



## TBPG Spring Newsletter - March 2026

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### What's New!



**Introducing a New Public Board Member!**



**Updates on Emeritus and Distinguished Texas P.G. Status!**



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



**Showcasing a Texas Geoscience registered Firm!**

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### A Message from the Board Chair!

The TBPG Board met on February 27<sup>th</sup> and worked on several initiatives designed to better serve our licensees and the people of Texas. Here are some highlights:

**Board Officer Election and Committee Chair Assignments** Following my appointment as Board Chair, the Board held an election to fill my previous position as Board Secretary. Congratulations to Member **Rusty Branch** who was elected Board Secretary.

Additionally, I recently announced the selection of Chairs for the Board Committees. Congratulations to the following Board Members on their recent Committee Chair appointments: **Danny Kingham**, Chair of the General Issues Committee **Dr. Bereket Derie**, Chair of the Application Review and Continuing Education Committee and **Steven Fleming**, Chair of the Compliance and Enforcement Committee

**Recognition Program** The Board voted to adopt final definitions and rules for the Emeritus and Distinguished Professional Geoscientist (P.G.) recognition programs.

The Emeritus program is an honorary, non-practicing retirement designation that recognizes the career service of Texas P.G.s who have met the highest standards of licensure and professional practice. This designation is available only to P.G.s who are retiring or have retired within the last three years from the public practice of geoscience in Texas.

The Distinguished P.G. program allows the Board to recognize the exemplary service of active Texas P.G.s who have consistently demonstrated the highest standards of licensure and professional geoscience practice and have distinguished themselves during their years of public practice as a Texas P.G.

Additional information on both programs will be available in the coming months following the final formal posting requirements in the *Texas Register*.

**Geophysics Licensing Exams** The Board is investigating the establishment of a working group to review the existing Texas Geophysics Exam currently used to evaluate applicants who want to be a licensed Professional Geophysicist. The Board also discussed promoting this exam to help increase the number of licensed geophysicists in Texas.

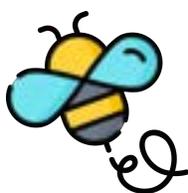
**Outreach and Awareness** The Board continues to discuss professional licensure with college and university geoscience students and geoscience department heads and faculty as well as at professional geological society and industry meetings. The Board, our Executive Director, and agency staff are dedicated to 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.

**A Closing Thought** Would you consider serving on the TBPG Board? Serving on our Board is a way for you to serve the people of Texas by participating in policy, ethics, and licensing decisions that affect geoscience practice statewide and the future of our profession. Applying is a simple process! For more information, visit the *Governor's Appointments* website (<https://gov.texas.gov/organization/appointments>).

On behalf of the Board, I thank all Texas P.G.s for serving the public through responsible practice.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Varhaug".



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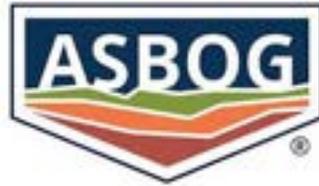
## Please Welcome Our Newest Board Member!



### **Tycom "Ty" Wright**

Governor Abbot recently appointed Mr. Tycom Wright to serve the remaining term of a recently vacated public board member position. Mr. Wright is from Bedford, TX and is a mediator and arbitrator at Wisdom Mediation and Consulting. He volunteers for the Tarrant County Juvenile Justice Department and is a proud member of the Texas Public Policy Foundation Liberty Leadership Council. Mr. Wright received a Bachelor of Arts in Paralegal Studies from Texas Wesleyan University. His term is set to expire on February 1, 2029.

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## **[ASBOG October 2026 Computer-Based Examinations](#)**

Now that the March 2026 ASBOG examinations have passed, TBPG is preparing for the Fall 2026 exams scheduled for October 1st and 2nd.

The deadline to apply for the October exams is September 1, 2026. We encourage candidates to apply early to ensure their applications include all required documentation before the deadline. Although we are accepting applications now, please note that we will not begin reviewing the October exam applications until March results have been released and distributed to examinees.

