



Société canadienne  
d'écologie et d'évolution

Canadian Society for  
Ecology and Evolution

# Bulletin 21

## Winter 2017

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# President's Report, July 2016 through February 2017

Jeremy Kerr, U. Ottawa

## *CSEE, public science, and policy engagement*



### **Preface**

CSEE represents an incredible diversity of researchers from across Canada and internationally, as do so many scientific societies. Scientific discovery does not depend on an individual's cultural or religious background any more than it does their gender or sexual orientation. Progress in our community depends on the free movement of researchers, their students, and the ideas they carry, as well as the capacity to listen with an open mind. Council has posted a statement on the CSEE website in response to the recent executive order prohibiting travel into or through the US from seven predominantly Muslim nations. CSEE recognizes and embraces diversity in all its forms, and we will continue to speak publicly in favour of a positive vision for science that encourages tolerance and inclusivity. CSEE will conclude work on a formal position around diversity and inclusivity, a process launched at the St. John's AGM last summer, and bring this to a vote at our business meeting at CSEE 2017 (<http://www.csee2017.ca>).

We are grateful for the continuing work of our SWEET (Symposium on Women Entering Evolution & Ecology Today) leaders because we recognize that women in STEM remain unequally represented in our institutions and in terms of opportunities. For more information about SWEET, and its many

contributions to our members, have a look at their website: <http://sweetecoevo.weebly.com/>

### **Policy activities and engagement**

When contributing to policy dialog, it is essential to remain clear on the difference between engagement and advocacy. Scientists are citizens too, so advocating in favour of personal views will not normally pose a moral obstacle to later policy engagement in a professional capacity. Nevertheless, attempting to make scientific opinions heard in noisy public policy discussions can mean that scientific voices are drowned out, effectively silencing scientists who try to make a difference with practical issues.

When governmental leaders ask for scientists' views, on the other hand, engagement is much easier. There have been a number of such opportunities in Canada over the past several months.

1. **Fundamental Science Review:** The Minister of Science convened a panel to consider how Canada's science landscape should evolve and how scientists and their research should be supported. With comments and suggestions from Council, I submitted detailed suggestions to this process and maintain a dialog with Ministry of Science leaders.
2. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) has initiated a **review of regulations around the Species At Risk Act**. Members of CSEE have played important roles in shaping discussions around the protection and recovery of at risk species since before SARA was passed. Some of the leaders in such work include Jeannette Whitton, Sally Otto, Jeff Hutchings, Scott Findlay, and Arne Mooers. These colleagues and I have submitted responses to the proposed new regulatory

guidelines and accompanying public comments will follow shortly. The deadline for responding to these has been extended to March 31, so please contribute if you feel these regulations do not address SARA shortcomings adequately:

[\(SARA consultation\)](#)

3. **Canadian Science Policy Conference**

**(CSPC):** I attended CSPC in November as an invited panelist around gender diversity and as a session organizer (with Rees Kassen) and speaker on “Emerging Research Leaders: a vision for evolving Canada’s research landscape.” I communicated views that are strongly represented at CSEE meetings around the need to embrace diversity and inclusivity and that researchers should be encouraged to engage the public and policymakers in their work (e.g. citizen science, hackathons, maker faires). Here is a blog posting about the event ([mitacs blog](#)) but it was also mentioned in *Science* ([Science news](#)).

4. **Chief Scientific Advisor:** I have worked with Dr. Kirsty Duncan, now Minister of Science, on developing the role of Chief Scientific Advisor since early 2015. The Motion to Parliament we prepared around restoring scientific integrity was adopted as part of her party platform, science integrity issues were prominent in Canada’s election campaign, and subsequently became government policy. The role of the Chief Scientific Advisor adopts a strong model, as hoped, and the search for Canada’s CSA will conclude in February.

5. **Scientific Integrity:** There is a small, but important, update on this issue. The Government of Canada and the union representing scientists (PIPSC) concluded a new collective agreement that enshrines scientific integrity principles in it. This will hopefully be the last policy nail in the coffin of the old muzzling regime that has quickly, but not quite completely, faded in Canada.

### **Public science**

In terms of public engagement, I continued in the tradition of previous members of our evolution and ecology research community as an “Egghead”. Through the Partnership Group on Science and Engineering (PAGSE), I gave a presentation at the **Bacon and Eggheads speaker series** in Parliament. Members of Parliament, political staff, staff from NSERC and other agencies, and researchers attend these events. I used this opportunity to speak about some of Canada’s highest profile research contributions in the realms of ecology and conservation, emphasizing recent discoveries from within our community.

I also spoke at the Museum of Nature’s Arctic Biodiversity Symposium in January, examining issues and opportunities in modelling biodiversity change across that vast region. Members of our community, like David Hik, Warwick Vincent, and Dominique Berteaux, played exemplary roles in this event, as did our colleagues in the Museum community, like Mark Graham and Jeff Saarela.

