



Canadian Federation of Earth Sciences | Fédération canadienne des sciences de la Terre

The unified voice of Earth Science in Canada

www.geoscience.ca

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Newsletter no. 5, July 2010

The CFES Newsletter is published four times per year. Please distribute widely!

From the President



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Just a few years ago, I was not really cognisant of the existence of the Canadian Federation of Earth Sciences (CFES) and for that matter, only dimly conscious of its predecessor, the Canadian Geoscience Council. This is despite the fact that I was past president of one CFES's member organisations and member of another one. For this reason, I can understand why awareness levels of CFES are low in the geoscience community. Having now been involved for some three years, almost two as president, I realise that the Canadian geoscience community derives considerable benefit from the activities of the volunteers in the Federation, but that those benefits are often not recognised as CFES accomplishments.

However, despite this lack of awareness, virtually every geoscientist is an indirect member of CFES through associations where they hold membership. Fifteen organisations are members and Geoscientists Canada (formerly Canadian Council of Professional Geoscientists) is among the observer members.

The role of CFES is to bring together earth science organisations to advance areas of common interest both within Canada and the international geoscience community. The organisation is "lean and mean" with a very small budget. The federation has one part time paid staff person, the Managing Director, Elisabeth Kusters, and the remainder of the work is done by volunteers.

Our Spring council meeting was held in Calgary just prior to GeoCanada 2010, and there was excellent attendance of presidents or representatives of associations. It is so important, if CFES is to be a success, that associations are engaged and see value in what the Federation is doing. CFES only exists for the members and their membership; it exists solely to serve the geoscience community through enhancing collaboration between the diverse areas of earth science. I would like to expand on two facets of this collaboration as an illustration of this.



OUTREACH – A CRITICAL ROLE

Outreach to the public, especially to youth, is a vital part of CFES activity. It is organised largely through our subcommittee the Canadian Geoscience Education Network (CGEN), and its branch, EdGeo. CGEN brings together a huge diversity of people interested in earth science education; from educators to industry outreach organisations and practicing geoscientists who have a personal interest in this field. As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, CGEN and EdGeo played important roles in GeoCanada 2010.

The Canadian National Committee for the International Year of Planet Earth, which included many people who are also active in CGEN, has just completed about three years of activities that have given CFES a lasting legacy of outreach materials that are a tribute to the efforts of the volunteers involved. This is highlighted in the website www.earthsciencescanada.com with a section for youth on careers in earth science, information on the WHERE challenge – a national competition for children aged 10-14 years to describe the origins of natural materials we use in everyday life – and the creation of a spectacular book on the geology of Canada, aimed at the public, but that will also be useful as a very first introductory geology text (“Four Billion Years and Counting: Canada’s Geological Heritage”). Through these three initiatives, the public is reached over a wide range of ages with creation of a general awareness of the importance of earth sciences and earth resources but also a path outlined for children to a career in earth sciences.

I would like to pay special tribute to the many volunteers who make CGEN activities such a tremendous success.

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION – CANADA IS A COUNTRY STRONG IN GEOSCIENCE

Canada has always had an important role in the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) and at present Peter Bobrowsky (GSC) is the Secretary General of the organisation. The organisation was founded in order to continue international geological research cooperation in between the years of International Geological Congresses (IGC). Which brings me to the IGC. As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, at its last council meeting the CFES council approved a motion that Canada should prepare a bid to host the IGC in 2020. The IGC is held in a different country every 4 years, and countries bid to host it 8 years prior. There is a symmetry in Canada bidding for the IGC 2020 because the Congress was held for the 12th time (1913) and the 24th time (1972) in Canada, and 2020 would be the 36th. Preparing a bid is like preparing for the Olympics, the aspirant host country has to demonstrate its capacity and attractiveness for the event against other bidding countries. It will be a unique opportunity to showcase Canadian geoscience, but also to interact with geoscientists from the rest of the world. This is a very



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serious undertaking and CFES will be looking for volunteers who are interested in helping make this a Canadian success.

The Canadian National Committee for Geoparks is charged with identification and advancement of Canadian applications for international recognition of Global Geoparks. A geopark is an area with significant geologic heritage elements, worthy of international recognition, but is not a park in the sense of a closed off area and should include local sustainable tourist businesses. The park could be designated for an area of unique small-scale geological features, a historic mining area or unique scenery. Recognition leads to identification in an international listing that is expected to lead to public interest in visiting the location. The GeoParks Committee has only been in operation for about a year, and already has played its role in helping to advanced one application, the Stonehammer GeoPark in the St. John area (New Brunswick), to the international level.