Currently, candidates can choose from 40+ testing locations across Texas. For a complete list of the current cities with testing sites, please visit Prometric by

**[CLICKING HERE](#)**

**[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.

ASBOG's Fundamentals of Geology Prep course is available. This is an immersive, on-demand, and fully online course, meticulously designed to empower candidates for the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology (FG) exam. For more information, please see ASBOG's website **[HERE!](#)**



# Compliance Comments

## Understanding TBPG's Continuing Education Audit Process

**By Gordon Magenheim, P.G.  
TBPG Compliance and Outreach Manager**

The Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists (TBPG) has an established P.G. licensee Continuing Education Program (CEP), the specific requirements of which were presented in our June 2025 Summer TBPQ Quarterly Newsletter (see link). A key component of our CEP is a requirement (Texas Administrative Code §851.32) for TBPG to conduct Continuing Education (CE) audits of a percentage of individual P.G. licenses. Rather than simply meeting a regulatory requirement, CE opportunities allow a Texas P.G. to improve their technical current level of proficiency with advancing technology and best practices within their respective areas of practice. CE audits provide TBPG with a snapshot of CE compliance and help control risks to the public and environment in regulated geoscience services.

Each month TBPG generates a list of licenses renewed in the preceding month. Five percent of these licenses are then randomly selected for an audit of their TBPG CE log and supporting CE documentation for their previous year of licensure. Any licensee who has been audited within the past three years is removed from the audit sample and additional licensees, if needed, are selected to meet the five percent requirement.

Once a listing of selected licenses is finalized, the licensees are notified by email requesting a response within 30 days after receipt of the email. If a response is not received, a second notification will be sent by U.S. certified mail requesting a response again in 30-days (total elapsed time of 60 days).

Failure to provide TBPG with the requested CE audit information will initiate disciplinary action related to one or more of the following TBPG TAC Rules:

- §851.32(c): Failure to obtain 15 Professional Development Hours (PDHs).
- §851.32(d): Failure to obtain one PDH in professional ethics.
- §851.32(k): Failure to submit a completed CEP Activity log.
- §851.32(p): Failure to satisfy CEP requirements.
- §851.101(d): Failure to promptly respond to Board inquiry.
- §851.104(a)(2): Falsely certified that CEP requirements had been met when renewing Texas P.G. license.

Please remember that it is the licensee's responsibility to ensure all required contact information is up to date on your TBPG online licensing record. As is always the case, questions regarding a CE audit are best accomplished by contacting TBPG compliance staff by email ([compliance@tbpg.texas.gov](mailto:compliance@tbpg.texas.gov)) or by phone (512-936-4408). Thank you for your assistance and the geoscience services you provide to Texas.



We are pleased to introduce our P.G. In The Spotlight:  
**Sydney Weitkunat, Texas P.G. # 15031**



**Ms. Weitkunat works as a Geoscientist at the Texas Water Development Board.**

**She received her Undergraduate degree from the University of Colorado Boulder and Graduate degree from The University of Louisiana Lafayette (B.S., Geology) (M.A., Geology).**

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

I was licensed in 2018. Having a PG license provides stakeholders and the public at least some confidence in my ability to carry out my job. The license is also important for accountability in maintaining growth as a geoscientist and allows for professional opportunities.

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

I was naturally analytically minded and was being pushed into engineering school at first. However, engineering didn't appeal to me, but art, history and chemistry did. Geology is kind of the perfect mix for all the sciences combined, and for folks with artistic minds who might want a decent chance at having a career someday. When I found out I would be able to hike for school and learn about why the rocks were where they were, I was SOLD. I was originally interested in some kind of public water service, but began my career with oil and gas for a brief stint, as I moved back to Houston after college. Thankfully, I eventually ended up right where I originally intended, working for the Texas Water Development Board mapping brackish groundwater.

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

It may sound a little cliched, but the people I work with are just some of the most down-to-earth (pun-intended), fun, intelligent, and interesting people. We all bring different perspectives to the table and that is what makes storytelling (which is half of geology) fun. That has always been the case, at any job I've had. Maybe I'm biased, but, I think we're neat.