### **Opportunities**

Late last summer, NSERC issued a call for suggestions around the next round of their **“Discovery Frontiers” program**. I was contacted about two of the proposals and asked whether CSEE would write letters of support. Both proposals were excellent and, with council input, I was pleased to support them. To our delight, I have been informed that one of these proposals inspired this new Discovery Frontiers call, the core theme of which will be **“Biodiversity and Adaptation of Biosystems”**. I encourage members to cooperate broadly and apply:

[\(Discovery Frontiers\)](#)

Over the years, CSEE has built an excellent working relationship with NSERC at all levels. I suspect that NSERC’s focus on biodiversity and evolutionary responses to environmental change in this DF call partly reflects CSEE engagement.

It is important to recognize our past Presidents, like **Judy Myers** and **Jeff Hutchings**, who helped forge a strong relationship with NSERC, among many other

contributions. Part of CSEE Council's role is to continue building on those foundations.

### **Conclusions**

It is the best of times and the worst of times. Our community in Canada is accomplishing extraordinary things, whether in terms of discoveries, education, public outreach, or contributions to evidence-informed policy. I am not sure if "renaissance" is too optimistic a term to describe recent developments, but changes underway in Canada are fostering a stronger science culture.

Our community is highly international and shares a deep respect for diversity and inclusivity. We know that scientific progress, among other things, is better when it is open to new ideas and different perspectives.

We also know that policies that ignore hard data ("facts") can go badly astray. Climate change is no hoax, evolution happens, and vaccines are exceptionally helpful, for example. Our community can contribute scientific information to discussions that may soon unfold around such issues.

I know there is much to do in defense of shared values around tolerance and evidence-informed policy in Canada and elsewhere. **Many hands make for lighter work.**

## Vice President's Report Isabelle Côté, Simon Fraser U *CSEE Council Elections for 2017*

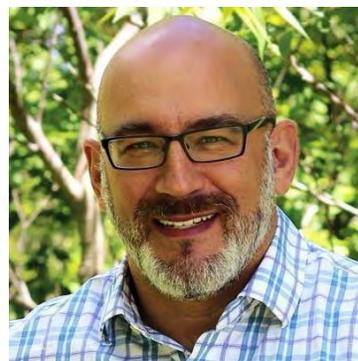


Out with the old, in with the new? Hardly! But soon, we must say thank you and farewell to several council members who have served our Society so well over the past few years. They will be leaving four empty seats on Council, so this year, we are holding elections for the posts of Secretary, regular Councillor (two positions) and Graduate Student Councillor. We are pleased and

incredibly fortunate to reveal a slate of remarkable people who have agreed to stand for these positions.

Find out about the candidates by reading their bios. When the email comes in a few weeks inviting you to cast your votes on the electronic ballot, JUST DO IT! All it will take is a few clicks of the mouse and a couple ticks of the clock. We will announce the election results in early spring and hope to introduce the new Council to you in person at the Victoria meeting (<http://www.csee2017.ca>) in May.

### **Secretary**



#### **Albrecht Schulte-Hostedde**

Laurentian University  
<http://www.cceec.ca/people/albrecht-schulte-hostedde/>

I am seeking the position of Secretary

of the CSEE. I have been an active member of the CSEE, serving as the CSEE representative on the Canadian Council for Animal Care (CCAC) from 2009-2015, and serving on the Board of the CCAC (2011-2016). I am currently Professor and Canada Research Chair in Applied Evolutionary Ecology at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Canada, where I am the Director of the Center for Evolutionary Ecology and Ethical Conservation (CEECE). I serve on the Terrestrial Mammal Subcommittee of COSEWIC, and lead the NSERC CREATE program, ReNewZoo, a training program for conservation professionals working with zoos and aquariums. I am eager to contribute to the CSEE as Secretary because of my belief in the mandate of the CSEE, and the need for a greater voice by members from small universities in the Canadian ecology and evolution community.

### Regular Councillor (2 positions)



**Carissa Brown**  
Memorial  
University

<http://carissabrown.wixsite.com/home>

I am an Assistant Professor of Biogeography at Memorial University (MUN), where my research group focuses our work on the distribution of plant species at the edge of their ranges, with particular emphasis on non-climatic factors influencing species responses to climate change. Our research primarily takes place in boreal forest ecosystems, in both sub-arctic and southern regions. I champion the use of experimentation in field studies, and lead the Global Treeline Range Expansion Experiment, a coordinated distributed experiment with participants at treelines around the world. Before landing at MUN, my academic path led from an early hiccup at the University of Guelph to a B.Sc. at Lakehead, M.Sc. at Carleton with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Ph.D. at University of Saskatchewan, and a post-doc at l'Université de

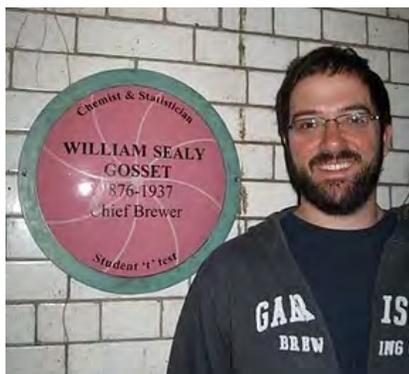
Sherbrooke. I have been an active member of CSEE since 2008, attending every meeting since 2009, and co-organizing our most recent gathering in St. John's. My strongest motivation for serving as a CSEE Councillor is to move the Society toward increasing the participation of underrepresented groups, a topic much discussed at our last few conferences and SWEET symposia. Having just finished my term on the Board of the American Association of Geographers Biogeography Specialty Group, I am keen to focus my time and energy on CSEE, the Society that I think best represents my research and role as an early(ish)-career scientist.