The initiation of the bid for IGC 2020 and the GeoParks Committee illustrate the advancement of Canadian geoscience interests that is at the heart of CFES intention to benefit both Canadian geoscientists and Canada.

CFES Earth Science Advisory and Advocacy Panel (ESAAP) www.geoscience.ca/esaap.html

CFES is proud to introduce you officially to the members of its *Earth Science Advocacy and Advisory Panel*. The five individuals who have agreed to serve on this panel are each eminent and undisputed leaders in their respective fields. The Panel, chaired by the CFES Past-President (currently Ian Young), advises the CFES Board on strategic matters both individually and as a group, and will advance the importance of Earth Science. The Panel is independent. Panel members speak on the basis of their personal expertise and experience. The Panel members are: for *Geoscience Literacy and Heritage*: Roberta Bondar; for *Government*: Jim Franklin; for the *Petroleum Industry*: Clay Riddell; for the *Mining Industry*: Eira Thomas; for *Academia*: Phil Currie and we still have a vacancy for the *Environmental Industry*.

Semi-annual Council of Members meeting, Calgary – May 7.

Twenty-six delegates met on Friday May 7 at the Department of Geoscience of the University of Calgary. The draft minutes are at www.geoscience.ca/minutes.html. Highlights of the meeting:



1. CFES will form a bid committee to develop a proposal to host the 2020 International Geological Congress (IGC) in Canada. The decision was taken on the basis of the advice of a feasibility committee chaired by CFES International director Peter Bobrowsky. The bid committee will involve delegates from member organizations. The member organization presidents will be contacted by President Bill Mercer about this issue shortly.
2. On behalf of all its member societies, CFES joins the Science Media Center of Canada (www.sciencemediacentre.ca) as a charter member. The SMCC will be a hub for media contacts for all Canadian sciences. The SMCC is expected to become operational by late summer.

GeoCanada 2010

The GeoCanada 2010 Convention was a big success. More than 4,000 delegates registered for this once-in-10-years event. The outreach activities especially were stellar.

1. More than 2,000 high school students from 19 schools flooded the Corral during the week in the **Earth Science for Society** (www.geocanada2010.ca/geocanada/earth-science-for-society.html) event. Another 500 conference delegates and 500 citizens also came to see this spectacular exhibition. Requests for follow-ups abound.
2. A **teacher workshop**, hosted by the Canadian Geoscience Education Network / CGEN (www.geoscience.ca/cgen/index.html), took place on the weekend preceding the conference. The aim of the teacher workshop was to expose science teachers to earth science in a way in which it can be incorporated in the other sciences, a strategy called 'wedging'. Twenty-five teachers from across Canada attended the workshop and visited the Tyrrell Museum in Drumheller the next day. Teachers were sponsored by a variety of organizations. This was definitely a concept worth repeating in the future.
3. A special session '**Communicating earth science to the public**', also hosted CGEN, had as a keynote Iain Stewart, a British earth scientist prominent in BBC programs. His keynote immediately followed the plenary keynote by Godfrey Nowlan on Earth Science literacy and heritage, a beneficial coincidence.
4. **Foundations: the science beneath the art** was conceived and brought together by CFES board members Jeff Packard and Ian Young. The purpose of *Foundations* was to explore the confluence of art and science, using iconic and/or significant Canadian landscape art pieces as a vehicle. The



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Glenbow Museum cooperated with the effort and their website still has an excellent write-up (www.glenbow.org/about/behind/geosceice.cfm). Twelve 8x4 ft posters were put on display in the Glenbow Museum, at the Convention and – probably most importantly – on pedestrian Stephen Avenue in Calgary during the week of the convention, mounted on custom-made poster boards. In this photograph, Jeff Packard demonstrates how well made the poster boards were, as he lugs them to their overnight shelter. This latter project will definitely have a follow-up as well, after some updating and editing



CFES Board member Jeff Packard moving one of the 'Foundations' posters on pedestrian Stephen Avenue in Calgary, during the week of the GeoCanada2010 Convention. Photo E. Kusters

5. CFES hosted a special session **'the Future of Earth Sciences in Canada'** at the GeoCanada convention. The session was chaired by Ian Young and Elisabeth Kusters with a dual objective: to introduce the CFES Earth Science Advocacy and Advisory Panel (ESAAP) to the public and to gather input for the CFES long term strategic document.

