



CFES FCST
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The coordinated voice for Canadian Earth Sciences

La voix coordonnée des sciences de la terre au Canada

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CFES President's report for Annual Council meeting and AGM, April 17-18, 2020

This report marks the end of my year as CFES president and was submitted as part of the 21st CFES Council and AGM. A lot of work has been done by the Board members over the past year to implement, on behalf of Council, new initiatives that were discussed during the 2019 Council meeting, as well as to continue delivering on existing programs. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and government health recommendations, this year's meeting will be held exclusively online and for practical reasons will be of shorter duration. Hence, discussions will only focus on key initiatives and the strategy for CFES for the next five years. However, details on the activities of each director can be found in the reports that they have prepared, a high-level summary of which is given here.

Board and Council memberships

Unlike the past year, when we had several people finishing their term on the Board, this year we will only be saying goodbye to our Past-President, Iain Samson, and our Director of Special Projects, Christian Böhm. Iain joined CFES in 2016 as President-Elect, then served as President for two years, and Past-President for the last year. Christian has also been with CFES since 2016, serving first for two years as secretary and then for another two years as Director of Special Projects. I'd like to thank both Iain and Christian for their dedicated service to CFES over this time.

The slate of Directors for 2020-2021 includes two changes to roles. Iain Samson, our Past-President will be leaving the Board. I will become Past-President and Ollie Bonham will become President. Our incoming President-Elect is Rachel Newrick, as described in the Nominating Committee report prepared by Iain Samson. In the coming year we will be seeking nominations for a new Director of Special Projects, and a new Director of Media Liaison to replace Katherine Dunnell, former Director for Media Liaison, who resigned from the Board in November 2019.

Finances

The main operating expenses incurred by CFES over the past fiscal year covered travel for Board members to attend the AGM and Council meeting in Ottawa, membership in PASGE, costs to support the CFES website and other CFES' supported projects, as well as legal, accounting and insurance costs. These expenses were similar to those of previous years and the budget was close to being balanced, as expected in the case of a not-for-profit organization. Please refer to the report prepared by the Financial director, Jen Parks, for full details.

International

CFES represents Canadian earth sciences internationally through three Canadian National Committees (CNC) of international organizations, namely the Canadian National Committee for the International Union of Geological Sciences (CNC-IUGS) chaired by Daniel Lebel, the Canadian National Committee for the International Geoscience Program (CNC-IGCP) chaired by Stephen Johnston, and the Canadian National Committee for Geoparks (CNC-Geoparks) chaired by John Calder. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the CNC-IUGS have been reviewed by both CFES and the Chair of the CNC-IUGS. CNC-IGCP supports Canadian participation in IGCP projects. Three new IGCP project proposals involving Canadian researchers were submitted to UNESCO in the fall of 2019. CNC-Geoparks formally transitioned in 2019 to a not-for-profit society, the Canadian Geoparks Network (CGN). This is a very active group, responsible for the development and coordination of UNESCO Global Geoparks applications from Canada. CFES is represented on this committee by Mostafa Fayek, the International Director. Please refer to the report prepared by Mostafa Fayek for further details. The CNC-IGCP annual report, the CGN report and the ToR for CNC-IUGS are also included.



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Mentorship Medal

After careful review of the slate of candidates nominated for this award, the 2020 Mentorship Medal has been awarded to Professor Dominique Weis of the University of British Columbia. More details can be found in Mentorship Medal report prepared by Iain Samson.

The Canada Prize

The Canada Prize Awards Foundation and the Canada Prize Foundation were established with the objective to fund, select the recipient, and award The Canada Prize for Earth and Environmental Science as an international award on behalf of the people of Canada. CFES is represented on the Board of the Foundation by the Past-President. The Board continues to face the same challenges as in previous years (all senior members, lack of younger members and the challenges to raise funds) and may decide to terminate the effort over the coming year if no progress is made.

Another item covered in the same report is the Willet G. Miller Medal. The latter is awarded every two years by the Royal Society of Canada for outstanding research in any branch of earth sciences.

Please refer to the report prepared by Iain Samson for full details.

CanGeoRef

[CanGeoRef](#), a subset of AGI's GeoRef database, includes more than 245,000 bibliographical references on Canadian geoscience literature. Since 2011, a significant number of geoscience publication records from geological surveys of most jurisdictions were added to CanGeoRef. However, the updating process has been slow and geoscience publications from Yukon, Nunavut and Quebec are still missing, which makes CanGeoRef incomplete and out-of-date.

Over the past year, CFES, through its Special Projects Director, Christian Bohm, has been investigating the possibility of transitioning geological surveys to 'Open Data', whereby standardized geoscience reference formats and policies would be adopted and implemented. This would replace the 'manual' and jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction updating process and would enable more direct access to references from all Canadian geological survey organizations. More details can be found in the report prepared by Christian Bohm on this topic.