**Alberto Civetta**  
University of  
Winnipeg  
<http://ion.uwinnipeg.ca/~acivetta/>

It is an honour to have the opportunity to serve the CSEE. I am a Full Professor in Biology

at the University of Winnipeg. Originally from Argentina, I received my Ph.D. from McMaster University and postdoc at PennState University before moving to Winnipeg. I am an evolutionary geneticist whose research concentrates on the genetic basis of reproductive isolation between species and in testing selection at the molecular level, particular at genes with a role in reproduction. Based on my years of experience in the classroom, I can provide perspective on the relevance of evolutionary genetics/ genomics research to society. I am interested in broadly promoting science, believe in the importance of engaging students, and look forward to work to help foster the development of early career scientists. I also look forward to work with CSEE to increase representation and participation of Prairie scientists in our society.



**Colin Garroway**  
University of  
Manitoba



**Robert Laird**  
University of  
Lethbridge

<http://umanitoba.ca/Biology/people/garrowcj/>

I am a new Assistant Professor (2016) in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Manitoba. My research group uses ecological and population genomic analyses to explore how environments, demography, and behaviour can promote and constrain evolutionary change. We currently focus our attention on the colonisations of cities by grey squirrels to explore the nature of local adaptation and population divergence. We also collaborate with research scientists at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to attempt to identify and mitigate the effects of climate change and development on Arctic marine mammal populations.

I attended my first CSEE meeting in Toronto (2007) as a graduate student and since then have attended as regularly as was possible. During this time, I have benefited considerably from the friendly sense of community and support of early career researchers fostered by the CSEE. Due to this experience, I see this support system as one of the most important activities of the CSEE and feel well positioned to contribute to, and further develop, these supports as a Councillor. As an early career assistant professor, I would be an enthusiastic representative of newly hired researchers on Council and ensure issues important to this group were clearly articulated in Council communications with funding bodies. More generally, I would be grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the CSEE's good work supporting and promoting the importance of research in ecology and evolution at a national level.

<http://people.uleth.ca/~robert.laird/>

I'm an Associate Professor at the University of Lethbridge where I've been a faculty member since 2009, following time at Queen's University (BSc, MSc), the University of Calgary (PhD), and Carleton University (PDF). My lab members and I work on the evolution of plant aging, plant-insect interactions, and various topics in ecological and evolutionary theory. I teach Population Biology, Biostatistics, Mathematical Modelling, and a large first-year course called 'Diversity of Life'. I am also involved in graduate education, both as a supervisor and as the Chair of my university's MSc Program Committee. In addition to my roles at the U of L, I am an Editorial Board member of *Biology Letters* and a regular reviewer for many other journals and funding agencies. I served the Alberta Conservation Association for four years as a member of their grants adjudication committee, with a focus on student grants.

Having attended every annual meeting since the CSEE's inauguration in Montreal in 2006, I've been very impressed by the steady increase in the Society's positive influence as it galvanizes researchers and institutions from across the country, advocates for support of basic and applied ecological research, and holds policy makers' feet to the fire regarding the importance of evidence-based decision making. The Society has been instrumental in my own professional and career development, and I am eager to help contribute to further its aims. I am particularly interested in the role of early-career scientists (especially students and post-docs) in building the society and ensuring its long-term success. Thus, if I am elected Councillor I will advocate for policies that seek to 1)

build society membership, particularly at the student and post-doc levels, 2) increase student and post-doc scholarship and award funding, both within the Society and via government agencies, and 3) enhance the availability of leadership roles for students and post-docs in the Society.



**Dave Shutler**  
Acadia University

<http://www.acadiau.ca/~dshutler/>

I am a behavioral ecologist who, for the most part, focuses my research effort on tree swallows, Leach's storm-petrels, and honey bees. In these and other study systems, I am interested in how stressors mess with metrics of fitness, mainly cognitive ability, reproductive success, and survival. Stressors I have focused on have included pesticides and mercury, and a diverse array of parasites. I come from a small institution that has a vibrant Biology program akin to those at many institutions represented within the CSEE membership. Thus, I am familiar with both the opportunities and challenges of researchers at small institutions. As my vitae indicates, I am also highly collaborative. As Councillor, I would thus bring collegiality and experience to grow our membership and fan the flames of our collective energies.