The session was a success, it was well attended and the panel members each made excellent and thought-provoking contributions. While only Jim Franklin and Phil Currie were able to attend in



person, Eira Thomas was able to contribute through cooperation with CFES President Bill Mercer. The other panel members were John Varsek, President of CSPG for the petroleum industry perspective, Bill Stiebel, CFES President-elect for the environmental industry perspective and University of Calgary graduate students Mary Samolczyk and Joel Cubley for the perspective from the next generation.

Because there were a lot of activities around outreach and because CFES Board member Godfrey Nowlan presented a plenary keynote on Earth Science Literacy and Heritage, that subject was not included in this session, although it is of course one of our strategic themes. We will publish about this effort in other venues as well, and you will be kept informed.



Panel members for the special CFES GeoCanada session 'the Future of Earth Sciences in Canada' (left to right): Jim Franklin, Mary Samolczyk, Joel Cubley, John Varsek, Bill Mercer, Phil Currie and Bill Stiebel. Photo E. Kosters

Canadian National Committee for Geoparks - www.geoscience.ca/geoparks.html

A delegation of the committee, led by committee chairman Godfrey Nowlan had a fruitful visit with the Canadian National UNESCO Commission in Ottawa in June. The proposed guidelines for Canadian Geoparks are ready to be submitted for approval to the Global Geoparks Network headquarters in Paris. Meanwhile, the proposal for the Stonehammer Geopark (Saint John area, NB) has been submitted for approval to the Global Geoparks Network.



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CanGeoRef

Purple Rock Editing, the contractor for this project, has finished entering provincial references for Alberta. The next province to be tackled is Manitoba. There have been few hiccups even in this initial phase. Launch date of CanGeoRef is still set for the Fall of 2011.

CFES Website www.geoscience.ca

While we are still working on making our website more modern and more flexible and integrate it with the www.earthsciencescanada.ca site (the legacy of the Canadian efforts under the International Year of Planet Earth umbrella), we continue to keep it up-to-date and relevant as much as possible. Two items have recently been added, specifically a table with all the member organizations' relevant information (on the home page, as well as a table with all CFES committees and chairs, which can be found at www.geoscience.ca/contacts.html

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

International Union of Geosciences / IUGS (www.iugs.org).

The call for proposals for the next round of IGCP (The International Geoscience Programme) is out. The IGCP is a cooperative enterprise of UNESCO and the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) and has been stimulating comparative studies in the Earth Sciences since 1972. The proposal form can be found at <http://iugs.org/uploads/IUGS%20Bulletin%2052.pdf>.

Project proposals should identify the societal relevance of their work, address the challenge of capacity-building in developing countries, and emphasize education and training, including a focus on under-represented groups (e.g. youth, women, ethnic minorities, etc.). Project proposals must be based on international participation including scientists from developing countries. IGCP themes are: a) the water cycle; b) mitigating risks; c) earth resources: sustaining our society; d) global change and evolution of life: evidence from the geologic record; and e) the deep earth, how it controls our environment. The deadline for submitting proposals is 15 October 2010.



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International Year of Planet Earth <http://yearofplanetearth.org/index.html>

The Summary Report of the International Year of Planet Earth to the United Nations can be downloaded.

Now that the activities associated with IYPE have come to an end, several members of the IYPE Board, along with representatives of other Earth Science institutions, have started to explore whether there is scope to launch a **Global Geoscience Initiative**, in response to the 'call to arms' embodied in the Tsukuba Declaration (www.gsj.jp/iype/en/docs/decTsukuba_en.html) put forward by participants in IYPE and three other International Years — the International Polar Year, the Electronic Geophysical Year, and the International Heliophysical Year. To this extent, 'town hall meetings' have been organized at several international geosciences conferences. The presentations from these meetings can be found at www.agiweb.org/members/presentations/index.html

AGI Geoscience Currents – www.agiweb.org/workforce/currents.html

Geoscience Currents are quick snapshots of data released by AGI (the American Geological Institute, our sister organization and our partner in developing CanGeoRef) on the status of the geoscience workforce. The Currents also represent data collaborations with other societies, employers, and professionals. Topics for these short reports are inspired by inquiries from geoscience community leaders.

Transatlantic Academy (www.transatlanticacademy.org)

The Transatlantic Academy is a scholarly forum for addressing challenges facing transatlantic relations. It is located at the German Marshall Fund of the United States in Washington DC. The academy brings together scholars from Europe and North America to work on a set of related issues facing the transatlantic community. One of its working themes is 'The Competition for Natural Resources: the new geopolitical great game?' Interested candidates are invited to submit a proposal for resident fellows.