have licensed and qualified geoscientists assessing and interpreting data that is relevant to the general public and protecting the environment. I would like more students enter the geosciences to become licensed geoscientists ensuring the strength and future of the practice.

### **5.Do you have any advice for someone interested in a career in Geoscience?**

I would tell someone interested in a career in the geosciences to try to figure out what part of geology is the most of interest to you and go for it. There are so many disciplines to choose from. While I majored in petroleum geology as part of my undergraduate degree, I had a minor in marine studies. I really enjoyed studying the material and it helped I had a very good professor who made the subject interesting.

### **6.What do you do in your spare time?**

In my spare time I like to play tennis. I am also interested in DIY projects around the house. There is always something to fix and I am very likely to have the tools somewhere in my messy garage.

### **7.What do you think is the single most important thing for the future of Geology or Geosciences in Texas?**

I think the most important thing to do is to continue to let the state legislators in charge of continuing the PG program that is program has a lot of value. Having an unqualified geoscientist to complete geoscientific work could prove disastrous to human health and the environment. As licensed geoscientists we are bound by a code of ethics to do the right thing.





**We are pleased to introduce our G.I.T. In The Spotlight:  
Cody Bjornson, Texas G.I.T. #777**



**Mr. Bjornson is employed as an Hydrologist at the Texas Water Development Board.  
He graduated from The University of Texas at Austin (B.A., Geography) and received his Texas G.I.T. Certification in 2024.**

**1. Why is having a GIT Certification important to you?**

GIT certification provided me with a framework for professional development that I knew would benefit my current job and make me more marketable in the future. I never thought I'd pursue a PG license but the longer I work in groundwater the more useful I think it will be.

## **2. Why did you pursue a career in Geoscience? What part of Geoscience interested you the most?**

Like many college students, I didn't know what exactly to pursue. What I did know is that I wanted to work outside and in some kind of environmental discipline. A degree in geography seemed like a good start because I could study earth sciences and take GIS courses which I had heard was a useful skill to have. Halfway through college I interned for a groundwater team within the City of Austin Watershed Protection Department. My mentors were all chill PGs and I thought the work they did was important and cool. A project I worked on took me to karst features near my hometown of Buda, Texas. That blew my mind because I was oblivious to how important my stomping grounds were for groundwater recharge and springs that I swam at as a teen. Needless to say, I focused my coursework on hydrogeology and geology classes after my internship was over.

## **3. What is your favorite part of working as a Geoscientist-in-Training?**

While my day-to-day tasks haven't changed much, the GIT certification is a reminder to think like a geologist and reach out to PGs for their opinion and expertise. There is so much to learn and I find that equal parts intimidating and exciting.

## **4. What are your hopes for the Geoscience industry in Texas? What would you like to see somewhere in the future?**

When I was in high school, environmental science was an optional AP class for 12th graders. It ended up being my favorite class, so I decided to go that route when I got to college. I would like to see geoscience taught within a required environmental science curriculum across high schools in Texas. I think this would help promote the industry and help address our projected future shortage of skilled geoscientists.

## **Anything else you would like us to know?**

I oversee the Water Level and Springs Monitoring Programs at the Texas Water Development Board, where I have worked for eight years. For the last ~4 years I have been based in Marfa, Texas and am in proximity to some of the most complex and fascinating geology in Texas. I welcome anyone to reach out for a chat on the phone or meet up in person if they find themselves in Far West Texas. My email is [cody.bjornson@twddb.texas.gov](mailto:cody.bjornson@twddb.texas.gov).



**If you are a licensed P.G. or G.I.T. in Texas and would like to be featured for Geoscientist in the Spotlight, please contact TBPG at [licensing@tbpg.texas.gov](mailto:licensing@tbpg.texas.gov) for an interview!**

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## **Highlights of the November 14, 2025 Board Meeting**

### **Requests For Waivers**

The Board reviewed twelve requests for waivers. The Board approved eleven of the twelve requests and took no action on one waiver request.

### **Discussion**

Newly appointed Board Chair, Mark Varhaug, P.G., C.P.G., introduced himself as well as new Board Members Dr. Eric Anderson, P.G., Rusty Branch, P.G. and Jeremy Ransom during this quarterly in-person Board meeting.

Executive Director Rene Truan provided a report on Operations, Staff Updates, Program updates, the status of TBPG's Four-Year Rule review and ongoing TBPG staff activities.

Financial Officer Dr. Coretta Briscoe presented the Financial Report.

Committee Chair Mark Varhaug reported on the General Issues Committee's review, research and discussion regarding proposed draft rules to support the creation of Emeritus status and Distinguished Texas P.G. recognition program that had been unanimously approved at the August Board meeting.

