



*For immediate release*

## Federal Government Says Three SCJ Employees Qualified to Identify Pocket Gopher Habitat

LACEY, Wash., May 3, 2018 – Three SCJ Alliance staff are among the first in Washington state to have passed the exam for the Mazama Pocket Gopher Protocol and Mound Identification training. The training was provided by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).



*Lisa Palazzi, CPSS, PWS*

Lisa Palazzi, CPSS, PWS; Gary Cooper; and Lisa Schlender attended a two-day course covering everything from soils, mound identification and the gopher’s natural history, to the Endangered Species Act, the federal law that regulates Mazama Pocket Gophers and other listed animal species. Both the training and exam included classroom and field time.

Lisa Palazzi is a Certified Professional Soil and Wetland Scientist, Gary Cooper is a Senior Planner, and Lisa Schlender has a Biology degree.

The contact information for these three trained and qualified individuals is now included [on the USFWS website](#), as well as provided to local jurisdictions within the range of the listed Mazama pocket gopher species. This qualifies each of them to be used as resources to differentiate between mole mounds and Mazama Pocket Gopher mounds. People on the USFWS website list are the only non-governmental employees recognized to make this distinction.



*Lisa Schlender*



*Gary Cooper*

SCJ Alliance is a multidisciplinary consulting firm specializing in environmental and urban planning, civil engineering, transportation planning and design, landscape architecture, and public outreach. This privately-held, majority women-owned firm has been nationally recognized multiple times for growth, award-winning projects, and as a great place to work.

Founded in Thurston County twelve years ago, the firm has grown steadily to a dynamic team of more than 80 employees in six locations across Washington. In addition to Lacey, SCJ has offices in Centralia, Seattle, Ballard, Vancouver and Wenatchee.

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### **Contact person**

Jean Carr, LEED AP BD+C  
SCJ Alliance Senior Principal  
mobile: 360.789.4551; [jean.carr@scjalliance.com](mailto:jean.carr@scjalliance.com)

8730 Tallon Lane, NE, Suite 200  
Lacey, WA 98516

360.352.1465

[www.scjalliance.com](http://www.scjalliance.com)