Communications

As in previous years, we continue to maintain an active online presence through our website and social media. Our followers on Facebook and Twitter increased by 18% and 9% respectively. Two new initiatives were launched on our website this year – a Job Board, where organizations, institutions and individuals can post job opportunities in Earth sciences, and a volunteer program, where volunteer opportunities with CFES are posted. More information can be found in the report prepared by our Communication director Diane Hanano.

Outreach and Education

The Canadian Geoscience Education Network ([CGEN](#)) is the educational arm of CFES. Over the past year it has been focusing on three key activities, the [EdGEO](#) that supports Earth Science teacher workshops, the Earth Science Careers website



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transition, and the completion of two Special Projects. The first was the Resources for Future Generations (RFG) Legacy Project, which consisted in the preparation of an Educational Outreach and Public Engagement Guidebook aimed to serve as an educational outreach best practices manual for the Canadian geoscience community. The second project was the Geoscientists in Canadian National Parks Pilot Project (GNCP) which was also approved by Parks Canada. The launch of this pilot project, originally planned for August 2020 in Pukaskwa National Park, may have to be rescheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional information can be found in the report prepared by Beth McLarty-Halfkenny, CFES' Outreach Director and CGEN's President. A copy of the CGEN's annual Report regarding EdGeo and the Guidebook are also included.

Geoscience and Canada booklet

On both the public awareness and geoscience careers fronts, an additional 5000 copies of the Geoscience and Canada booklet were printed jointly with Geoscientists Canada. In addition to further distribution of booklets nationwide by Geoscientists Canada, CFES undertook a distribution to all forty-nine Geography Departments across Canada. All our member organizations were encouraged to make full use of the booklet, including posting it for download from each member organization website home page. Please refer to the report submitted by Ollie Bonham for details. A copy of the [booklet](#) can also be downloaded from the CFES website and is available in both English and French.

PAGSE

CFES is also a member of PAGSE ([The Partnership Group for Science and Engineering](#)) a cooperative association comprising over 25 Canadian science and engineering organizations, whose mandate is to represent the national science and engineering organization to federal decision-makers. In late spring of 2019 Dr. Jérôme Marty was elected as the new chair of PAGSE, as Dr. Maria DeRosa completed her mandate.

One of PAGSE's initiatives is the [Bacon and Eggheads](#) presentation series, which gives distinguished geoscientists the opportunity to present on a subject of primary scientific importance in a non-partisan way to members of the federal government. Over the past year CFES has been working with two of our member organizations, CSEG and CSPG, who were interested in preparing a presentation to be considered for nomination by the Bacon and Eggheads committee. Due to the Canadian Federal election this series was suspended during the fall of 2019 but has resumed this year. Our aim is to submit a nomination to the committee in the coming months.

Another PAGSE initiative is the [SciEng Pages](#). These brief documents provide Parliamentarians and the general public evidence-based information on current topics of interest in science and engineering. We are pursuing an opportunity to work with Dr. John Thompson to prepare a SciEng Pages document based on his 2019 Bacon and Eggheads talk on "Metals and Sustainability – Earth's odd couple", which was nominated by CFES.

CFES continues to be represented on the PAGSE committee by Chris Burn. I would like to thank Chris for his commitment and input to PAGSE on Earth Science matters.

National Geoscience Research Plan

During the annual Council meeting held in April 2019 it was agreed that the earth science community should develop a document that is equivalent to those that have been developed by the US and Australia. These documents have been distributed to Council again this year (Australia has two) and another one developed by Europe has also been included. The objective of a national document is to lay out the importance of earth science research and to provide some vision regarding



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key areas and future priorities. To-date the research plans presented by the afore mentioned countries have been surveyed and a list of potential topics for developing the Canadian plan to meet the future needs of Canadians has been identified and will be discussed during this year's annual Council meeting. Please refer to the International Director report prepared by Mostafa Fayek.

Climate Change Information Document

Another initiative launched in 2019 is the preparation of a Climate Change document, designed to present an educational and scientific view on the topic accessible to the general public. A committee made up of representatives from some of our member organizations is working on the preparation of this document and a draft copy is planned for later this year.

CFES Strategy for 2020- 2024

2019 has also seen CFES' 2014-2019 Strategic Plan come to an end. Work on a new strategic plan is underway and will be presented and discussed during the annual Council meeting. Please refer to the document prepared by Ollie Bonham for guidance. We strongly encourage you to provide your input as to what you would like to see the Board focus on over the coming 5 years. As we have said several times before, CFES is our member organizations and it depends on them and their representatives on Council for input, direction and support. CFES Board members in turn try to execute recommendations from Council as best as they can.

Concluding Remarks

Since its first strategy was put together 5 years ago, CFES has led and supported a broad range of Earth science initiatives that benefitted both the general public and federal decision makers. While a lot has been accomplished, a lot more can still be done. As we prepare the strategic plan for CFES for the next five years, let us think on where we would like Canadian Earth sciences to be over the coming ways and how CFES can contribute to achieving this goal.

I would like to conclude by thanking all board members for their dedication and support over the past year. It was my pleasure working with all of them and they have made my job as President a lot easier than it would have otherwise been.

Respectfully submitted,

Graziella Grech

CFES President, April 2020