

Geology & Society Division

Newsletter Fall, 2009

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Greetings from the Chair

Dear Geology and Society Division Members,

The annual meeting is nearly here. I hope that this Newsletter finds your research coming together to make for interesting and scintillating presentations in Portland. The division officers and volunteers have been busy making preparations. We have a need for additional volunteers from the Division to serve as judges in the Best Student Presentation competition. Please contact Craig Cooper craig.cooper@inl.gov to help. We also need assistance at the booth in the exhibits area. Contact Jon Goodwin geolojon@comcast.net or Goodwin@isgs.illinois.edu to help.

There are a few changes to our customary schedule that you should note. We will not be meeting together on Monday evening. Instead, this year, our Distinguished Speaker will be the GSA Lunchtime Keynote Speaker on **Sunday**, Oct. 18 at 12:15 PM, in Room D135/136 in the Oregon Convention Center. Our invited guest is Patricia A. Woertz, and her topic will be “*Toward a Shared Energy Future: Carbon Sequestration and the Global Corporation.*” The Division Business meeting will be held **Tuesday**, Oct. 20 at 5:45 PM in Room B113. Please plan to join us both Sunday at 12:15 and again Tuesday at 5:45.

Thanks are in order to Rhea Graham for her service as Second Vice-Chair this past year. We congratulate her on her new position with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and wish her well.

It is also time to thank Dick Berg for his service to the Division as Newsletter Editor. His patience and attention to detail have ensured that the membership received timely and

interesting material. This is the last edition of the Newsletter that Dick will edit. We welcome our incoming editor, Rob McDowell.

I have enjoyed my year as Chair of the Division. I look forward to the continued influence that the Division has established within GSA and beyond. Please join me in welcoming the newly elected members of the leadership team, Joan E. Fryxell appointed to fill the vacancy in the First Vice-Chair position, and Craig Cooper elected to the Second Vice-Chair position.

Please attend as many of the DG&S Events and Sponsored Sessions as possible. See you in Portland!

Regards,

Karen McCurdy, Chair DG&S

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Election Brings Changes to DG&S Management Board

Because of a recent resignation from the Division's Management Board, two of the candidates who ran for the office of Second Vice Chair have been asked by the Management Board to serve as officers starting this year. Rhea Graham, elected last year to be Second Vice Chair of the division, recently informed the Management Board that she had changed employment and the demands of her new position with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation would make it impossible for her to continue to fulfill her duties. Ms. Graham also has been forced to resign from her appointment to the GSA Finance Committee. The

Management Board, during a recent teleconference, voted unanimously to accept her resignation.

Ms. Graham's resignation left the position of Second Vice Chair vacant and the normal succession of officers through the offices of the Management Board was disrupted. After consulting with the candidates, and with Jack Hess, Executive Director of the GSA, the Management Board voted to approve the appointment of Joan Fryxell, the candidate with the largest vote count in the recent election to the position of First Vice Chair, and Craig Cooper, the candidate with the second largest vote count, to the position of Second Vice Chair. The candidates will take their respective offices at the close of the annual business meeting in Portland on October 20, 2009.

Joan E. Fryxell, appointed First Vice Chair by the management board to replace Rhea Graham, is a professor of geology at California State University, San Bernardino, specializing in structural geology and tectonics. She graduated from Earlham College with a BA in Geology, earned a Master of Arts in Botany from the University of Texas at Austin and her PhD degree in geology from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. She joined the faculty at San Bernardino in 1989 after serving as a National Research Council Post-Doctoral fellow at the U.S. Geological Survey from 1984-1986, and a post-doctoral fellowship at Harvard University from 1987-1989. She joined the GSA in 1977 and has served as General Chair and Technical Chair of the 1994 Cordilleran Section Meeting, Secretary-Treasurer of the Cordilleran Section from 2001-2009, and Associate Editor of the GSA Bulletin from 2000-2004. She was a member of the Virtual Student Expo Steering Committee (2002-2003), the Ad Hoc Committee on the role of Sections in the Society (2004-2005), the Ad Hoc Committee on the role of Divisions in the Society (2005-2006) and the Ad Hoc Committee on Accreditation (2006-2008). She can be reached at jfryxell@csusb.edu.