**Laura Weir**  
St Mary's University  
<http://www.smu.ca/academics/departments/profile-laura-weir.html>

I am an Assistant Professor at Saint

Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. My interest in ecology and evolution began in Montreal, where I did my undergraduate degree in Biology at Concordia University. Both my Master's and PhD are from Dalhousie University, where I expanded my interests to conservation biology and the evolution of mating systems. I moved to Vancouver to do a post-doc in evolutionary biology at Simon Fraser, and stayed in British Columbia to pursue a fellowship at UBC where I learned about effective teaching in science. In combination, these academic experiences at institutions from coast to coast have stressed the importance of promoting the understanding of basic ecological and evolutionary principles, both in the classroom and beyond, to provide the citizens of Canada (and the world!) with the tools they need to make informed decisions about issues that affect our natural environment. As a CSEE Councillor, I would like to continue to support our organization's strong tradition of encouraging the effective communication of science to the public, and in particular promote student involvement in this initiative.

### **Graduate Student Councillor (1 position)**

**Dasvinder Kambo**  
Queen's University  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/dasvinder-kambo-498783aa>



I'm a 4th year PhD Candidate from Queen's University, specializing in alpine ecology. My research interests are centered on understanding treeline dynamics in southwest Yukon, Canada. In

nominating myself for the Graduate Student Councillor position, I am hoping to bring my passion of science advocacy to the CSEE. Over the past few years, I have given multiple interviews on television and radio regarding climate science, northern ecology and the importance of basic

science. In 2014, I created, organized and sought funding for a 5-week seminar series titled “Shattering the Academic Language Barrier: Climate Science Explained”. For the series, I invited MPs and scientists to speak to the public, free of charge, about climate science. Based on the success of the series, in 2015, I created “Shattering the Sustainability Myths: Green Technology Explained”, where I invited key scientists and industry experts to speak about renewable technology. This year, I have organized a climate change series with the Toronto District School Board where I give weekly lectures on climate science to high school students.

If I am selected as a Graduate Student Councillor, I hope to increase our outreach beyond researchers and academics. I strongly believe that by engaging more non-scientists in Canada, we can foster a sense of sustainability, importance of biodiversity and basic ecology in a much more meaningful and far-reaching way. When the public is engaged and interested in ecology, policy makers will take notice and begin to do more to conserve our ecosystems.



**Phillip Meintzer**  
Memorial University  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/phillip-meintzer-6694a4126>

I am an M. Sc. graduate student at the Fisheries & Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN), currently completing the second year of my

M. Sc. research. My research project is focused on promoting the conservation of Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*) through the improvement and implementation of low-impact fishing gears (cod pots) in Newfoundland and Labrador, with the goal of having cod pots considered as an alternative harvesting strategy to higher impact fishing gears such as gillnets.

I would like to nominate myself for the advertised CSEE Council position – Graduate

Student Councillor. If elected to the position, I will provide the Council with leadership experience (I am currently serving as the elected Treasurer for the MUN Biology Graduate Student Association), creativity, and a unique perspective influenced by my research experiences related to Canadian Atlantic fisheries.



**Ken Thompson**  
University of British Columbia  
<https://ecolutionaryevology.com/>

I am a Ph.D. student at The University of British Columbia, studying the ecological and genetic mechanisms of speciation. I am

currently the institutional graduate student representative for CSEE at UBC. If elected, I would strive to strengthen society outreach to junior scientists (both undergraduate and graduate students) by creating opportunities for them to connect with faculty mentors at the annual meeting. In addition, I would organize ‘networking dinners’ at annual meetings that would connect graduate students who have similar interests but are based at different institutions. I would also like to initiate a new yearly student award for the best paper in the fields of ecology, evolution, or conservation published by a graduate student in any journal.



