

JOINING A PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

Greg Page, President TBAEP

I recently found some time to reflect on a TBAEP lead article from [December 2006](#) and wanted to share it and summarize other information available on the web with FAEP members and contacts. In a profession where time is usually always accounted for, we are often too busy to join another group. The thought of going to another meeting, or networking with other professionals can seem like just too much work. Professional associations like FAEP and your local chapter are often a forgotten and misunderstood career development tool.

Here are only some of the many benefits of joining a professional group:

- Expand your professional network. Our contacts become stale and limiting if we have a narrow circle of workers.
- Learn about industry trends. Leaders from industry present and discuss current industry topics.
- Increase other's awareness of your company or organization.
- Discover what other companies are doing.

Here are some strategies to maximize your FAEP and local chapter member-ships. Some might seem obvious but are rarely practiced:

1. Use and read the information gleaned from the newsletters. Find out more about:

- Up-to-date issues and developments in your field. If you are interviewing, this can be invaluable information!
- Who the "movers and shakers" are in your field.
- Companies--or individuals--with whom you would like to work.
- Information about upcoming conferences and professional development opportunities.

2. Have a strategy for attending the meeting. If you are shy, try to make this a time to go to a meeting with a fellow co-worker. Scheduling meetings ahead of time can assist in working busy work and personal schedules around.

3. Renew/Update your membership even if you are not in job-search mode. This is your insurance policy.

4. Get involved in the association at a deeper level. Why not be part of a committee? For instance your local chapter has several committees and many initiatives to continue providing a high level of service to the organization's members.

5. Write an article if you have feedback and/or feel you have some expertise. This catapults you into the role of expert. FAEP is always looking for contributions to the Beacon.

6. Follow up with your contacts and keep in touch to renew your relationships. Professional memberships will always keep you fresh and ahead of the pack.

Through professional associations like FAEP and you local chapter, you will have an opportunity to learn and share. And although our work environment might be less than desired in these trying times, it is through professional groups that you hear about inside opportunities.

April 2010



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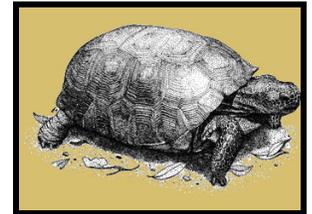
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Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

Event	Date	Place
<u>Waste-to-Fuels Conference</u>	April 18-20	Jacksonville
<u>NAEP 2010 Annual Conference</u>	April 27-30	Atlanta, Georgia
<u>Florida Groundwater Association Annual Convention</u>	May 6-8	Orlando
<u>NEFAEP Spring Conference</u>	May 13	Jacksonville, Florida
<u>2010 National Environmental Partnership Summit</u>	May 25-27	Orlando
<u>40th Spring Symposium: Sustaining Forests, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in a Changing World</u>	June 2-3	Gainesville
<u>Florida Association for Water Quality Control Conference</u>	June 9-11	Naples
<u>Florida Stormwater Association Conference</u>	June 9-11	Sanibel Island
<u>The Greater Everglades: Ecosystem Restoration</u>	July 12-16	Naples
<u>FL Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Assoc.</u>	July 17-21	Kissimmee
<u>FL Chamber of Commerce Environmental Permitting Summer School</u>	July 21-23	Marco Island
<u>FL Local Environmental Resource Agencies Conference</u>	July 28-30	Sarasota
<u>FL Air & Waste Management Association Conference</u>	Oct 4-6	Crystal River
<u>Florida Remediation Conference</u>	Oct. 14-15	Kissimmee
<u>Florida Brownfields Association Conference</u>	Nov. 14-17	Jacksonville

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A Traveler's Notes

India

Preface: A fellow Environmental Professional and Hydrologist is working in Saudi Arabia to characterize the hydrogeology for the purpose of long-term storage and recovery of drinking water. Mike Geddis is an adventurer and while he is in the Middle East he is visiting many of the surrounding countries. His emails home are always informative and give the reader a view of different cultures through the lens of a true Environmental Professional. Enjoy...

Well folks, India was great, but a bit disappointing in one way. It is true what "they" say: You can always tell you are in India by the smell. 2 billion people, and more than 70% of them burn a cow-dung fire 3 times a day to cook their food. Every morning, no matter where, the air is filled with smoke, until the differential solar heating starts moving the air around. Even close to the beach. They burn trash everywhere, all the time, because they don't have very effective municipal garbage pick-up, let alone any significant land fill system. They burn it with leaves, plastic, anything that will burn, or not burn, and then they pick-out the reusable incombustible items.

