



POST OFFICE BOX 1636, TALLAHASSEE, FL 32302

THE SOUTHEASTERN GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY FIELD TRIP ANNOUNCEMENT  
October 13-15, 2016

**Cote Blanche Island, Salt Dome Mine (Underground), St. Mary  
Parish, Louisiana:  
Salt Diapirism and Geology of the Louann Salt (Jurassic)  
Operated By Compass Minerals**

The Southeastern Geological Society will be hosting a field trip to examine the spectacular subsurface geology of the Cote Blanche Island Salt Dome Mine, located south of Lafayette and Baton Rouge, on the Louisiana coast. Here, several “islands” (including nearby Avery Island, home of the world famous Tabasco Pepper Sauce Factory) have emerged from the coastal marsh as a result of the intrusion of subsurface salt diapirs. The salt is the Jurassic Louann Salt, a massive evaporite formation in the western Gulf, deposited in the young Gulf of Mexico Basin during the initial rifting phase of the breakup of the Pangaeon supercontinent. Later burial of the salt by thick Mesozoic and Cenozoic sediments mobilized the salt, forming a great variety of intrusive salt structures, especially the petroleum-trapping salt domes. More than 500 salt domes are known from the northern Gulf Coast. Some of the coastal and inland domes that nearly reached the surface have been mined for salt.

Participants will collect beautiful, large halite crystals, sylvite, and other minerals in the mine. The Louann Salt is nowhere exposed in outcrop. Cote Blanche Salt Dome has been mined since the 1960's, but has only rarely been accessible to geologists. This is indeed an exceptionally unique field opportunity for SEGS members! Attached to this registration is a Cote Blanche Fact Sheet from Compass Minerals, which includes a site map.

*This trip is available to SEGS members only, current with 2016 dues (\$35.00).* In addition, the Field trip fee is \$35.00, and covers a hardcopy field guide and box lunch. Please access [www.segs.org](http://www.segs.org) and go to the membership tab. Use the PayPal function to pay for SEGS due and the trip (note that the \$35 field trip fee is in addition to the \$35 annual membership fee). Trip information and related forms are also on the website. The trip is also limited to the number of participants due to mine safety concerns; therefore, **register as soon as possible online** and Clint Noble at 904-

613-2261 or Andy Lawn 407-810-2949 to confirm availability. Your registration is NOT considered complete until payment is received AND all required forms (attached) are submitted via email to Clint Noble ([cnoble@gfnet.com](mailto:cnoble@gfnet.com)) and Andy Lawn ([alawn@hsweng.com](mailto:alawn@hsweng.com)). Members will be notified when registration is closed.

**Participants must be at least 18 years of age due to mine and safety regulations.**

A block of rooms has been reserved (at a discounted rate is \$90.95 + tax) for the **Thursday** evening, 13 October, at: Holiday Inn Express & Suites, New Iberia-Avery Island, 318 West Highway 90 Frontage Road, New Iberia, LA 70560, Phone: (337) 408-2700 or (337) 944-0059.

Thursday, 13 October:

An informal dinner and SEGS meeting will be held at 6:00 PM (CST) at the R & M's Boiling Point ([randmboilingpoint.com](http://randmboilingpoint.com)), a popular, Cajun Style seafood restaurant, at 6308 Hwy 90 W, New Iberia, LA 70560 (Ph: 337-365-7596). We will be joined by Cote Blanche Mine Engineer, Michael Nixon, who will give us a pre-trip presentation on the mine history and operations. Other presentations may be given by Compass Minerals professionals. SEGS Leadership will also conduct a business meeting that all are encouraged to attend. This is an excellent opportunity to meet, network, and socialize with fellow members of SEGS. Dinner meal and payment are NOT covered by SEGS and will be up to attendees.

Friday, 14 October:

We will assemble in the parking lot of the Holiday Inn Express & Suites at 6:45 AM, and depart by 7:00 AM (CST). We will caravan to the mine on US-90 east to SR-318. Turn south on SR-318 (which turns into SR-83) and take S-83 south to the Intracoastal Waterway. A cable ferry takes 2 or more automobiles at a time across the canal (you stay in your vehicle during transport), where we continue on Cote Blanche Road to the mine. We need to allow 45 minutes travel time from the hotel to the mine to allow time for the cable ferry and possible delays on the road from sugar cane harvesting.

Field trip participants will participate in a brief site hazard training (and must sign a U.S. Department of Labor Certificate of Training form), and will be supplied with lights, safety glasses, hard hats, and other safety equipment. Entry into the mine requires a 2-minute vertical descent in a large mine shaft to approximately 1,500 feet (more than ¼ - mile below sea level). SEGS members will be escorted by miners through the extensive mine in 4-wheel transport carts holding 4 or 5 people each. Lunch and drinks will be provided at the mine.

### Clothing and Field Equipment You Need to Bring:

--Heavy field boots/steel-toed shoes, preferable shoes that include metatarsal protection.

--The mine gets warm (~90°F), but is obviously very dry. Nonetheless, you should wear long field pants. Shirts with at least short-sleeves are permitted (NO tank tops). Long-sleeve T-shirts or field shirts are recommended. Even a flannel shirt is not uncomfortable in the mine.

--Rock hammer, chisels, sample bags (larger Ziploc bags are very useful to protect your salt samples from moisture/humidity when you return to the surface).

--Cell phones are not permitted in mine, and cannot be used as cameras.

--Notes on photography: We will all want photos of this event. However, cell phones are NOT permitted in the mine. Also, you will not want to expose a high quality camera to the high concentration of salt dust in the mine. So you may want to consider using an old camera or a disposable camera, and have a Ziploc bag in which to keep it. According to our mine contacts, a gas meter may be required in order to take any pictures to verify a safe, noncombustible atmosphere. We may have to break off into sub-groups for pictures and will be required to follow all instructions from mine personnel regarding picture-taking protocol while underground.

### Saturday, October 15, 2016

SEGS Leadership is currently evaluating the possibility of a local outdoor social event for those interested, and/or philanthropy - community volunteering option to assist those victims affected by the flooding events of August. Please contact Clint Noble at 904-613-2261 if you have any ideas or related information. We will finalize these plans for Saturday once the attendee list is settled and input can be solicited from fully registered attendees.

We look forward to seeing you on this trip. Please contact me via cell phone with any questions or concerns. We are gracious to have the assistance and planning efforts from Dr. Jon Bryan of NW Florida State College to make this trip happen.

Regards,

Clint Noble, P.G.  
SEGS Vice President  
904-613-2261 (cell)  
[cnoble@gfnet.com](mailto:cnoble@gfnet.com)

**Attached Forms required for Registration: SEGS Waiver, Registration Form, and Guidelines**