**Quinn Webber**  
Memorial University  
<http://qwebber.weebly.com/>

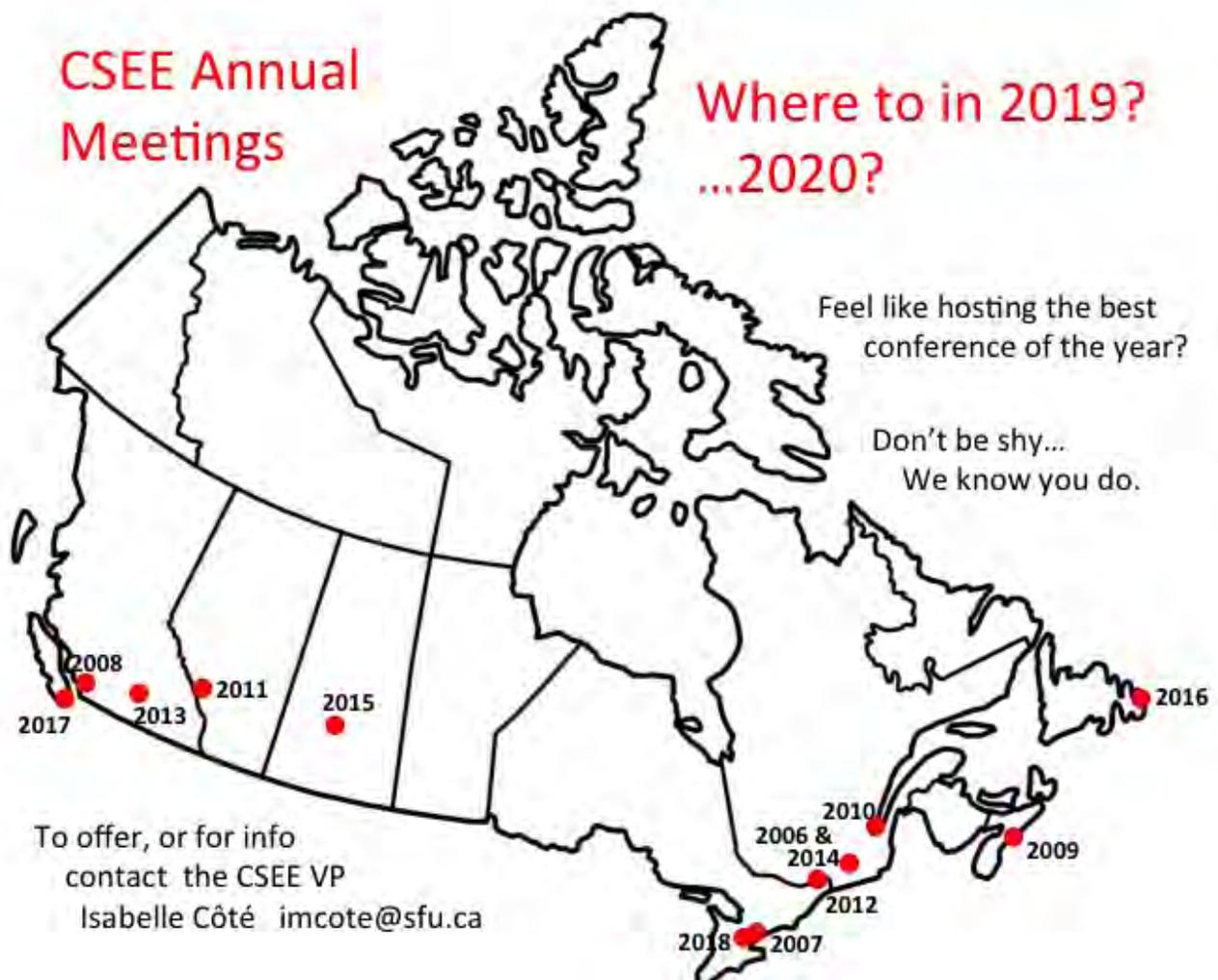
I was first introduced to

research through studying the effects of behaviour on pathogen dynamics in bats with Dr. Craig Willis at The University of Winnipeg (UW). After completing both an Honours and MSc in a

supportive community at UW, my research interests brought me to Memorial University where I recently started a PhD with Dr. Eric Vander Wal studying social and spatial behaviour of caribou in Newfoundland. While I am specifically interested in how and why animals make social and spatial decisions, my research ties together aspects of conservation biology, animal behaviour, and evolutionary ecology.

I am passionate about science communication and engagement, and am excited by the prospect of sharing these interests as a CSEE Student Councillor. The community-based culture at past CSEE meetings has been incredibly inspiring, providing both an encouraging atmosphere and key networking opportunities. In my experience as a young scientist, it is the presence of this open community atmosphere that sets certain

societies/conferences apart for students. I am interested in maintaining and growing the student-oriented atmosphere of CSEE. My previous experiences on the organizing committee for the Prairie University Biology Symposium, University committees (e.g. Animal Care), and student-oriented groups, like journal clubs and statistics workshops, have provided me with relevant skills to contribute to the CSEE council. I intend on continuing current initiatives, such as the graduate student excellence grant, as well as implementing new opportunities for talented and diverse students to showcase their research to CSEE members and a broader audience. This could include profiling student members online and in newsletters. As a CSEE Graduate Student Councillor I hope to continue building a positive, healthy, and student-oriented CSEE community.



## Secretary's Report

Miriam Richards, Brock U



Already the end of January (February by the time this is out)! With this winter newsletter, I head into my last few months as CSEE Secretary. It's been an interesting, challenging, and often fun experience – I hope everyone out there seriously considers standing for Council

in some capacity in the future. The Society needs you.

During these last few months, several big items are on the agenda. First is the annual election for CSEE Council, which will likely be held in late February to early March. As usual, the election will be by electronic ballot, and we hope every CSEE member will take a few minutes to read about the candidates and then vote in the election. A second big project is the long-awaited effort to create a new membership database. This is a two-pronged project in which we are creating a new

membership database that will eventually be integrated with a system for tracking membership dues and conference registration. The current membership tracking system using spreadsheets is definitely primitive, and the PayPal system apparently has become infested with gremlins over the past year or so. I do apologize to anyone who has been inconvenienced and thank you for being patient. A new database and payment system should be in place this spring, just in time for the next CSEE Secretary to take over. The second part of the project involves integrating the membership records with the CSEE website, which itself will be undergoing a major upgrade in the next few months.