How can you cap and trade that CO₂? I used to think that this level of re-use helped the environment, now I think it does not. No wonder the EPA operating paradigm shifted from groundwater contamination (source remediation and plume remediation) to air quality and groundwater pollution source containment only. At least you can get out of the way of a groundwater plume, but you can't hide from the air, not even in a 5 star hotel!

At the most fundamental level, there is a complete lack of any environmental ethic, and they are not teaching it to their children, as is evidenced by the relatively thick layer of trash covering every square meter of unused land surface. I watched every Indian national I encountered litter at some point. Every single one. From drivers to tour guides, to shop owners, to children, to beach boys. If they were finished with anything, it simply left their hand, and landed on the ground.

I guess, to be fair, the other thing I wanted to say is ... basically there are fundamentally 2 problems in India:

1) Their day-to-day life is far too difficult to worry about something as insignificant (for them) as littering. You need wealth to implement a national environmental ethic, and they simply don't have it.

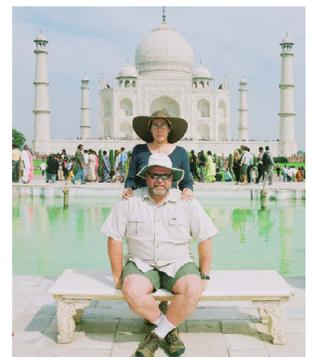
2) Roughly speaking, there are 10 times as many people in India, as there are in the US, and they live on one-third of the space. This corresponds to a population density that is almost 30 times greater than ours.

That's a lot of people, and all infrastructure resources are spent on water distribution, roads, and electricity, in that order. More than ever I realize how good we have it in America, and how lucky we are that our tax system is so effective, and our corruption is so (relatively speaking) minimal.

Anyhow, attached is our favorite picture, of a tear drop on the cheek of time.

Warm regards,

Mike & Margo Geddis



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Tampa Bay Association of Environmental Professionals Student Chapters

TBAEP recently held their annual student chapter competition. This competition requires students to write a paper answering questions that are derived from the NAEP Annual Conference topic. Entries were limited to 200-400 words and were evaluated by the TBAEP Board of Directors. The winner of this year's competition is **Jacqueline Ayala** from Eckerd College. Jacquie has won an all-expenses paid trip to the NAEP conference in Atlanta. NAEP, FAEP & TBAEP all share the expenses for this award.



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NAEP News from Paul Looney

This column is expected to be a fairly regular contribution to the Florida Beacon. As a lot of things have been recently in NAEP, this column has been a long time in coming to fruition. For many of you, the fact that FAEP has representation on the Board of Directors is news to you. What I want to accomplish with this regular contribution is:

- Bring the FAEP member a sense of what NAEP is;
- Provide the FAEP member with an understanding of what benefit NAEP provides to the Environmental Professions in general;
- Keep the FAEP membership up to date on the latest NAEP Board actions and what they mean to you;
- Provide a means for members to ask me questions about NAEP or FAEP; and
- Fulfill my obligation to the FAEP members as their representative on the NAEP Board of Directors.

Since I started to represent FAEP on the Board of Directors in 2004, I have been mostly caught up in understanding how NAEP actually runs and what it is that it actually does for the Environmental Professions. I think I have a handle on things now, as Vice President of NAEP. Thanks to you I have been able to be the first Chapter Representative to reach the Executive Committee of NAEP.

When I got here I was the recently elected President of FAEP. I discovered that FAEP had been out of touch with NAEP for several years and I felt that it was important for me to reestablish the relationship. After all, our web site claims that we are “*An Affiliate of the National Association of Environmental Professionals.*” Without good representation we were losing the value of that affiliation. There were things being decided that potentially affected our operations and we had no idea what they were.

Rather than a blow-by-blow description of how I became involved in NAEP, I am going to bring up the most recent activity that will have an effect on FAEP. By the time you read this, the NAEP will have unveiled the final version of the most recent **Affiliation Agreement** to the 19 Chapters that make up NAEP. I anticipate that you will have also been exposed to the White paper – The Spirit of the Affiliation Agreement. Both of those documents have been years in the making and have included the effort of many NAEP members in crafting the documents.

