



4220 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22302-1502
703-379-2480;
Fax: 703-379-7563
www.agiweb.org

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Contact: Geoff Camphire
gac@agiweb.org

Earth Science Week Kicks Off with International EarthCache Day, Washington, D.C.

Alexandria, VA – Earth Science Week 2006 will begin with the first International EarthCache Day from 1 to 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 8, 2006, on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The public is invited to join the EarthCache team from the Geological Society of America, in association with Groundspeak Inc., the American Geological Institute, and the National Park Service, in celebrating the exciting educational geocaching tool of EarthCaching at this event on the grounds northwest of the Washington Monument.

This event will give participants an opportunity to see how EarthCaches are developed and allow them to speak to EarthCaching officials about ideas for potential EarthCaches. Participants also can learn about the EarthCache Masters pin program and receive their own white EarthCache Masters pin. Additional EarthCache events are being held on the same day in other states and countries. To view the locations for this and other EarthCaching events, please go to <http://www.earthcache.org/>. Currently more than 550 EarthCaches are located in 27 countries, and the number is growing rapidly.

Earth Science Week is an annual event sponsored by the American Geological Institute to expand the public understanding and appreciation for the earth sciences and to encourage stewardship of the Earth. This year's Earth Science Week will be October 8-14. To learn more about Earth Science Week and this event please visit <http://www.earthsciweek.org/>.

As well as meeting the EarthCache and Earth Science Week teams, Greg Forbes, the Severe Weather Expert of The Weather Channel will speak on the effects of weather on the Washington Monument and other local edifices. Participants will learn about the various stones that make up the nation's monuments.

Speakers will discuss how EarthCaches can be developed. Participants will be encouraged to engage in hands-on activities as well as sharing ideas and stories about their geocaching experiences. Travel bugs and geocoins may be exchanged with other participants. Afterward, participants are encouraged to try their hands at finding and logging geocaches and waymarks in the close vicinity.

The American Geological Institute is a nonprofit federation of 44 scientific and professional associations that represent 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 our profession, plays a major role in strengthening geoscience education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role the geosciences play in mankind's use of resources and interaction with the environment. More information about AGI can be found at <http://www.agiweb.org>. The Institute also provides a public-outreach web site, <http://www.earthscienceworld.org>.

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