



Looking Back on a Productive 2016

The College had a very busy year. In addition to meeting all of our core responsibilities through our entry standards, audit, and discipline procedures, we also moved forward with a number of initiatives from the strategic plan. All regulators across Canada took particular notice of the BC government's removal of self-regulation for the real estate profession and of a similar loss for Quebec's regulatory body for engineers. This is a reminder that self-governing legislation is a privilege and the College must be vigilant in meeting its obligations to protect the public interest.

The College's current **Strategic Plan** was built upon feedback from the membership and the requirement to provide assurance to the public of professionalism in the practice of applied biology by College members. This year, in response to the Strategic Objectives, the College has worked towards strengthening the credibility of the College; enhancing communication; expanding its visibility, profile, and influence; and becoming more strategic and responsive to changing circumstances. The College released its **Online Ethics Course** and updated its **Rules**. Now all new professional and in-training applicants must complete the Ethics Course and exam prior to receiving membership with the College. This ensures that all new members enter the College understanding its structure and mandate, that they understand the concept of professional ethics, and that they are able to translate the professional requirements to their practice and conduct.

It is important that knowledgeable, trained, and accountable biology professionals assist in the management of BC's natural resources. It is therefore

critical that the appropriate professional is hired. The College had meetings with various representatives of the provincial government to promote the idea that College membership should be a requirement for positions specializing in applied biology. As Dr. Vanessa Craig mentioned in her President's Report, there has been significant progress in this initiative. The College remains engaged with government as we work toward a mutually acceptable mechanism to ensure professional biologists are employed where appropriate.

The College provided a **response** to a request for feedback from the federal government regarding the changes to the Environmental Assessment processes. While the College does not engage in issue-oriented advocacy, it does comment on legislation pertinent to the purpose of the College. The College engaged in several activities to support members in their practice and improve our ability to meet our mandate. This year the College: 1) developed information on incorporating climate change impacts in professional practice, and continues to be involved with the Professional Adaptability Committee, 2) released the **Guidance for Members Employed in Formal Decision-Making Roles** to support members who were concerned about meeting their professional duties while also meeting their official duties when employed in a management or decision-making capacity, 3) developed an online Continuing Professional Development (CPD) form to support members in recording activities to ensure they remain current in their area of practice and meet their CPD requirements, and, 4) is developing a professional

practice guideline document for riparian area assessments in collaboration with the Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABCFP), the Association of Engineers and Geoscientists (APEGBC), and the Association of Science Technologists and Technicians (ASTTBC). This guideline is currently being finalized and will be available very soon.

Other new partnerships developed this year include a collaboration with ABCFP and the BC Wildlife Federation (BCWF) focused on improving resource management in BC. Look for updates on this project in a future issue of **College Matters**. A successful initiative with the Alberta Society of Professional Biologists (ASPB) and the l'Association des Biologistes du Québec (ABQ) is currently underway; see the Biologists Canada Committee Report for an update.

In addition, the College continues to work with post-secondary institutions and I'm pleased to report that the Ecology, Evolution and Conservation major at Simon Fraser University (SFU) has been added to the list of accredited programs. The College's accreditation program, whereby specific programs at post-secondary institutions are recognized as meeting the College's course requirements, supports students who are considering a career as a professional biologist.

Through the College's initiatives with its members, and partnerships with other organizations, the College continues to meet the mandate awarded to it by government. **cm**

Respectfully submitted
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