The Affiliation Agreement replaces a five-year old document that FAEP signed in 2005 when we reestablished formal relations with NAEP. The NAEP created the Chapter Committee, headed by John Irving (RMAEP) in 2006. In 2007, California AEP, realizing the importance of Chapters to the future of NAEP, and the importance of NAEP to the continued success of the Chapters, contributed \$10,000 to hold a summit of the Chapters in California. They supplied lodging and food for all who could attend. At that time FAEP was the second largest Chapter but we had the most NAEP members. We had (and still retain) two representatives on the NAEP Board based on our number of FAEP/NAEP members. Bruce Hasbrouck attended the summit. He has been an important part of crafting and drafting this final document.

The Affiliation Agreement formalizes the relationship between NAEP and FAEP. It assigns specific responsibilities to both parties for financial and membership issues. It also establishes some of the NAEP benefits being provided to the Chapters and allows for those benefits to expand as NAEP can develop and implement them. The agreement sets goals for the FAEP. The agreement looks for a 25% minimum percentage of NAEP members in each Chapter by the end of the five-year agreement. It also, for the first time in NAEP history, quantifies the actual cost of Chapter support to NAEP and requests each chapter to help pay for that support. These goals and the costs are probably the largest source of concern for the Chapters. They are actually closely related.

First, the goals. Many of the original Chapters adopted by-laws that required a minimum number of NAEP members. At one time NAEP required all members of a Chapter to also be NAEP members. By 1990 that requirement changed and eventually slipped to be a minimum of 10 to start a Chapter and no minimum number of NAEP members required. We have seen a fast drop in NAEP membership since that time. With the loss of

members came increases in dues and the cycle of loss and dues continued. Since 2000, dues have remained relatively steady, but membership in NAEP has continued to drop. NAEP can no longer provide monetary support to the Chapters, although it is what we have done for many years.

Our current Managing Director, Bower Management Services, has turned around out membership trend and those of you who are NAEP members, have seen a definite increase in benefit to you through better communication and a web site that actually works. Members can renew and new members can join on line. The largest strength of a State Chapter or a local Chapter is the direct affiliation with NAEP. I was given a great analogy by Bruce Hasbrouck as I was preparing this article...The Pinellas Audubon Society has much more immediate respect than The Pinellas Bird Watchers Society. What provides that respect? Affiliation with a National organization.

What the Affiliation Agreement is trying to do is to first provide NAEP with affiliates so that we can truly represent everyone who has committed to joining some aspect of this association of professionals. The reciprocal will also be true for the Chapters. By officially affiliating with NAEP, the FAEP can truthfully claim to represent (at this point) approximately 5,000 professionals. When it comes to organizational strength, our respect will come from being united.

Now the cost. I do not know the exact numbers of NAEP members in Florida at this time. I know that at our last tally we still had more than 151. That has provided FAEP two votes on the NAEP Board of Directors. This represents the largest number of NAEP members of any Chapter. What this also points out, however, is that there are approximately 550 people in Florida that have not joined NAEP.

The idea behind setting up Affiliation Agreements was to provide a forum for the Chapters to become and remain aware of environmental issues of national importance, to become more closely allied with NAEP, and to reciprocally provide each association with the numerical significance of a national organization.

NAEP is unlike many professional organizations, we recognize that there are going to be members who are only interested or capable of providing support to local issues. Thus we have made a means for Chapter-only members to exist. Many professional organizations require national membership for a full fee and a fraction of additional funds go to a generalized regional chapter if you want to join. We are looking at the idea of membership from a completely different angle.

Before this, local only members were not receiving anything, because they were not contributing anything to NAEP. The Chapters, however, were receiving benefits in the form of NAEP handling the membership renewals for NAEP/FAEP members (and even down to the local chapter levels for FAEP). As this affiliation develops I expect that the chapters will see value for affiliation and the local-only members will see the value of becoming NAEP members.

As with anything, members get out of NAEP (and FAEP) what they put into the Association. I would like to call on each of you to find a few hours of time to volunteer to the NAEP or FAEP. Provide the rest of us with the expertise that only you have. Offer to write an article for the Beacon, for the E-News, for the Environmental Practice Journal. Come up with new and exciting ideas for exposing us to more and more of the multidisciplinary aspects of this most exciting life style. Volunteer your time to help run your local chapter. Do something that will return to the Association some of what you are as a professional.

I welcome any questions and issues concerning NAEP. Please write to me in care of FAEP (info@faep-fl.org) and I will do my best to be sure that FAEP is well represented and well informed. This article can also be considered as a source of comments and responses, similar to a "letters to the editor" forum, I want to hear what you all have to say.

Thanks for allowing me to be your representative.

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PO Box 7416
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