The Committee is preparing qualifying criteria to be presented at the February Board Meeting.

Compliance Manager Gordon Magenheimer provided the quarterly Compliance report.



### **Emeritus and Distinguished Texas P.G. Recognition Program Update!**

TBPG staff continues to work on developing draft language to support development of rules and detailed criteria for both the Emeritus and Distinguished Texas P.G. recognition programs. Both recognition programs were voted unanimously by the Board during the August 22, 2025 Quarterly Board meeting.



### **Earn Your Ethics CE Hour with TBPG's Videos!**

TBPG now offers five ethics videos on our YouTube channel that may be used to fulfill the required ethics hour for continuing education. These engaging videos cover ethical responsibilities and professional expectations for P.G.s and G.I.T.s.

If you still need your ethics hour, this is an easy and accessible way to meet the requirement!

Watch all five ethics videos on TBPG's [YouTube](#) channel today!



**P.G. In The News:  
Dr. Kenneth Tramm, P.G. #805**

Pictured on the right:  
**AEG President Renee Wawczak,  
P.G. and Kenneth S. Tramm  
Ph.D., P.E., P.G., CHMM at AEG's  
68th Annual Meeting in Chicago,  
IL. September 24, 2025.**



Dr. Kenneth Tramm, a Texas-licensed Professional Engineer and Professional Geoscientist, was recognized by the Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists (AEG) on September 24, 2025 with the AEG Advocacy Award. The Advocacy Award highlights outstanding accomplishments in advocating for geoscience in public policy.

Dr. Tramm recently led a team that donated over 2,000 hours of technical time to researching common risk assessment errors that are directly related to environmental policies that were meant only as “placeholders.” His team completed a comprehensive numerical modeling effort that incorporated current geostatistical data and outlined more appropriate regulatory policies that embraced the spatial variability of naturally-occurring metals in Texas soil (i.e., Background Threshold Values; BTVs). His efforts now allow a more streamlined risk-assessment approach that can save Texans tens of millions of dollars every year.

Dr. Tramm's work has renewed conversations within commercial real estate, economic development committees, municipalities, commercial banking, brownfield redevelopment cooperatives, Texas legislators, and even the new Texas Regulatory Efficiency Office (TREO) on how best to modernize Texas' risk-based corrective action programs so they are ready for the environmental challenges of tomorrow.

**For more on the ‘Back the BTV’ effort, contact Dr. Tramm at (ktramm@moderngeosciences.com). For more on Dr. Tramm's recent BTV research efforts please review:**

- ***Importance of Background Threshold Value development within Risk-based Corrective Action Programs***  
***(<https://doi.org/10.1002/vzj2.20294>);***

**and**

- ***Estimating Background Threshold Values for Risk Assessment*** (***<https://doi.org/10.21663/EEG-D-24-00009>***).



## CURRENT LICENSES AS OF 11/30/2025



### Total Licenses Managed: 4606 (Current and Eligible to renew)

Status	PGs	GITs	Firms
Current	3111	269	326
Expired	651	213	36



**HAPPY  
HOLIDAYS!!**  
A message from  
the TBPB Staff:

Wishing all our licensees and colleagues a cheerful and relaxing holiday season! We hope you find time to recharge, and may your holidays be stable, stress-free, and free of unexpected faults!

A quick friendly reminder: now's a great moment to double-check your contact info and renewal status as we head into the new year.

**Agency Contact Information:**

SUBJECT	INFORMATION	PHONE/EMAIL
GENERAL	General questions and inquires, Token Numbers	512-936-4408 LICENSING@TBPG.TEXAS.GOV
COMPLAINTS	File a Complaint, Complaint inquiries	512-936-4410 COMPLIANCE@TBPG.TEXAS.GOV
CONTINUING EDUCATION	CE Program, CE Audits, CE Requirements	512-936-4410 COMPLIANCE@TBPG.TEXAS.GOV
OUTREACH	Outreach Opportunities	512-936-4401 GORDON.MAGENHEIM@TBPG.TEXAS.GOV
FINANCE	Accounts Payable, Receivables, Purchasing, ITVs	512-936-4404 CORETTA.BRISCOE@TBPG.TEXAS.GOV
LICENSING	New license inquires, Applications, Examinations, Waivers and Qualifications	512-936-4408 LICENSING@TBPG.TEXAS.GOV
OPEN RECORDS	Open Records of Public Information Requests	512-936-4401 RTRUAN@TBPG.TEXAS.GOV
ONLINE ASSISTANCE	Assistance with the online licensing portal	LICENSINGHELP@HPC.STATE.TX.US



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