The Mount Hood Highway (US 26) is a primary transportation corridor between the Portland Metropolitan Area and Central Oregon. The highway travels through the Mount Hood National Forest and drivers have the opportunity to view Mount Hood and the surrounding forest from multiple scenic viewpoints. Recreational activities within the forest are accessed from the highway throughout the year, including skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling in the winter and hiking, biking and camping in the summer.

The highway between MP 49.20 and MP 57.45 is located in steep mountainous terrain. This section has experienced a higher than average crash frequency, especially under winter-time driving conditions, as compared to other rural highways. From 2003-2013, 98 crashes occurred between MP 49.20 – 51.90 and resulted in 88 injuries and 4 fatalities. A majority of the crashes were run-off-the-road and cross-over accidents. Existing rock slopes in this section are up to 160 feet high and the catchment areas at the base of the slopes are not designed to today’s standards. Rock blocks frequently fall onto the travel lanes of the highway.

The FFO: US 26 MP 49.20 – MP 57.45 Sec. Project will improve safety by reducing severe crossover crashes that lead to fatalities and serious injuries. Project elements include the installation of a median barrier between the eastbound and westbound travel lanes, extension of downhill passing lanes by approximately 1,400 feet, and cutting back rock slopes to a more stable geometry which includes providing adequate catchment areas. Pavement throughout the project will be rehabilitated with a grind and inlay.

The presenters will discuss the multi-discipline coordination required to address project challenges and develop unique solutions. Geotechnical project design elements will be discussed in detail. A summary of construction activities during the first and second seasons and planned work for the third construction season will then be presented.
Bio: Stephen Hay, RG, CEG

Stephen is an Engineering Geologist with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), Region 1 Geo/Environmental Unit. He has over 20 years of experience in geotechnical project development, design, and construction of highway infrastructure and specializes in slope hazard mitigation which includes emergency response to rockfall, debris flow, and landslide events impacting the highway system. He received BS degrees in Geology and Geography from Portland State University and is licensed as a Registered Geologist and Certified Engineering Geologist in Oregon and as a Licensed Geologist and Licensed Engineering Geologist in Washington. Mr. Hay is involved in engineering geology professional organizations and currently serves as Chair Elect for the Oregon Section of the Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists (AEG).

Bio: Benjamin A. George, PE, RG, CEG

Ben is an Associate Engineer at Cornforth Consultants, Inc., with over 12 years of engineering geology and geotechnical engineering experience with an emphasis on rock slope stability and rockfall hazards working with federal and state transportation departments; local, state, and federal government agencies; and public utility companies. His experience includes development of mitigation measures for major rockfall and landslide hazards, geologic site reconnaissance, geotechnical and groundwater investigations, soil and rock material sources, mine tailing management, and construction observation. He is the senior lead of the CCI rope access team with extensive experience conducting on-slope work efforts related to reconnaissance, investigation and observation of rock slope stability projects. He received a BS and MS degree in Geology and Geological Engineering from the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado. Mr. George is a Professional Engineer, a Registered/Professional Geologist and a Certified Engineering Geologist.

HUESKER, Inc. will be hosting the beverages for January 6th Social Hour!

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“Keen observation is at least as necessary as penetrating analysis”
Karl Terzaghi
**Message from the Chair**

Happy New Year from the Oregon Section of AEG!

Thanks to everyone who came out for our December meeting at the Old Market Pub! We had a great turnout and we were pleased to have George Freitag present his case study summary of 25 years of rockfall along South River Road in Salem. Special thanks to Manuel Castaneda and PLI Systems for their sponsorship of the beverages at the December meeting! As with all of our sponsors and newsletter advertisers, we’re grateful for PLI’s substantial and ongoing support of our Section. For those of you who missed the meeting, we presented past-Chair (2013-2014) Darren Beckstrand with a special award for his years of outstanding leadership on the Oregon Section Board. The camaraderie, hosted beverages, and excellent presentation made for a fantastic final meeting of 2015!

As I mentioned during my announcements at the December meeting, the national AEG Board of Directors (BOD) is changing in 2016 to a new model where Regional Directors (as opposed to Section Chairs) represent larger regions, creating a smaller national BOD. Our Region will include Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska, and Hawaii. While there are many advantages to the new BOD model, one possible consequence of the regionalized representation is the potential for “dilution” of the voice of some mid-sized (yet strong) chapters in a region dominated by a larger chapter. The Oregon Section (the future “Oregon Chapter”) has a strong history of participation and leadership on the national BOD and we’d all like to make sure that this representation continues. Ideal candidates for the 3-year-term Regional Director would be Oregon Chapter members with past experience with AEG at the national level, such as past Section Chairs or national-level committee members. If you have suggestions of a great candidate to nominate for this role (or especially if you’d like to volunteer yourself), please don’t hesitate to approach me or another Board member.

On Wednesday, January 6th we will have our annual Joint Meeting with the ASCE Geotechnical Group. As noted earlier in the newsletter, the January presentation “Mount Hood Highway (US 26) Safety & Preservation Project” will be delivered by Stephen Hay, CEG (Oregon Section Chair Elect) and Ben George, PE, CEG. Particularly for those of us who have observed phases of construction while travelling up and down this section of roadway, it will be exciting to learn more about the technical aspects of this project. As an added bonus for this event, we’re pleased to have HUESKER, Inc. hosting the beverages! This year is ASCE’s turn to host, so the meeting will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Lake Oswego. Please note the rapidly approaching meeting date and RSVP right away.

See you in 2016,

Adam Reese, CEG
Oregon AEG Section Chair

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**Thank You PLI for Hosting the December Meeting Beverages!**

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Winter Courses at PSU

- G410/510, Tectonic Geomorphology, Adam Booth, 4 credits, TTh, 16:00-17:05 and Lab F 14:00-16:00
- G410/510, Earthquake Geology, Ashley Streig, 4 credits, MW 13:00-13:55, and Lab F, 12:00-13:35
- G424/524, GIS for the Natural Sciences, David Percy, 4 credits, TTh, 14:00-15:05 and Labs either: TTh 12:00-13:50 or TTh 10-11:50
- G448/548, Chemical Hydrogeology, Ben Perkins, 4 credits, TTh 16:40-17:50 and Lab Th 18:00-19:30

Classes start January 4 and end in mid-March
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