



GSA Field Guide 1

Colorado and Adjacent Areas

Edited by
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Alan P. Lester, and
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Cover: Andrew's Peak in southwestern Rocky Mountain National Park. Photo by Diane C. Lorenz

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Preface

This inaugural volume of the Geological Society of America (GSA) Field Guide series represents an entirely new publication venue for the Society, one that emphasizes the “field roots” of the earth sciences profession. The timing of this new series seems both appropriate and ironic, considering that geology at the close of the twentieth century is immersed in a level of technology that has drawn attention away from its field-oriented beginnings. In an era when universities are altering their traditional field-based curricula in favor of more marketable (computer-based) skills, it seems that going to the field and observing has become a thing of the past. In contrast, we feel that a broad-based field perspective is crucial to understanding most geological problems. Field observations provide for the germination of new ideas and are, ultimately, their testing ground.

The Reverend John Walker, who taught the first systematic course in geology at the University of Edinburgh (1781–1803), had this to say to his students: “The way to knowledge of natural history is to go to the fields, the mountains, the oceans, and observe, collect, identify, experiment, and study.” Two hundred years later, there is still much to be said for his approach. It is in this spirit that GSA has created this Field Guide series.

The new Field Guide series will initially showcase field excursions associated with national meetings of the Society, maintaining the high standards of excellence for which other GSA publications are known. The series may be expanded in the near future to showcase selected field trips from sectional meetings as well as special field excursions. Moreover, as professional earth scientists, we hold a responsibility to promote public outreach and education, to address those geological issues relevant to the needs of society, and to disseminate information about the Earth in formats that do the greatest good for the greatest number. Therefore, it is hoped that the Field Guide series will not only serve as a valuable resource for our profession, but also serve as a venue for public education and outreach.

As we prepare to slide into the year 2000, we dedicate this first Field Guide volume to those field-based earth scientists of the twentieth century who walked the outcrops and paid their dues in the field.

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Note

This volume was compiled from field trips offered as part of the 1999 Geological Society of America Annual Meeting in Denver. The following field trips could not be included in this volume because of unusually tight publication deadlines.

Cretaceous hydrocarbon plays—southern Colorado
P. R. Krutak

Geological reconnaissance of Dinosaur Ridge and vicinity
N. Cygan, B. Rall, T. Caneer, and B. Reynolds

Kimberlites of the Colorado-Wyoming state line district
P. Modreski and T. Michalski

Geology tour of Denver buildings and monuments
J. Murphy

Tour of the U.S. Geological Survey mapping and geologic facilities,
Denver Federal Center
P. Modreski and J. Kerski

Soil-geomorphic relationships near Rocky Flats, Boulder and Golden, Colorado,
with a stop at the pre-Fountain Formation of Wahlstrom
P. Birkeland, R. Shroba, and Penny Patterson

South Park conjunctive use project: A combined look at geology and hydrology in
the South Park Basin, Colorado
M. F. McHugh, J. Jehn, and H. Eastman

Geology and paleontology of the gold belt back-country byway: Florissant Fossil
Beds and Garden Park fossil area
H. Meyer, T. W. Henry, D. Grenard, and E. Evanoff