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

For industries and governments to coordinate in order to preserve our water and land for the future.

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

Stay open to any and all opportunities to get your foot in the door, you can always learn something from the experience, and you never know where it may lead you. "An object in motion stays in motion". Also, learn at least one coding language.

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

In my spare time I like to explore nature, read, dance, practice taichi, bead, hang with friends, and try new recipes.

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

Protection of groundwater and re-uniting the hydrologic cycle (aka connecting surface data with subsurface data and understanding interaction with the life on the surface)



We are pleased to introduce our G.I.T. In The Spotlight:  
**Shelby Sckittone, Texas G.I.T. # 866**



**Ms. Sckittone works as a Natural Resource Specialist at the Bandera County River Authority & Groundwater District. She graduated from The University of Texas at San Antonio (B.A., Geology) and received her Texas G.I.T. Certification in 2025.**

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

A GIT certification was necessary for my career growth, and it shows others in the industry I am committed to acquiring knowledge, skills and experience in the field. My certification is important to me as it reminds me of my capabilities and dedication to geology.

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

I've always loved rocks and digging in the dirt so I figured I should make a living from it! I grew up ranching and always enjoyed working and exploring outside, so the field aspects of geology really appealed to me. What interests me most about geology is how it creates the foundation (pun intended) for so many adjacent spheres. You can trace several disciplines back to geology in some way.

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

My favorite part of working as a Geoscientist-in-training are the learning opportunities. I really enjoy learning, and it seems people established in the field are equally enthusiastic about teaching me topics from their industry, so it's been very enjoyable to forge new friendships and accumulate mentors.

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

My hopes for the geoscience industry lie in groundwater conservation. We see it preached everywhere; supply is ever diminishing and demand is ever increasing and it's truly alarming. My hopes for the future are for science & technology and policy & regulations to come to a sustainability agreement about what's needed and what's available, and how to supply water to all Texans, our livestock and our crops. Finding that solution is where I want to be.

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

In addition to being a certified rock nerd, I'm also a certified nature nerd as a Texas Master Naturalist. I spent the last five years as the Editor for the South Texas Geological Society, which is a great group of professional rock hounds. In my free time I enjoy reading, hiking, cycling, birding and hanging out with my fiancé, my dog and three cats.



**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!**



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

Establishment of the Emeritus and Distinguished Texas P.G. recognition programs was unanimously approved by the Board during the August 2025 Board meeting. TBPG staff then worked on the required process to establish definitions and rules for both programs. During the recent February 2026 Quarterly meeting, the Board voted to adopt final definitions and rules for both recognition programs which now requires an additional posting in the Texas Register. More information on both programs will be available in the coming months after the formal process is completed.

## **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!

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**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF THE NEW  
P.G.'S WHO RECEIVED LICENSES BETWEEN  
12/01/2025-03/31/2026!!!**



15786 GENE SCHRAGER PORTSMOUTH, NH  
15787 SEAN HUSSEY BROKEN ARROW, OK  
15788 DAVID SHOORE MIDLAND, TX  
15789 NICOLAS BOELHOUWER CALGARY, CANADA  
15790 SAVANNAH PURCELL GEORGETOWN, TX  
13038 EDGAR CONTRERAS HOUSTON, TX  
15791 STEVEN WALKINSHAW MADISON, MS  
15792 KAITLYN STACY ALLEN, TX  
15793 ADAM CAMP MAGNOLIA, TX  
15794 TESSA RAY-COZZENS SPRING, TX  
15795 MARK ANDREW LAWRENCE ABILENE, TX  
15796 ARTHUR WICKHAM PHOENIX, AZ  
15797 KELLY FRANK WESTMINSTER, CO  
15798 SIERRA JAMES LITTLETON, CO  
15799 NICOLE ROCKENTINE SALINE, MI  
12921 ROGER GRANTHAM WHITNEY, TX  
15800 KRISTY MILLIKEN PAPHOS, NE  
15801 HERBERT HAMLIN EUGENE, OR  
15802 JESSICA LYNCH CANYON LAKE, TX  
15803 KYLE KLAUSNER SAN ANGELO, TX  
15804 THOMAS BUERKERT THE WOODLANDS, TX  
13039 IBRAHIM ILHAN AUSTIN, TX  
15805 NORMAN MEEKS THOMPSONS STATION, TN  
15806 ASHLEY ROWE BRANDON, FL



