

News Release

Release Date	Contact	Phone	Email
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David Perlman Receives 2004 John Wesley Powell Award

Chip Groat, Director of the U.S. Geological Survey, has selected David Perlman, senior science writer and editor for the San Francisco Chronicle, as a recipient of the 2004 John Wesley Powell Award.

This award, named after the distinguished scientist, explorer and second director of USGS, recognizes an individual whose outstanding achievements have made significant contributions to and advanced understanding of the USGS mission.

“You have the ability to synthesize complex science, identify the essence and communicate it to the public in a highly readable way,” Groat said in his letter of congratulations.

Perlman has been covering USGS science, with particular interest in the newsworthy activities of scientists in the Menlo Park facility. USGS is celebrating the 125th anniversary of its creation as an agency and the 50th anniversary of the Menlo Park Science Center this year. Perlman’s recent topics have ranged from discoveries of the Mars Rover to the giant sequoia redwoods to volcanoes around the Pacific Rim and extensive coverage of earthquake science, including the magnitude 6.5 earthquake near San Simeon in December of last year.

In addition to covering USGS science, Perlman has played a leadership role in advancing science journalism on a national level, and has been widely recognized by his peers and the scientific community for excellence in science reporting. He is a past president of the National Association of Science Writers and the Council for Advancement of Science Writing, and has shared his award-winning techniques with journalism students and working journalists both nationally and internationally. In his honor, a number of scientific institutions, including the American Geophysical Union, have created science journalism awards in his name.

The John Wesley Powell award will be presented to David Perlman at an honor awards ceremony at USGS headquarters in Reston, Virginia, on October 19. Scientists from Menlo Park will honor David Perlman during a 50th anniversary social event in September.

The USGS serves the nation by providing reliable scientific information to describe and understand the Earth; minimize loss of life and property from natural disasters; manage water, biological, energy, and mineral resources; and enhance and protect our quality of life.

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