



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
No. 196, October 18, 2012
Compiled by Dan Smith cag@geog.uvic.ca

Anne Godlewska and Jean Andrey. 2012 To the Editor – A response to Stephen Johnston’s article “Get Rid of Geography Departments”. *Geolog* 41(3):9

In April of 2012 Dr. Stephen Johnston’s call for the abolition of geography was published on the Canadian Association of Geographers’ listserv (previously published in *GEOLOG*). There it garnered thoughtful answers from geographers. These answers collectively pointed out that while earth system science is vital to tracking and understanding the effects of climate change, geography is also well placed to understand its principal causes, its impacts on human societies and to determine the best ways to respond to the challenges it presents. There was no argument that only geography is so placed: given the intertwined nature of human thought and disciplinary and interdisciplinary effort, the social sciences and the sciences are collectively well placed to respond to this challenge. As a spatial discipline that encompasses the sciences, the social sciences and the humanities, as a field that – on its best days – strives for integration, and as a discipline that draws people interested in contemplation of both human and natural systems, geography has a leadership role to play. Looking across the many departments of geography in Canada, and looking at the research and teaching efforts of our colleagues, it is our belief that geographers are playing that leadership role.

Geographers also understand that it is our role to excite students about the work we do (whether climate change related or not), to encourage them to recognize in disciplines and approaches commonalities and particularities, and to both engage and challenge them.

Geography is not a self-satisfied discipline. We understand that our nature must change as the problems faced by our world change. That change is sometimes unsettling. But as a discipline and as individual scholars we are deeply committed to the work involved in reaching out to other disciplines and ways of thinking to identify, understand, and solve the principal problems of our age, including but not limited to the challenges created by climate change.

CAGONT 2012 Hosted by University of Toronto Scarborough, October 12-13: The University of Toronto Scarborough recently hosted the Canadian Association of Geographers - Ontario Division (CAGONT) 2012 Annual Meeting. The CAGONT 2012 Keynote speaker was Dr. Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands whose talk was titled: "Dog Stranglers in the National Park: Ecology and Politics in the Rouge Valley". The conference featured numerous presentations and papers, with full details available in the downloadable [CAGONT 2012 Schedule](#) and the [Book of Abstracts](#)

Reflections on the UVic Geography Cascadia Sustainability Field School: Join twenty-eight geography students and two instructors from the University of Victoria as they traverse Cascadia from Victoria, BC to San Francisco, CA exploring how this popular but elusive concept has come to be variably understood in this transboundary region. This [video](#) captures what the students learned through traveling and engaging with community groups, activists, government officials, entrepreneurs, and academics each tirelessly working towards more ecologically and socially just communities. *Reflections on the Cascadia Sustainability Field School* was produced by Malcolm MacLean and graciously acknowledges Coast Salish and other First Nations whose territories constitute 'Cascadia'. It is a tribute to all those who shared their stories with us, the instructors, Dr. Cam Owens and Crystal Tremblay, and all the students who created this rich learning experience together. [What is sustainability?](#)

U Regina's Dave Sauchyn says Calgarians could Experience 20 to 30 Dry Years this Century: Despite Calgary's near bursting rivers this summer, a Dave Sauchyn, a water researcher at the University of Regina, says there's a very good likelihood Calgarians could experience a serious long-term drought. "If you're a young person working and living in Calgary, you should be concerned that you'll still be around in the middle part of this century and there could be some pretty severe water restrictions if the past is any indication of what's going to happen in the future," Sauchyn says. "There's no reason we can't have 20 to 30 dry years in the middle of this century." [CBC News](#)

Vancouver Island U Offers Course Focused Environmental Behaviour and Sustainability: This is a new course that will be delivered as an advanced seminar in applied geography and will explore and analyze environmental behaviour at societal and individual levels from local to global scales. A focus will be placed on social science theory in practice and models of behavioural change with an emphasis on sustainable behaviour at the community level. Applications include the following topics: energy use, transportation, water, wildlife and biodiversity conservation, parks and protected areas, waste management, recycling, and health and wellness. [What'sNew@VIU](#)

U Victoria's Chris Darimont Reacts to B.C. Cattleman's Association Call for Wolf Cull: Large packs of wolves are feasting on the province's cattle in alarming numbers, according to ranchers, who claim that mortality rates of cows and calves have doubled over the past year. The B.C. Cattlemen's Association is calling for a "thinning" of the wolf population in hard hit areas such as the Peace River and Cariboo regions. Conservationist Chris Darimont, assistant professor of geography at the University of Victoria called the idea of a wolf cull outrageous. "They have some of the most liberal regulations on the planet and that they are asking for more suggests this approach does not work," said. He said all lethal methods of wolf control have proven to be ineffective. "We know that culling attempts are unsuccessful because wolves are very good at reproducing or dispersing into other areas so even aggressive persecution simply sets up the context for continued carnivore conflicts," he said. [The Vancouver Sun](#)

U Toronto's Matti Siemiatycki Comments on Cost of Public-Private Partnerships: Public-private partnerships are all the rage in Canada for big infrastructure projects – roads, bridges, waste-water plants and the like. Governments insist they're "leveraging greater value" and generating "efficiencies" by offloading risk on the private sector. Based on a new study of 28 Ontario P3 projects worth more than \$7-billion, however, University of Toronto assistant professor Matti Siemiatycki and researcher Naeem Farooqi found that public-private partnerships cost an average of 16 per cent more than conventional tendered contracts. That's mainly because private borrowers typically pay higher interest rates than governments. Transaction costs for lawyers and consultants also add about 3 per cent to the final bill. [The Globe and Mail](#)

