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## Earth Science Week Kicks Off with International EarthCache Day

Alexandria, VA – Earth Science Week 2011 will kick-off with the fifth annual International EarthCache Day on Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup>. The public is invited to join the Geological Society of America (GSA), organizer of the global EarthCache program, and the American Geological Institute (AGI), Earth Science Week coordinators, in exploring this exciting and educational earth science experience.

International EarthCache Day is a time when EarthCachers around the globe organize small gatherings where people can learn something about the Earth. An EarthCache is a place that people locate with a GPS device while participating in a “treasure hunt” called geocaching.

“The treasure you find at an EarthCache is a lesson about the Earth itself,” says EarthCaching Program Director Gary Lewis of GSA, a longtime Earth Science Week partner. “Each EarthCache site will teach you something about the science of our dynamic planet - you actually have to do a task to prove that you have been observing and learning from your EarthCache visit.”

EarthCache events are being held around the world this October 9<sup>th</sup>. To view the locations for EarthCaching events, go to <http://www.earthcache.org/>.

In 2004 Lewis developed the world’s first EarthCache on an Australian headland, which features geologic evidence of an ancient ice age. Since that time, more than 11,200 EarthCaches have been established by geocachers around the globe, and some 1,250,000 people have visited the sites. More EarthCaches are added daily.

As Earth Science Week approaches, stay tuned for more details on the international gathering of EarthCachers scheduled to take place in September 2012 in Portland, Maine. For more information, contact Lewis, Senior Director of GSA Education and Outreach, at 720-201-8132.

Earth Science Week is an annual event sponsored by AGI to expand public understanding and appreciation for the earth sciences and to encourage stewardship of the Earth. This year’s Earth Science Week will be October 9-15. To learn more about Earth Science Week, visit <http://www.earthsciweek.org>.

The American Geological Institute is a nonprofit federation of 50 geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 120,000 geologists, geophysicists and other earth scientists. Founded in 1948, AGI provides information services to geoscientists, serves as a voice of shared interests in the profession, plays a major role in strengthening geoscience education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role the geosciences play in society's use of resources, resiliency to natural hazards, and interaction with the environment.

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