In her statement of interest, Professor Fryxell said, "We as geoscientists need to expand our discussions...to include policy makers at the local state and federal levels. (Regrettably), taking our science to policy makers carries little or no professional prestige for academic geologists. We all understand that policy will be more effective and cheaper in the long run if science is fully considered during policy development.... I view the G&S Division as a growing force through which to make these improvements."

D. Craig Cooper, elected Second Vice Chair, received just 8 fewer votes than Professor Fryxell in the election. A specialist in Carbon, Water, and Energy Systems at the Idaho National Laboratory in Idaho Falls, ID, Dr. Cooper received his BS in Chemistry at Clemson University and his PhD in Chemical

Oceanography at Texas A & M University. He was a research associate at the Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs (1998-2000) and a Visiting Assistant Professor of Chemistry at the IU Department of Chemistry (2000-2001). From 2001 to 2006 he was involved in geoscience research at the Idaho National Laboratory. In 2006-2007, he was the GSA's Congressional Science Fellow and served in the office of Senator Diane Feinstein (D-CA). Since 2007, Craig has been a member of the Energy Resources Recovery and Management department at the Idaho National Laboratory. He has been active in Democratic Party politics and was a candidate for the House of Representatives in Idaho's 1st Congressional District in 2006. He can be reached at craig.cooper@inl.gov.

In his statement of interest, Dr. Cooper said, "I want to continue my service to GSA in the area of "geosciences serving public policy"; I think I can best do that by helping the G&S Division to grow. One key is to help geoscientists rediscover the value and reward of "geosciences for public service." Society provides extensive financial support to science, yet too little professional reward is given for activities that translate scientific knowledge into "actionable items" that provide tangible benefits to society. I think the G&S Division can help change this balance through innovative forums that focus on "science-based solutions" to augment GSA's traditional "knowledge discovery" forums."

Dr. Robin J. McDowell, the third candidate running for the office of Second Vice Chair in 2009, has been offered, and has accepted, an appointment from Chair Karen McCurdy to serve the Division as Newsletter Editor for the coming year. Richard Berg, the Newsletter Editor since the start of the Division, has decided to step down after the completion of the current issue. Dr. McDowell is director of the Environmental Policy Program of the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia in Athens. He received his BS in geosciences from The Pennsylvania State University, his MS in geology from West Virginia University and his PhD in geological sciences from the University of Kentucky. Following a post-doctoral fellowship from 1992-1993 at Georgia State University in Atlanta, he accepted an appointment to the Georgia Geological Survey and worked there, and for its successor agency, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, from 1993 to 2009. He left the EPD to take his current position. His professional interests include earth science and public policy development, regional water management, aquifer sustainability, and earth science education. He is a licensed professional geologist in Georgia. He can be reached at mcdowell@cviog.uga.edu.

Rhea Graham's resignation pointed to the absence of a provision in the Division's by-laws to deal with the

problem of the resignation of an officer. Karen McCurdy, the current chair, will appoint a committee to develop an amendment to the by-laws to be presented to the membership and voted on at the 2010 Annual Meeting in Denver.

ANNOUNCEMENT - New Division of Geology & Society Newsletter Editor Rob McDowell

In my extremely biased opinion, there is no more fundamental science than Earth science. So, it's very exciting to be the next editor of the DG&S Newsletter, taking over from Dick Berg following the 2009 Annual Meeting in Portland. As Director of the Environmental Policy Program at the University of Georgia, I am extremely interested in introducing policy makers to Earth scientists and their work. Many policy makers still do not understand or accept global climate change science, evolution, or peak oil scenarios at a time when the very future of our societies depends on critical thinking in these areas. Sometimes, their lack of understanding is our fault. Therefore, my goal as newsletter editor will be to emphasize stories and articles focusing on reaching decision makers in ways that lead them to create policies based on the most fundamental science of all.

