

Canadian Geoscience Education Network
January 25, 2004 meeting
Vancouver, B.C.

For those of you unable to join us, here are the key things you missed:

- ❖ A report on future directions for the Canadian Geoscience Council and the impact on CGEN. This will be a major discussion item at the May meeting.
- ❖ Reports on the success of GeoSciEd IV, the revitalization of EarthNet, and the continuing growth of EdGEO, Geoscape and What on Earth.
- ❖ A discussion on next steps for the careers in earth sciences project.
- ❖ Reports on a new GSC outreach project for northern communities, and on Friends of Canadian Geoheritage, which is under consideration as a CGEN core program.
- ❖ A congenial lunch, much enhanced by the sheer bliss of not having to wear hats or boots, nor to have shovel in order to get to it.
- ❖ Post-meeting, at the Cordilleran Roundup, a very exciting student program run by the Mining Association of B.C. (congratulations to Sheila Stenzel!).

KEY POINTS, ACTIONS, DECISIONS

In attendance: John Clague, Alan Morgan (Chair), Godfrey Nowlan, Mike Porter, Bob Turner, Eileen Van der Flier Keller, Christy Vodden. Regrets: too many to record; thanks to everyone who let me know you could not attend.

Canadian Geoscience Council: Connections and new directions (Alan Morgan)

Future directions for the CGC were the subject of a meeting in Toronto in December that pulled together many Presidents of CGC member societies. Alan reported that CGEN is considered one of the CGC success stories, and there is strong support and appreciation for it and its programs. There is interest at the CGC level for an expanded role for CGEN, i.e. adding the broader realm of public awareness of geoscience to our education mandate, with a specific focus on reaching the political level in “top of mind” areas of concern for Canadians: water, health, etc.

Our discussion focussed on the volunteer and networking nature of CGEN, and questions as to how its capability could accommodate an expanded mandate. There was consensus that policy issues are completely outside the realm of CGEN. A more active promotion of CGEN products/projects to CGC member societies was one area suggested for action. A further, in-depth discussion should be possible at the May meeting, as more information should be available at that time about future plans for the CGC, and more CGEN members will be in attendance.

Financial report (Christy Vodden)

CGEN's funding base is healthy for the short-term and we should be able to weather the expected period of diminished funding from our traditional sponsors (GAC, CGC). The new GAC Trust Fund will be interesting to watch unfold: it may provide funds at the CGEN-supported, project-level. A full financial report will be distributed at the May meeting, and a discussion about alternative sources of long-term funding will be held. A big thanks to the GeoSciEd IV Organizing Committee for repaying the \$3,000 seed monies that CGEN provided over the past two years.

CGEN website update (Christy Vodden)

All revisions suggested by CGEN members were approved, and the update will go ahead in February. I will look after ongoing maintenance of the website, with a contractor based in Halifax. Ideas for additional content/links/etc. are welcome anytime.

EarthNet (Godfrey Nowlan/Jennifer Bates)

Two initiatives have given EarthNet a new lease on life. A national EarthNet Committee, chaired by Godfrey, is focussing on content capture. The goal is to set up provincial and territorial teams across Canada, and these groups will be responsible for feeding in content from their regions. New funding from the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) has allowed for the hiring of a co-op student to assist with input. Eileen will send out a request to all EdGEO workshop leaders encouraging content submissions. Jennifer will put in an abstract to GAC/MAC to publicize this new push for EarthNet.

EdGEO (Eileen Van der Flier Keller)

The EdGEO program has been as busy as ever. Eleven workshops were held in 2003, with 202 teachers participating. Jane Wynne has embarked on a fundraising campaign to enable an expansion of EdGEO. There is particular interest in encouraging workshops in parts of Canada that have not had one recently or ever (notably Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland). Pat Bright, the treasurer, has just stepped down (a big thanks to her from CGEN!), and Sheila Dale Johnson will replace her. The EdGEO newsletter will be looking for submissions in April, for inclusion in their next edition, which will be published in time for the GAC/MAC meeting and at which EdGEO will have a special event. The EdGEO summary report will be presented at the May meeting, and attached to the minutes.

GeoSciEd IV: Final report and legacy issues (Godfrey Nowlan)

The meeting was a huge success, and the organizing committee has just completed its final report. By the May meeting, the International Geoscience Education Organization will have approved it, and Godfrey will be able to make the report public and brief us on the legacy issues as they apply to CGEN.

Geoscape (Bob Turner)

Geoscape projects continue to flourish across the country, with new posters published for Toronto (Jan. 2003), Whitehorse (April 2003), Geoscape Canada Map (May 2003), and Saskatchewan (Jan. 2004). Geoscape Ottawa and Nanaimo are expected to be out by March and September 2004 respectively. The GSC continues to provide funding, but

Geoscape teams across the country are raising additional funds to support expanded distribution (Saskatchewan) and lesson plan development (Ontario). For the future, the concept of "waterscapes" is gaining much interest, and posters are being developed for Bowen Island and the Gulf Islands (B.C.) and the Calgary region.

What on Earth (Alan Morgan)

The newsletter continues to improve using funds from the federal PromoScience program. Encouraging contributors to send in content remains a challenge. Alan is looking for regional correspondents who will drum up interesting content for their parts of Canada (perhaps the EarthNet regional coordinators would like to take that on too!). Anyone interested should contact Alan directly: avmorgan@uwaterloo.ca. It's a wonderful opportunity to reach a broad range of Canadian educators and promote your project, program and good works. The next issue will be available for distribution at GAC/MAC 2004, so the readership will be even broader.

Careers in Earth Science initiative (John Clague)

Discussion focussed on next steps and the need to use the funding received from the Canadian Geological Foundation. John has hired a Simon Fraser University graduate student to examine and revise the content of the existing careers material for a Grade 9 audience, and to seek out material from other Canadian and U.S. sources. This should bring the project to the point where we could seek concrete input from the CGC member societies.

Geoheritage Project (Alan Morgan/Christy Vodden)

The Friends of Canadian Geoheritage is gaining momentum in Ottawa-Gatineau under the dynamic leadership of Al Donaldson. Over a thousand people have signed up as members. CGEN support for the project would help stimulate the growth of this project in other regions of Canada. This will be discussed at the May meeting.

Lithoprobe update (Ron Clowes)

Unfortunately Ron was unable to attend, but there was discussion about the new children's book on Lithoprobe "Dancing Elephants and Floating Continents", which has received considerable publicity in newsletters across the country: What on Earth, the PDAC Mining Matters News, EON, Teacher's Winter 2004 Update from the Mining Association of B.C.

GSC: Geoscience Experience for Northern Communities (Godfrey Nowlan)

The Geological Survey of Canada has allocated funding towards this initiative. Godfrey distributed draft copies of a new series of fact sheets on earth science topics of interest to northern educators. He will be sending digital versions to CGEN members for comment and input. These will eventually be adapted for web use, and will be an excellent addition to EarthNet.

Next meeting

The CGEN annual meeting will take place at the 2004 Geological Association of Canada/Mineralogical Association of Canada meeting, May 12-14, in St. Catharines,

Ontario (time and location to be announced shortly). Register for the GAC/MAC annual meeting by April 16 to get the early-bird rate, plus to avoid the crush signing up for the “Geology and Wine” field trip (www.stcatharines2004.ca).

Christy Vodden
Secretary- Treasurer, CGEN

February 6, 2004