



CFES ANNUAL MEETING SUMMARY & OVERVIEW 2017

The 18th Annual CFES Council Meeting and General Meeting was held in Ottawa on April 21st and 22nd, 2017. In addition to representatives of the various member organizations, Geoscientists Canada, Resources for Future Generation (RFG), the Partnership Group for Science and Engineering (PAGSE), and the Science Media Centre of Canada (SMCC) were all represented, providing a broad forum for the discussion of issues of national and international scope.

The last four years have been a period of rebuilding for CFES and the organization now has a solid foundation for the future. The Board worked hard throughout the past year to achieve that foundation, and CFES is now well-positioned to build further towards the key strategic goal of being the coordinated voice for Earth Sciences in Canada; this includes being a coordinator of public policy advocacy, a promoter of public awareness of Earth Science and Earth Science literacy, international representation of Canadian Earth Sciences, a forum for its member organizations, and a supporter of professional and academic Earth Science organizations in Canada. A key objective has been to develop the relationship between the member organizations and CFES, and this has improved over the past year, and will continue to be developed and extended to the general membership such that they have a better understanding of the important role that CFES plays in Earth Science in Canada.

CHANGES TO THE BOARD

CFES *is* the member organizations, and CFES Council comprises representatives of every organization. The CFES Board is the group of volunteers who run CFES on behalf of Council. The achievements of the past four years are in large part due to the significant efforts of Scott Swinden and Sandra Barr, who, in the past year, served as Past-President and President, respectively. A big thank you goes to Scott and Sandra. Iain Samson and Graziella Grech are the new President and President-Elect, respectively, and we have a dedicated board of directors who have responsibility for the various strategic priorities of CFES (<https://www.cfes-fcst.ca/board-of-directors>).

EDUCATION, OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

THE CANADIAN GEOSCIENCE EDUCATION NETWORK (CGEN)

CGEN (<https://www.cfes-fcst.ca/cgen-edgeo>) continues to be very active, including in its key program of EdGeo workshops. CGEN is always seeking new members and ideas, and interested people are encouraged to contact Lesley Hymers, CFES' outreach director (lhymers@miningmatters.ca). CGEN will play a significant role at the RFG 2018 conference, on engaging the public in matters related to Earth Sciences and resources. CGEN is also the lead in developing a new initiative on having geoscientists integrated into Canadian National Parks. More information is available at <http://earthsciencescanada.com/cgen/index.php?page=home> and Facebook: @CGEN2CanadianGeoscienceEducationNetwork.

PAGSE

PAGSE (the Partnership Group for Science and Engineering; <http://pagse.org/en/main.htm>) is a key mechanism for bringing expert opinion to the government, and CFES has representation on PAGSE. This is achieved through briefs written for the government, meetings with prominent people in funding agencies, and through their Bacon and Eggheads breakfast series of talks (given to MPs, Senators, and staffers). The CFES Board, on behalf of its members, contributed over the past year to PAGSE documents on climate change, the pre-budget consultations, and the fundamental science review. Further discussion of the science review will occur in June. At the CFES annual meeting, we had a discussion with Maria DeRosa, the chair of PAGSE, which developed a better understanding of how CFES can represent the Earth Science community. This will be most effective with input from member organizations on key issues, such as the pre-budget consultations. While this is a broad-brush document, it is important that CFES members understand themes of importance to the Earth Science community. PAGSE is also always looking for nominations for the Bacon and Eggheads series.

SCIENCE MEDIA CENTRE OF CANADA (SMCC)

We had an interesting discussion with Jim Handman, Acting Executive Director of the Science Media Centre of Canada (<http://www.sciencemediacentre.ca>). This led to a much better understanding of how science journalism operates, and how we can help member organizations engage with the media. An additional aspect is that we can help enhance their database of experts.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

WEBSITE & COMMUNICATION

The CFES website (<https://www.cfes-fcst.ca>) underwent a major redesign this year and we now also have a French version (<https://www.cfes-fcst.ca/fr>). We would like to see the website as a place for cross-fertilization among the various member organizations and we encourage you to place items on our news and announcements page, as well as links to your newsletters. We are also actively seeking people to blog about what they do and to write about perspectives on Earth Science. We also post all such items to Twitter (@CFESciences) and Facebook (@CFESciences). We also ask that member organizations place links to CFES on their websites, to help engage individual members in the broader Earth Science scene. We can supply a summary of CFES and its mandate for your websites and newsletters. The CFES website calendar now aggregates all events and meetings for the member organizations, and other groups. Please contact our Communications Director, Sarina Cotroneo, regarding any of the items mentioned above (sarinaec@gmail.com).