Rob McDowell mcdowell@cviog.uga.edu

ANNOUNCEMENT - Annual Meeting of the Membership

The annual meeting of the DG&S membership will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 20 in Room B113 of the convention center. The meeting will begin at 5:45 PM and will last about one hour. Among the items on the agenda are the following:

1. Presentation of the awards for the best student presentations at the 2008 Annual Meeting in Houston, Texas to Andrew Leaf for his paper with Jean Bahr entitled, "*Water Quality Changes during Aquifer Storage Recovery in the Cambrian-Ordovician Aquifer, Oak Creek, Wisconsin*" and to Philip Stokes for his paper entitled, "*Spreading Roots: The Goals and Challenges of Establishing a Self-Sustaining Diversity Program in Southern Arizona.*"
2. Introduction of the newly elected officers of the Division: Joan Fryxell, First Vice Chair; Craig Cooper, Second Vice Chair (provisional until October– see article on election p. 2), and Jonathan Goodwin Secretary-Treasurer.
3. Presentation by the Chair and the Secretary-Treasurer of the annual report to the

membership on activities of the division during fiscal year 2009.

4. Discussion of plans and activities for the coming year (late 2009 and 2010).
5. Passing of the chairmanship of the division from Karen McCurdy to Jim Davis.

The DG&S Distinguished Lecture, usually held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting, will instead be held at noon on Sunday, October 18 as one of the Lunchtime Keynote Lectures. The speaker is Patricia Woertz, Chairman of the Board, President, and Chief Executive Office of Archer Daniels Midland Company and her presentation is entitled "*Toward a Shared Energy Future: Carbon Sequestration and the Global Corporation.*" There will not be a reception at the annual business meeting on Tuesday, or at Ms. Woertz's presentation on Sunday.

ANNOUNCEMENT - Attend the DG&S Annual Business Meeting in Portland: Help Your Division Fulfill its GSA Public Policy Role

The officers celebrate DG&S membership's interest in making geosciences input to lay public policy makers at the local, regional, or national levels. We urgently invite all members and friends to the 5:45-6:45 PM October 20, 2009 Annual Division Business meeting (**Convention Center, Room B113**).

The summary of DG&S 2008-2009 activities at the meeting will highlight two exciting new developments -- further clarification of the DG&S role as a public policy organization in GSA and the creation of Policycomnet, the online GSA member's policy communication networking site. In early 2009, the GSA Council asked the Division of Geology and Society, the Geology and Public Policy Committee, and the Director of Geoscience Policy to prepare a short joint report outlining their principal public policy roles on behalf of GSA. DG&S has the principal responsibility to encourage and facilitate membership opportunities to provide local, regional, and state lay policy makers nonpartisan geosciences input that can improve their decisions. The GPPC has the principal responsibility to identify the need for GSA Position Statements on important policy issues and suggest expert panels of GSA members to prepare consensus statements on the topics and then to lead the resulting draft Statements through the process of review and comment by the membership and ultimate approval by the GSA Council. The GSA Director of Geoscience Policy represents GSA in Washington, DC principally at the national level. In early 2009 the development of Policycomnet was jointly sponsored by DG&S and GPPC with assistance from GSA staff in order to expand the opportunities for GSA members to consult with each

other and make geosciences input to decision makers as a means of encouraging a greater GSA membership public policy role.

The discussion of prospective activities during the upcoming 2009 – 10 year will consider the ways in the clarification of the DG&S role and Policycomnet can increase our Division's effectiveness by enabling, encouraging, and facilitating greater membership participation in successful communications of geoscience inputs needed for pending policy decisions to achieve their intended outcomes. We also hope to consider any suggestions that are proposed at the meeting by you our members. The officers wish to get your feedback, questions, and recommendations for 2009 – 10. Your participation in the Annual Meeting and during the coming year is vital to fulfilling the potential achievements by your Division.

We understand that your time at the Portland is very precious and that each of you has important activities competing for your time. Please plan to attend -- your presence is vital to the future of our Division. Bring nonmember friends who are also interested in public policies using geoscience insights. We suggest that you confirm the meeting room for our business meeting after you arrive in Portland to make certain that there has been no last minute venue change. See you there!