**Showcasing a TBPG Geoscience  
Firm!**



Geoscience Firm registration in Texas began on September 1, 2003, following the establishment of the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists (TBPG) by the Texas Geoscience Practice Act in 2001 and became effective on September 1, 2006.

The act mandates that Firms such as corporations, partnerships, or limited liability companies that offer professional geoscience services (geology, geophysics, or soil science) to the public in Texas are required to register.

Results of a recently conducted TBPG online survey of active Texas registered Geoscience Firms indicate solid support of registration (93.2% favoring registration) with a large majority (86.4%) of Firms indicating that registration protects the public. Registered Firms participating in the survey indicate that the top four benefits of Firm registration are ensuring the ethical practice of geoscience, geoscience-related work is completed in a competent manner, and that Firm registration protects the public and the environment.

Additional information on Firm registration requirements is available at this TBPG website link: (<https://tbpg.state.tx.us/firm-registration-requirements/>).

Beginning with this TBPG Quarterly Newsletter, TBPG will periodically showcase a current registered Texas geoscience Firm. KJE ([www.kje-us.com](http://www.kje-us.com)) located in Cross Roads, Texas (Denton County), is our showcased Geoscience Firm for this newsletter and have provided the following responses to our Geoscience Firm interview:

#### Questions:

**1. When did your Firm become a TBPG Registered Geoscience Firm?**

November 1, 2025.

**2. How many employees does your Firm have? How many geoscientists?**

25 total, five (5) environmental, two (2) registered geoscientists.

### 3. Describe the geoscience work your Firm performs.

Phase II ESAs (boring logs, groundwater gradient, etc.), Aggregate Surveys, Water Availability Studies, Geological Reports.

### 4. What opportunities or changes in geoscience practice have you seen or do you anticipate? What have been (or may be) the impacts to Firms/PGs in Texas?

I think we could be one of the few professions that is largely unaffected by the AI wave. Our work tends to be very localized in its scope and, even though there is a ton of data available, the need for physical, “eyes on” assessment is irreplaceable.

### 5. Tell us more about your Firm’s PG in Responsible Charge?

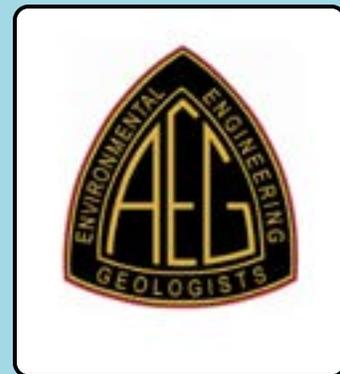
Travis Oaks received his PG in 2025. Prior to becoming an environmental professional and geoscientist, he attended Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton for his geology degree.

### 6. How has Geoscience Firm registration benefited your Firm?

Ever since we became a Geoscience Firm, we have been more visible to more established clientele, such as national level companies. It appears to bolster our clients’ trust. Additionally, we have been more of a competitor in any RFQs, RFPs, etc. It also gives our team a sense of pride to be part of a registered Firm.

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## Outreach Initiatives

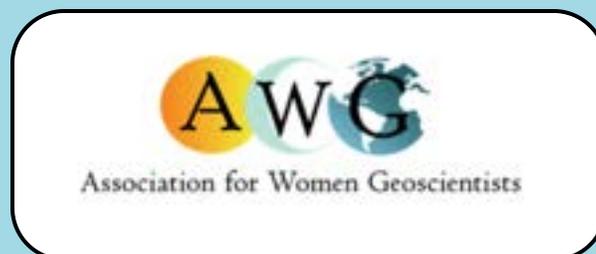


On March 7th, TBPG Board Secretary Rusty Branch, P.G., provided an update on TBPG activities to 24 attendees at a meeting of the Texas Chapter of the Association of Engineering Geologists held in Houston, Texas. Member Branch discussed ongoing programs for recognizing Texas P.G.s as well as discussing TBPG's ongoing work with the Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG) in assessing the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology exam passing rate in Texas. Board Member Branch also participated in a presentation on March 13th to 16 geoscience students attending a Tarleton State University Geological Society meeting in Stephenville, Texas that included information on TBPG's Geoscientist-in-Training certification process.