We recently undertook a member organization survey to better understand the priorities of the member organization representatives, especially regarding the CFES strategic priorities, on communication among the members of council, and between the member organizations and the CFES Board. This formed the basis for a productive discussion in Council of these issues. It is clear that the success of CFES is predicated on engaged member organization representatives, and several suggestions arose that are designed to enhance that, including focused teleconference council meetings through the year that address specific issues, and where various representatives from MOs can contribute to a discussion. The CFES Board need to hear from its member organizations about issues that are of high priority and that would benefit from a national discussion. A challenge that remains is timely response from member organizations on matters that come to our attention and that require broad input.

RESOURCES FOR FUTURE GENERATION (RFG 2018)

Several of our member organizations, as well as CFES, are engaged in the organization of the Resources for Future Generations conference (RFG 2018; <http://www.rfg2018.org/en.aspx>), which is designed as an international venue to address questions around supply and management of resources of all kinds (water, minerals, energy), including the societal impact. The objective is to “*Bring industry, academia, governments and civil society together to examine future demand for resources and our ability to deliver these resources with the highest environmental standards consistent with global sustainability goals*”.

As noted above, CGEN is heavily involved in the public engagement aspects of this conference and communicating Earth Science in education, and CFES has proposed a session on the nature of national geoscience communities and the benefits and challenges of speaking with one voice. John Thompson, Chair of RFG, gave an update at the annual meeting, and emphasized the need to get Canadian Earth scientists involved in the conference, something that is best achieved through our member organization channels. Promotional materials can be downloaded at <http://www.rfg2018.org/en/RFG/2018/Rfg-Highlights/Promoting-RFG.aspx>.

INTERNATIONAL

CFES continues to represent Canadian Earth Science internationally through its representation with IUGS and UNESCO. Two Canadians are currently on the IUGS Executive: Stephen Johnson, CFES’ International Director, and Dr. Qiuming Cheng, who we are pleased to note is now the President of IUGS. Canadian involvement in UNESCO occurs through IGCP and the Global Geoparks program (see below). Any questions on international activities can be directed to Stephen Johnson (stjohnst@ualberta.ca).

CANADIAN INITIATIVES

CANGEOREF

The CanGeoRef database continues to grow (<https://www.cfes-fcst.ca/cangeoref>). This is a Canadian subset of GeoRef for smaller organizations, companies, and individuals, allowing lower-cost access to literature on Canadian geoscience. A significant objective was to add data on publications of the provincial and territorial surveys. The catalog for most provinces and territories have been added and we are mostly moving to update mode. This is a tremendous opportunity for these organizations to make their publications known to anyone searching CanGeoRef or Georef.

GEO PARKS

The Canadian National Committee for Geoparks have been busy (<https://www.cfes-fcst.ca/geoparks>). Global Geoparks is a UNESCO program. A Geopark is a “single, unified geographical area where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development”. Canada now has two Geoparks: Stonehammer, NB, and Tumbler Ridge, BC. There are two additional advanced “aspiring geoparks”: Percé Aspiring

Geopark, QC, which has submitted a formal application to UNESCO, and Discovery Aspiring Geopark, NFLD. There are another nine aspiring geoparks in Canada (<http://www.canadiangeoparks.org/main.html>).

GEOSCIENCE FOR SOCIETY BROCHURE

CFES in partnership with Geoscientists Canada is creating a non-partisan brochure that will highlight the importance of geoscience, and the work of geoscientists in a Canadian context. This is well on its way to completion and is funded by a grant from the Canadian Geological Foundation.

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

MENTORSHIP MEDAL

The 2017 CFES Mentorship Medal recipient is Professor A.E. (Willy) Williams-Jones of McGill University (<https://www.cfes-fcst.ca/mentorship-medal>). This will be presented to Dr. Williams-Jones at the SGA (Society for Geology Applied to Mineral Deposits) meeting in Quebec City in August.

A CONCLUDING NOTE

As I noted above, CFES *is* the member organizations. Its future success will rely on the ability of the organizations to effectively use CFES to raise issues of broad and national or international scope at the council table, both physical and virtual. The board will do its utmost to facilitate the message, and the importance and relevance of Earth Science to the government and the public. Communication with member organization representatives is coordinated by Graziella Grech (now President-Elect; mggrech@shaw.ca), but do not hesitate to contact me at cfespresident@gmail.com or ims@uwindsor.ca.

*Iain M. Samson
President, CFES
May, 2017.*