

Commentary

GSA CONNECTED COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

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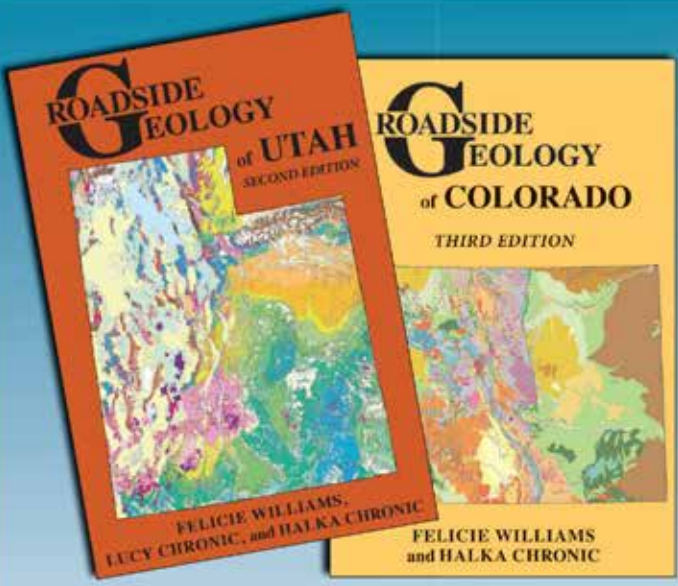
I am sure that most of you have noticed that GSA has been shifting its communications more and more to the new GSA Connected Community in the last year or so. Those of you who serve on various GSA committees should already have noticed this transition, which was approved by Council and is being implemented by GSA staff.

GSA values your membership and appreciates every member's commitment and investment of resources in the Society, and we feel that the Connected Community will ultimately lead to more efficient and effective communication between the Society and our members as well as member-to-member discussions and exchanges. Joining the GSA Connected Community is actually quite easy, since all members already have a profile that has been created from the member database.

Once you have logged in, you can complete and customize your profile by adding any other relevant personal or professional information that you think is appropriate, and adding a photo of yourself. I personally like to see colleagues in the field or in their labs, rather than posing for a "mug shot," but, of course, the choice is yours! A variety of security settings are in place so that you can customize access to each part of your profile information and decide how it

should be used. The Connected Community is ideal for conducting discussions and utilizes a hybrid of listserv and threaded-discussion-forum technology. Such discussions are the primary communications vehicle for groups inside the Connected Community. If you belong to one or more GSA Divisions, you will be subscribed to the respective Division community discussion group so you can keep up with your colleagues in that discipline. Any member can belong to the Open Forum (all-GSA) community discussion; members without a Division affiliation will be subscribed to the Open Forum. Members will automatically receive a "daily digest" e-mail for each community they belong to, highlighting discussion posts on days when there is activity.

Just over 10% of the membership has joined the Connected Community so far. We are confident that many more of you will recognize the advantages of this new communications tool if you have a chance to try it, so the Society has decided to fully launch the GSA Connected Community by enrolling all members in the near future. All members who do not currently belong to the GSA Connected Community will receive an e-mail to inform them that they have been enrolled. They will also receive instructions on how to log in and change their settings if they don't wish to receive e-mails or would like to get them in "real time" rather than as a daily digest. Of course, anyone who is automatically enrolled can opt out at any time—the directions for unsubscribing will be prominently displayed. But I strongly encourage all of you to give it a try—as a long-time member of GSA (since 1968) and as a member of GSA Council, I have found the GSA Connected Community to be a valuable new resource for members, and I think you will as well.



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