ANNOUNCEMENT - Division Award for the Best Student Presentation at the 2009 Meeting Needs Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to serve as judges for the DG&S' Student Presentation Award. Please let Craig Cooper (craig.cooper@inl.gov) know if you will be able to help with this task. Each student presentation in a DG&S co-sponsored session is automatically eligible for the award. Students are identified by their pre-registration for the meeting, so some are at the early stages of their research, while others have recently completed their degrees. There is a judging sheet that indicates the criteria on which the award is based that will be sent to you in advance of the meeting. You may return this sheet to Craig electronically or in hardcopy.

Volunteers Needed at GSA Annual Meeting in Portland

We need some volunteers to help run the Division's exhibit booth at GSA's Annual Meeting in Portland. The exhibit booth will be open on the following days and hours:

Sunday, Oct. 18, - 7 to 9 PM for the welcoming party event.

Monday, Oct. 19 - 9AM to 6 PM (We especially need one or more volunteers to work at the booth on Monday from 1:30 to 3:30 PM).

Tuesday, Oct. 20 – 9AM to 5:30PM (The annual meeting of the membership begins at 5:45 PM and the booth will not be staffed for the final half-hour that the exhibits are open).

Wednesday Oct. 21 – 9AM to 2 PM (Assistance in taking down and packing the exhibit after 2 PM also will be appreciated).

Drop by the booth at any time during the meeting and join in the fun of meeting people and convincing them to join the Division of Geology and Society and to actively participate in the mission and goals of the Division.

If there's a particular time when you'd like to work at the booth, please contact Jon Goodwin at geolojon@comcast.net or goodwin@igs.illinois.edu.

Introducing GSA's New Policycomnet Online Science Policy Networking Site Co-Sponsored by DG&S and GPPC

Policycomnet, a GSA online science policy networking site co-sponsored by the Division of Geology and Society and the Geology and Public Policy Committee, was developed during early 2009 to help GSA members provide lay public policy makers with useful geoscience insights on pending decisions. Promoting the wise use of geosciences in formulating public policy is an important part of the Society's mission as a trusted science information source. Consensus-based GSA Position Statements (complete list at <http://www.geosociety.org/positions/>), prepared by expert panels and vetted by the membership before adoption by the Council, are important complementary elements in achieving this mission. Examples include earth science research, energy and mineral resources, natural hazards, land use, water resources and the current draft revision on global climate change.

GSA members can enhance the effectiveness of the Society's efforts by communicating directly with decision makers regarding specific pending policy decisions that require consideration of important science elements in order to achieve their desired results and avoid unintended outcomes. These circumstances can arise at local, state, and regional

levels, as well as at the national level. GSA members who reside in jurisdictions in which geoscience inputs are needed by policy makers can help the Society accomplish its mission by providing constructive, nonpartisan advice to lay decision makers.

Policycomnet is an online science networking site designed to assist members in coordinating their efforts in assisting policymakers. Policycomnet provides webpages for each of the GSA Sections. A member who wishes to collaborate with colleagues about developing and offering geoscience input regarding a specific policy can invite viewing and comment on his/her posting at a particular Section's webpage. A member can place a description of the proposed policy and the needed geoscience input, suggestions for message content, and plans for coordinating communication with the policy makers. The resulting online dialog can seek to resolve differences in opinions regarding the science that should be presented and ultimately lead to a consensus on the best approach. When this is achieved, the participants can move to the "community" webpage to complete their planning. The resulting messages are sent by individual members rather than by GSA or by the Policycomnet site. When appropriate, Position Statements attached to the messages are useful complements on the general background geoscience relevant to specific decisions. Of course those GSA members who have perspectives at variance with a GSA Position Statement attached to their message should clearly indicate how their opinions differ from the Statement.

The integrity of the Policycomnet site rests upon the professional integrity of each of the members using the site. In contrast to blog sites, Policycomnet is not a site where political partisanship or ideology, sarcasm or hyperbole, are welcome or appropriate to its purpose. Please enjoy those perspectives elsewhere. Policycomnet has been introduced at the DG&S GSA Section meeting booths and has been online for use since March. Its use is still only in the early stage. The Division and the GPPC welcome your comments on how it can be further improved to better achieve its purpose. To learn more about the site please visit its URL at <http://policycomnet.wikidot.com/>. Policycomnet is hosted by wikidot.com technology at no charge to GSA and its users do not receive unsolicited email messages. Paper 214-4 will present additional information about Policycomnet at the 2009 Annual Meeting on October 20 during Session 214.

