

## **Asian Conference on Permafrost, Lanzhou, China**

The first Asian Conference on Permafrost, co-organized with the assistance of the International Permafrost Association (IPA), was held in Lanzhou, China, August 7-9, 2006. A total of 262 participants from 17 countries including 99 non Chinese attended. The majority of the 163 Chinese attendees (89) were from the conference organizations located at the Cold and Arid Regions Environment and Engineering Research Institute (CAREERI) and its State Key Laboratory of Frozen Soils Engineering (SKLFSE) of the Chinese Academy of Science in Lanzhou. In addition to the local organization (CAREERI-SKLFSE), thirty-nine Chinese research and design institutions, universities, ministries and construction companies were represented. A total of 90 oral papers and 38 posters were presented with the majority of the Chinese reports dealing with the experimental design and results of investigations for the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau (QTP) railroad. The non-Chinese papers dealt with a variety of scientific and engineering topics including several sessions devoted to paleoenvironmental and periglacial topics. A 214-page volume containing 233 abstracts was published is available on several web sites, including the present. The first Permafrost Young Researchers Network (PYRN) awards for best reports were given to three young researchers. Following the Conference 56 participants visited the northern portion of the QTP by bus, visited the recently established Beiluhe field testing station and railroad test embankments, and then crossed the Plateau from Golmud to Lhasa on the new railroad. The QTP railroad crosses 632 km of warm permafrost terrain. The CAREERI and railroad institutes developed proactive cooling techniques to protect or enhance permafrost conditions under and within the railroad embankments. A pre-Conference workshop on mapping of Asian permafrost was held and attended by 39 participants from nine countries. The workshop and a separate, post-conference site visit on the QTP was sponsored in part by a grant from the International Union for Quaternary Research (INQUA).