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EARTH: Creationism Creeps into Mainstream Geology

Alexandria, VA – In almost every way, the “Garden of the Gods at Colorado Springs” excursion at the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America (GSA) last year was a normal — even enjoyable — field trip. Standard geologic terminology was used in the accompanying field trip guide and the guides relied on orthodox geologic thinking to explain geologic features. But in reality, the trip was anything but a normal geology field trip.

Instead, as EARTH explores in its July feature “Creationism Creeps into Mainstream Geology,” the field trip was an example of a new strategy from creationists to interject their ideas into mainstream geology: Creationists lead field trips and present posters and talks at scientific meetings. They avoid overtly stating anything truly contrary to mainstream science. And when the meeting is over, the creationist participants go home and proudly proclaim that mainstream science has accepted their ideas.

It’s a crafty way of giving credence to creationism, but the question mainstream geologists wrestle with is whether there is anything that the conveners of meetings and field trips can or should do to prevent this.

Read what one scientist suggests should be done, and read other stories on topics such as what water officials are doing to try to get ahead of a declining snowpack in the West, how geophysical tools are helping remediation managers at Hanford and other nuclear cleanup sites, and why disasters such as the Japan earthquake and tsunami affect the economies of rich or poor countries disproportionately in the July issue. And don’t miss the story about the middle school student who uncovered an international mineral scandal.

These stories and many more can be found in the July issue of EARTH, now available digitally (<http://www.earthmagazine.org/digital>) or in print on your local newsstands.

For further information on the July featured article, go to <http://www.earthmagazine.org/earth/article/456-7db-6-a> .

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