A frequent topic of discussion in Council meetings is coming up with new ideas for membership benefits. One that came up at Council's December meeting was a new way to assist members with NSERC grant proposals. Every year, the conference includes a few sessions with NSERC officials and we are looking for ways to make these sessions more useful. This year we plan to hold a mock grant evaluation session so that members can get a clearer idea of how the evaluation process actually works. If you have other ideas, let us know – we'd love to hear them!

## University-level faculty and student representatives for CSEE

Alison Derry, Université du Québec à Montréal



The CSEE membership committee comprised of Julie Lee-Yaw, Yolanda Morbey, Miriam Richards and myself launched a campaign to recruit a faculty and student representative for CSEE at every Canadian university. We compiled a database with faculty representatives that have agreed to this role during the fall of 2016. Thank you to those who have agreed to be an institutional representative for CSEE. Welcome! For those who

have already been in this role for many years, thank you again!

We have two requests that we would like to ask of CSEE university faculty reps to start off 2017:

1. Please email me ([derry.alison@ugam.ca](mailto:derry.alison@ugam.ca)) your confirmation of this permission for website publicity if you have not done so already. We will upload a list of university faculty representatives on our website once we have confirmation of permission for this publicity from the faculty that we have been in contact with.

The goals of having CSEE university faculty representatives at each university are 1) to facilitate rapid transmission of CSEE news with tight deadlines to a wider cross-section of researchers in ecology and evolution at each university; 2) to create a university-level framework for transmitting feedback from members back to CSEE; and 3) to recruit and

maintain a student CSEE representative at their university.

2. We would like to have a student representative for CSEE at each university by the end of winter. Almost 50% of faculty reps at Canadian universities have already come forward with a graduate student for this role. If you are in the other 50%, please send me the email address of the student representative that you have chosen for your department.

Through CSEE university student representatives, we would like to create a better venue for student networking among universities. We also hope to enhance student involvement and participation from universities across Canada in student-driven activities, workshops, and job forums at the annual meeting.

## Student & Postdoctoral Members

Julie Lee-Yaw, (UBC) & Mélanie Jean (U Saskatchewan) Student/Postdoc Councillors



**CSEE 2017 in Victoria (May 7<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, 2017):**

**Diversity and Excellence in Doctoral Research Award (\$500):** The CSEE has created new awards to highlight the work of our senior graduate student members. The “Diversity and Excellence in Doctoral Research Award” will be granted to five CSEE PhD student members nearing the end of their degree (approximately 1 year left) who will be presenting at the annual meeting. To apply for this award, students must email the student councillors ([CSEEstudent@gmail.com](mailto:CSEEstudent@gmail.com)) by February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017

(note new deadline) to submit their application: i) thesis summary (500 words), ii) summary of other relevant activities (250 words), iii) a list of selected awards and contributions (max. 1 page), and iv) a letter of support from their supervisor or a committee member. Please carefully read the detailed instructions found at [CSEE students grants and awards](#) before applying, and note that eligibility has been extended to Canadian students studying outside the country. The five winners will receive \$500 and present their work in a special ‘Graduate Student Showcase Symposium’ highlighting exceptional student research at the Victoria meeting.

**CSEE Student Presentation Awards (Regular awards):** Student presentation awards (\$500, \$300, and \$200) will be given to the top three talks and posters during the meeting. The New Phytologist Trust will also offer a \$500 prize to the best student presentation (poster or talk) in botany. **To be considered for these awards, you have to apply.**

The requirements have not been released yet, but keep an eye on the CSEE website, as well as the [Victoria meeting website](#). To see the criteria our judges use to evaluate presentations and get some tips for creating an effective presentation go to: [CSEE Student grants and awards](#).

**CSEE Student Travel Grants (\$500 each and 5 PDF Travel Grants):** In 2017, CSEE will provide 20

\$500 travel grants to student and 5 travel grants to post-doctoral members presenting a talk or poster at the annual meeting. Recipients will be chosen at random from student (20) and post-doc (5) members that have paid their yearly membership fees and are travelling over 500 km to get to Victoria. If you would like to be considered for a travel grant, you must forward the email confirming your submission of a presentation, note that you are a CSEE member, and list the address of your home University to [CSEEstudent@gmail.com](mailto:CSEEstudent@gmail.com) by the early bird registration deadline (March 1, 2017). We will send a confirmation email so that you can be sure your application has been received, and winners will be notified two weeks after the early-bird submission date.

