



## George Plafker 1929–

George Plafker, U.S. Geological Survey geologist, conducted widespread geologic mapping in southern Alaska, delineated Yakutat terrane history, synthesized the geologic and tectonic history of southern Alaska, and compiled the first statewide active fault database. Plafker recognized that the 1964 M9.2 Alaska earthquake occurred along a megathrust between the subducting oceanic plate and overlying continental plate. His investigation of the 1960 M9.5 Chilean earthquake, the largest ever recorded, confirmed subduction zone megathrusts as the source of large convergent margin earthquakes. His documentation of coseismic uplift and subsidence is a template for assessing earthquake and tsunami hazards at subduction zones worldwide. He was awarded the Geological Society of America Penrose and Seismological Society of America Fielding medals for these major contributions to plate tectonic theory.

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