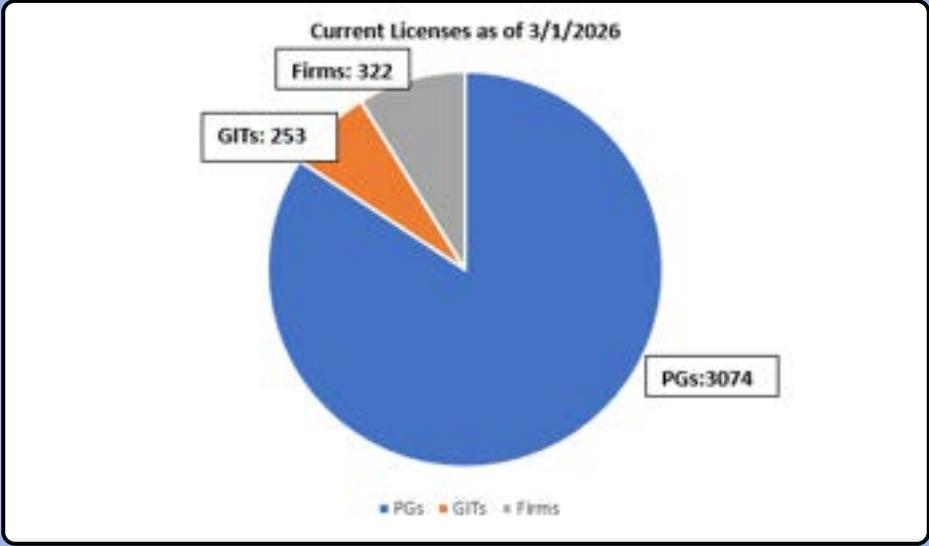
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On January 27th, TBPG Compliance and Outreach Manager Gordon Magenheim, P.G., provided a remote professional ethics presentation to 11 geoscience professional members of the Association of Women Geoscientists (AWG) Lone Star Chapter. The AWG is a global organization devoted to enhancing the quality and level of participation of women in geosciences. Mr. Magenheim also participated remotely in TCEQ's Quarterly P.G. Workgroup meeting on March 10th where he discussed TBPG's efforts related to ongoing agency rule changes.



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**CURRENT LICENSES AS OF 3/1/2026**



Total Licenses Managed: 4568 (Current and Eligible to renew)

Status	PGs	GITs	Firms
Current	3074	253	322
Expired	656	223	40



**HELLO SPRING!!**  
**A message from the TBPB Staff:**

**Wishing all our licensees and colleagues a bright and refreshing Spring season! As the days grow longer and everything begins to bloom, we hope you find time to enjoy the warmer weather and recharge for the months ahead. May your Spring be productive, balanced, and full of steady ground and clear horizons.**

**A quick friendly reminder: Spring is a great time to double-check that your contact information and renewal status are up to date as we move further into the year.**

# Upcoming Quarterly TBPG Meetings

Austin, Texas

## May 7, 2026

Application Review and Continuing Education Committee  
Financial Review Committee  
Compliance and Enforcement Committee  
General Issues Committee

## May 8, 2026

TBPG Board Meeting

\*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.

## 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	512-936-4410 GORDON.MAGENHEIM@TBPG.TEXAS.GOV
FINANCE	Accounts Payable, Receivables, Purchasing, ITVs	512-936-4404 ntolpeeva@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



The Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists | 1801 Congress Avenue Suite 7.800 George H. W. Bush building  
| Austin, TX 78701 US

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