**Student Workshop & Mixer:** We will reprise the popular “Strategies for Success” workshop held in Montreal 2014/Saskatoon 2015/St. John’s 2016. The workshop will be held at Garrick’s Head pub in Victoria on May 7<sup>th</sup> 2017 and will consist of small discussion groups focusing on a range of topics. Students will be free to move from group to group during the evening. Tentative topics for discussion are: 1) How to effectively conduct and

communicate research to conservation and management policy makers, 2) How to peer-review for academic journals, 3) Advice on choosing where to do your MSc/PhD/PDF, 4) Preparing for your MSc/PhD defense, 5) Deciding if an academic career is right for you, 6) Landing a job outside academia, 7) Maintaining work-life balance, 8) Raising kids during your graduate degree/post-doc, 9) Applying for post-docs/faculty positions, 10) Advice for teaching your first university course. Ideas for additional topics are welcome, please contact us at [CSEEstudent@gmail.com](mailto:CSEEstudent@gmail.com) with your suggestions.

**NSERC Scholarships and Fellowships:**

There has not been much change in NSERC's policies in the past year. You can check out the number of applications and success rates of the NSERC competitions since 2012 on their website: [NSERC funding decisions](#)

**CSEE Elections: New student councillor to be elected this Winter**

Be sure to vote for your new student councillor in this winter’s election. Nominations are now closed and you can learn about the students running for this position in Isabelle Côté’s VP report (above). You will receive notice of the election via email in the coming months; please vote!

As always, please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, would like to become more involved, and/or have ideas for new initiatives at [CSEEstudent@gmail.com](mailto:CSEEstudent@gmail.com). Looking forward to seeing you all in Victoria in May!

CSEE is investing in updating its website and membership database capabilities in 2017. If you have comments about things you’d like to see changed with the website or membership interface, please let us know! Ideas or comments can be sent to the current website coordinator, Jill Johnstone ([jill.johnstone@usask.ca](mailto:jill.johnstone@usask.ca)).

# Update on CSEE work with PAGSE

## The Partnership Group for Science and Engineering

Jeremy Kerr (U Ottawa), CSEE representative to PAGSE

One of the main pathways for engagement between CSEE and agencies and policymakers is through our active participation in the Partnership Group for Science and Engineering (PAGSE). PAGSE is a group that operates independently within the Royal Society of Canada, that consists of representatives from many scientific societies across Canada. PAGSE serves three main roles:

1. To encourage face-to-face meetings between the organization and agency leaders,
2. To organize and submit suggestions to governmental requests for input on policy directions, and
3. To bring leading speakers to Parliament Hill to give presentations to Parliamentarians, agency leaders, and science staff through its banner Bacon and Eggheads breakfast.

The current Chair of PAGSE is Professor Maria DeRosa, who has proven exceptionally capable.

PAGSE met with the new President of the National Research Council of Canada (NRC) in November, Mr. Iain Stewart. Mr. Stewart explained the nature of the reforms he was implementing within NRC to restore morale among scientific staff and to refocus the agency. This presentation was refreshingly frank and encouraging. Early signs are that NRC, which is one of Canada's venerable scientific institutions, might really benefit from this change of management style, with its greater emphasis on consensus-building and respect for the expertise and opinions of staff. We will continue to monitor developments at NRC.

PAGSE submitted a brief to the government in response to its solicitation for budgetary ideas in the coming year, specifically to the House Finance Committee. Suggestions for expenditures included funding for a new "Canada Opportunity

Scholarship" that would equalize costs of study for students wherever in Canada their graduate work brought them, funding for smart power grids in the north, emphasis on bringing industrial research into much closer partnership with academic institutions through joint research facilities, and significant increases to granting councils to make Canadian research funding levels comparable to those of other G8 nations. PAGSE's previous funding requests have sometimes contributed to meaningful changes in scientific funding in Canada, including a 15% increase to Discovery Grant levels a few years ago. These annual finance briefs are difficult to prepare and present. PAGSE also prepared submissions to the Government of Canada's request for input on climate change and the state of fundamental research. Both submissions are available on request.

Finally, PAGSE organized three talks in Parliament over the autumn. CSEE is fortunate that two of these emphasized ecology and evolution. Professor Mike Flannigan, from University of Alberta, spoke about wildfire ecology in Canada ("Living with forest fires: Lessons from Fort McMurray"). I was unable to attend this talk, but it received very positive reviews. I gave the other eco-evo talk on October 27 ("The great biodiversity challenge: conserving nature through a century of unprecedented change"). I used this opportunity to highlight the extraordinary research conducted by our research community as well as the expected emphasis on discoveries in my research program. A third presentation focused on nanorobots. All talks are described on the PAGSE web site.

In my opinion, PAGSE continues to serve as a valuable way for CSEE to engage with policy-makers and agencies.

Details about PAGSE activities can be found here: <http://pagse.org>.