U Victoria's Ian Walker Receives CFI Award to Equip Coastal Erosion and Dune Dynamics Lab: UVic geographer Ian Walker will receive a CFI grant to help equip a coastal erosion and dune dynamics lab research unit. Coastal erosion is a widespread problem along Canada's low-lying and most populated coastlines, and dune systems are rare, threatened habitats. The research will help agencies and communities prepare for and adjust to the coastal impacts of climate change. [UVic Media Release](#)

Brock U Graduate Student Kerrie Pickering Receives "Best Paper Award": Brock U geography graduate student Kerrie Pickering and her co-authors recently received a "Best Paper Award" at the [International Conference on Innovation and Trends in Wine Management](#), held at the Burgundy School of Business, in Dijon, France. The paper was titled "Innovation and adaptation in the Ontario grape and wine industry: An integrated, transdisciplinary response to climate change." [Brock News Around Campus](#)

U Lethbridge to Host WDCAG 2013 – 55th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of Geographers: The Department of Geography at the University of Lethbridge is hosting the 55th Annual Meeting of the Western Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers (WDCAG), 7-9 March 2013. WDCAG meetings serve as an annual gathering place for geographers from Alberta, British Columbia, the Northwest and Yukon Territories, and the northwestern U.S. states. The department is welcoming geographers and those interested in Geography to come to Lethbridge for what promises to be an interesting, educational, and fun event. [WDCAG 2013](#)

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Jamey Essex. 2012. [The politics of effectiveness in Canada's international development assistance](#). Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue canadienne d'études du développement 33: 338-355.

Alison Mountz, Kate Coddington, R. Tina Catania and Jenna M. Loyd. 2012. [Conceptualizing detention. Mobility, containment, bordering, and exclusion](#). Progress in Human Geography. doi:10.1177/0309132512460903

Christopher W. Stevens and Stephen A. Wolfe. 2012. [High-resolution mapping of wet terrain within discontinuous permafrost using LiDAR intensity](#). Permafrost and Periglacial Processes. DOI:10.1002/ppp.1752

Jianghua Wu, Nigel T. Roulet, Mats Nilsson, Peter Lafleur and Elyn Humphreys. 2012. [Simulating the carbon cycling of northern peatlands using a land surface scheme coupled to a wetland carbon model \(CLASS3W-MWM\)](#). Atmosphere-Ocean. DOI:10.1080/07055900.2012.730980

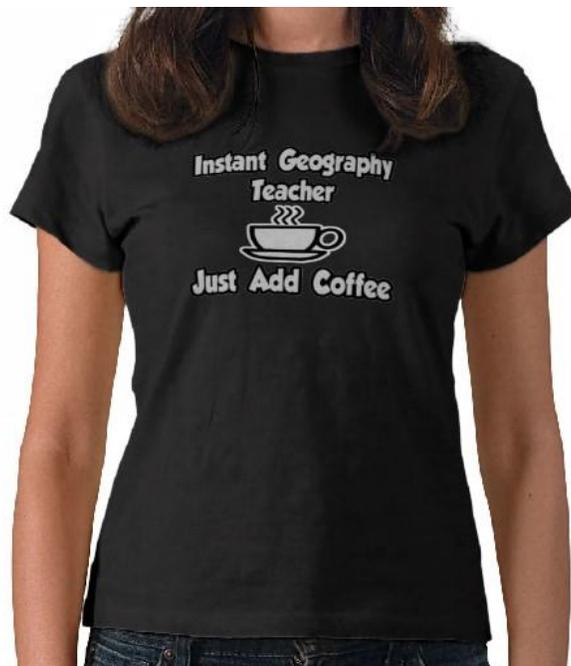
Other "Geographical" News

UPEI to Host Worldwide Database of Forest Biodiversity for the Smithsonian Institution: The University of Prince Edward Island signed a memorandum of understanding with the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute which collects, stores, and maintains data from the international network of one-hectare forest biodiversity monitoring plots, established using methods developed by the Smithsonian Institution's Monitoring and Assessing Biodiversity program (SI/MAB). This includes forest measurements from over 650 research plots in over 33 countries. [UPEI News](#)

Canadian Water-Policy Expert Bob Sanford Warns Warmer Climate Adding to Extreme Weather Woes: A gradual warming of the atmosphere coupled with a melting snowpack and receding glaciers is likely to lead to continued incidents of extreme weather, says Bob Sanford, EPCOR Chair for the Canadian Partnership Initiative of the United Nations Water for Life Decade. Sanford took some of the world's leading water and climate scientists, engineers, risk managers, municipal planners and policy experts on a tour of the Columbia Icefields. Sanford said he wanted to give the experts — who are attending an extreme weather conference in Banff, Alta. — a chance to "see first-hand why we're concerned about warming effects on the hydrological cycle.We're talking about how warming temperatures are affecting the depth of snow cover, the depth of snowpack, the length of time when it is there and the effect of these changes on glacier mass, which is to say how much snow is available to feed and sustain these glaciers." [CBC News](#)

Too Late to Stop Global Warming by Cutting Emissions? Scientists Argue for Adaption Policies: Governments and institutions should focus on developing adaption policies to address and mitigate against the negative impact of global warming, rather than putting the emphasis on carbon trading and capping greenhouse-gas emissions. "At present, governments' attempts to limit greenhouse-gas emissions through carbon cap-and-trade schemes and to promote renewable and sustainable energy sources are probably too late to arrest the inevitable trend of global warming," the scientists write. Knight and Harrison want governments to focus more on adaption policies because future impacts of global warming on land-surface stability and the sediment fluxes associated with soil erosion, river down-cutting and coastal erosion are relevant to sustainability, biodiversity and food security. [ScienceDaily](#)

Some not so "Geographical" News



GeogNews Archives: <http://www.geog.uvic.ca/dept/cag/geognews/geognews.html>