

**NEW SERIES:**  
**Great Ideas in Earth Science Education**

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## NEW SERIES

# Great Ideas in Earth Science Education

Jon S. Dudley

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The Education Committee of the Geological Association of Canada (GAC) is challenged constantly to identify its highest priority objective from among the many terrific ideas generated within GAC. As spelled out in the GAC Action Plan published in 1998, public awareness of earth science is a high priority in itself, but what might be the single most significant goal the GAC Education Committee could set, and attain, to help membership of the GAC in increasing such awareness? One answer to this question came in helpful feedback from committee members and delegates at the 1997 annual general meeting in Ottawa: Why attempt to create a new public awareness program when many GAC members are already involved in exceedingly successful activities across the country, but largely unbeknownst to the membership at large? Would it not be better to help all members by recognizing successes, and offering a medium by which to inform and motivate GAC members who are currently, or are about to become, active in public awareness activities?

Thus was born the idea for this new series "Great Ideas in Earth Science Education," with articles to appear in both *Geoscience Canada* and *GEOLOG*. *GEOLOG* articles will highlight individual public awareness activities being conducted by GAC members, activities that could be adapted by other earth scientists and educators for their own public awareness endeavours. *Geoscience Canada* articles will feature broader programs and/or philosophies in presenting earth science to the public, rather than specific activities. An example of the type of article that could appear in this *Geoscience Canada* series is "Reinventing the Geological Map: Making Geoscience More Accessible to Canadians," which recently appeared in *Geoscience Canada* (1997, v. 24, p. 161-172) describing some of the Geological Survey of Canada's new innovative map products designed to take geoscience information to the public. Such articles publicize ongoing programs in the hope of soliciting new participants in the programs, and/or inspiring members to create similar or entirely new programs where they don't yet exist.

The success of "Great Ideas in Earth Science Education"

will depend entirely on you, the membership, submitting articles featuring your public awareness activities and programs. We hope that public awareness of earth science issues will improve as more GAC members learn of and practise public awareness activities, perhaps for the first time. This new series aims at presenting new ideas — as well as helping those individuals currently active — by acknowledging and publicizing their contributions and offering a vehicle for exchanging and further developing successful concepts and approaches. Please consider submitting an article. We want to learn about your ideas, and to introduce them to others! An example follows of the type of paper we are seeking ("Oil Sands Geologists in an Industry-School Partnership: A Resource and Teaching Opportunity").

### SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR ARTICLES

Paper length: maximum 12 double-spaced pages, 1-3 illustrations.

Emphasis: programs and/or methods and philosophies successfully used in presenting earth science to the public, including school children and adults.

Content: papers should aim to include the following points:

1. Audience for the program (grade-school children, adults, school curriculum keyed?)
2. Key objectives of the program, method, concept or approach
3. Respective roles of earth scientists and public in the program
4. Materials required, and their availability
5. Resources required for the program or method (e.g., books, educational networks)
6. Impact of program or method (actual and/or potential)
7. Keys to success of the program or method

As the editor for the new series "Great Ideas in Earth Science Education," I invite you to submit articles, and/or direct any questions to me at Jon S. Dudley Earth Works, 2540 32 Avenue S.W., Calgary AB T3E 0V8, jdudley@nucleus.com, (403) 240-1051. Let's share our ideas!