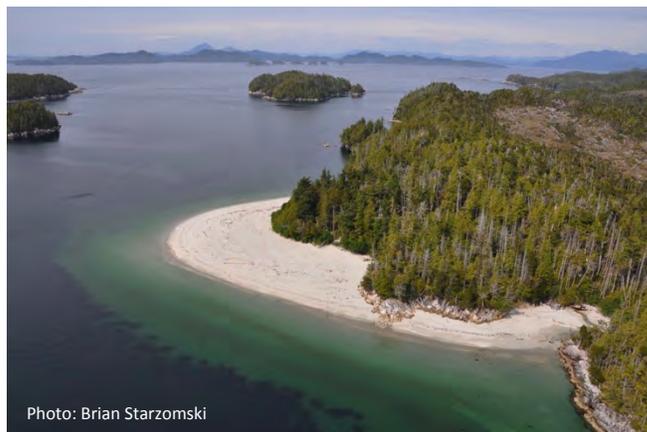
## CSEE 2017: Victoria, May 7-11

Brian Starzomski (U Victoria), LOC



Early registration is now open for the 2017 CSEE Meetings in Victoria, British Columbia. Please visit [www.csee2017.ca/registration.html](http://www.csee2017.ca/registration.html) to register (abstract submission closes March 1<sup>st</sup>). The main part of the conference encompassing the talks and symposiums will take place from Monday-Wednesday May 8-10th, with workshops preceding these days, and field trips happening on Thursday May 11th. There is an excellent lineup of symposiums already accepted, across all topics in Ecology, Conservation, Evolutionary Biology, and Policy. Some examples of field trips include visiting

Species at Risk and restored ecosystems at Ft Rodd Hill National Historic Site, the biodiverse marine habitats of Botanical Beach and the big trees of Avatar Grove, both on the west coast of Vancouver Island, and visiting Gulf Islands National Park Reserve by boat. Field trips are first-come-first-served, so be sure to sign up when you register. Looking forward to seeing everyone in May!



## CSEE 2018: Guelph

Andrew MacDougall, LOC

We are excited to be hosting the 2018 CSEE conference at the University of Guelph, from Wed July 18<sup>th</sup>-Saturday July 21<sup>st</sup>. Our conference theme centers on **Ecology and Evolution in Theory and Practice**. Our plenary speakers and many of our symposia will tackle cutting edge theoretical, empirical, mathematical, modelling and related methodological issues at the forefront of eco-evo research globally. We will offer several exciting features to the conference. First, we are thrilled to be partnering with the 2018 annual conference of the North American Society for Conservation Biology, to be hosted by the University of Toronto immediately after the CSEE. The conferences will be linked in many ways, including shared symposia, field trips, and the ability to easily register for both conferences at reduced rates. Second, we will be embedding the *Peter Yodzis Colloquium in Fundamental Ecology* as a special symposium in



CSEE 2018

(<https://peteryodziscolloquium.wordpress.com/>).

Finally, we will be offering a diverse array of field excursions and nightly social events, made possible by the close proximity of Guelph to the Great Lakes, the Niagara Escarpment, and Algonquin

Park, and our town's bustling social scene with its diverse collection of restaurants, microbreweries, and entertainment venues.

## Communicating Science to Media and Policy Makers: Canada's Liber Ero Fellowship Program

Sally Otto, Director; Anita Miettunen, Program Coordinator

The [Liber Ero Fellowship Program](#) continues to offer unique opportunities for post-doctoral fellows who want to make a difference in applied conservation biology in Canada. Through their two-year fellowships, Liber Ero Fellows partner with academic and conservation mentors, collaborate on group projects, and develop valuable networks that can provide future career support. Fellows also participate in our bi-annual retreats where they build upon their leadership, communications, and policy-influencing skills.

Our fall retreat (October 2016) brought us back to Ottawa for a dynamic week of communications training, meetings with government officials, and networking. Communications training was led by [Nancy Baron](#), of COMPASS, and had Liber Ero Fellows honing their science communications strategies directly with journalists Sonya Buyting, Jim Handman, and Ivan Semeniuk. They also met with Ottawa-based reporters and communications experts to learn about parliamentary journalism. Throughout the week, Fellows presented policy briefs to MPs and to All-Party Caucus Meetings on Oceans (marine protected areas) and on Climate

Change. Fellows also organized a panel with Rob Annan ([Public Policy Forum](#)), [Eleanor Fast](#) (Nature Canada), [Jeremy Kerr](#) (University of Ottawa), [Jeffrey Kinder](#) (Federal Science and Technology Secretariat), and MP [Richard Cannings](#) to discuss how scientists can influence conservation and environmental policy in Canada.

Our next retreat (spring 2017) will focus on facilitation skills and our selection process for choosing 2017 Fellows is now underway (the next application deadline is November 1, 2017). For further information please visit our [website](#) or



contact us at [info@liberero.ca](mailto:info@liberero.ca).

## Your Current CSEE Council

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- [Isabelle Côté](#) – Vice president (2016-2018)
- [Miriam Richards](#) - Secretary (2012-2015, 2015-2017)
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- [Alison Derry](#)– Councillor (2016-2019)
- [Julie Lee-Yaw](#) - Student/Post-doc Councillor (2016-2018)



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