J. Davis, 1st Vice Chair jamesdavis93@comcast.net

On-call Volunteer Scientists Needed

In October 2008, the AAAS Science and Human Rights Program (SHRP) unveiled "[On-call](#)"

[Scientists](#), an SHRP initiative which aims to expand pro bono science in the service of human rights by connecting scientists and engineers interested in volunteering their skills and knowledge with human rights organizations in need of scientific expertise. Over 200 scientists and engineers from around the world have signed-up to volunteer, and requests for volunteers are also starting to come in. There is currently a specific request for volunteer geologists.

A highly-regarded human rights organization has submitted a request for three scientists or engineers with expertise in the gold extraction industry, the oil extraction industry, and the diamond extraction industry, respectively. These scientists or engineers would be asked to assist the organization in documenting human rights violations resulting from extraction practices and identifying further expertise needed to assess the impact of these practices on, for example, the local water supply and agriculture.

Each scientist/engineer would spend approximately seven days at the extraction location: Pointe Noire, Congo (oil); Mbuji-Mayi, Democratic Republic of Congo (diamond); and Lero, Guinea (gold). Ideally, the volunteers will be able to help the organization get a better understanding of industry standards to which the extraction companies should be adhering, and identify ways, if any, in which they are failing to do so. The scientists/engineers should be knowledgeable in all phases of the extraction process as well as in industry standards and/or best practices.

If you or someone you know is suitably qualified and would like to volunteer with our "On-call" Scientists program and/or contribute to the specific project outlined above, please contact oncall@aaas.org.

DG&S Events & Sponsored Sessions

Sunday am	Sunday pm	Monday am	Monday pm
7-T1 <i>Geological Mapping</i> B116	54-T1 <i>Geological Mapping</i> B116	77-T23 <i>Arsenic</i> B139/140	126-T23 <i>Arsenic</i> B139/140 12n – Sally Benson (Glob. Clim. and Energy Project) <i>Sequest.</i> D135/136
	12n – Pat Woertz (ADM) <i>Sequest.</i> D135/136 5:15pm – Rep. Blumenauer talk D135/136	92-T142 <i>Landslides</i> E147/148 101-T2 <i>Geologic Maps</i> Exhibit Hall 118-T135 <i>National Forests</i> Exhibit Hall 11:30am - Judge Jones panel BR251/258	1:30pm – G&S Div. <i>Management Board meeting</i> VIP Suite D 101-T2 <i>Geologic Maps</i> Exhibit Hall 118-T135 <i>National Forests</i> Exhibit Hall 125-T10 <i>Geoheritage</i> B113 137-T120 <i>Darwin</i> BR251/258 140-T134 <i>Societal Risks</i> D135/136 144-T160 <i>Digital Innovatins</i> B117/118/119

Meeting at-a Glance

Tuesday am	Tuesday pm	Wednesday am	Wednesday pm
174-T23 <i>Arsenic</i> Exhibit Hall	174-T23 <i>Arsenic</i> Exhibit Hall		P1 <i>Crisis Cryosphere</i> BR254 270-T8 <i>Terroir Wine</i> B113
166-T151 <i>Clean Coal</i> B114/115	201-T62 <i>Geologic Hazards</i> E141/142		
191-T160 <i>Digital Innovations</i> Exhibit Hall	191-T160 <i>Digital Innovations</i> Exhibit Hall 212-T135 <i>National Forests</i> BR253 12n – Lucy Jones talk <i>Shakeout</i> D135/136		
188-T134 <i>Societal Risks</i> Exhibit Hall	188-T134 <i>Societal Risks</i> Exhibit Hall 5:30pm – Cong. Sci. Fellow panel disc. Hilton, Broadway I 5:45pm – DG&S Div. Business Meeting & Awards B113		
164-T134 <i>Societal Risks</i> D135/136			

Meeting session # - Topical #
Abbreviated session/event title
Convention Center room
Poster sessions
Other events