



## PLANETARY SCIENCES SECTION NEWSLETTER #54 (May 2014)

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### 1) Letter from the Section President and President-Elect

As spring turns into summer, the halls of the U.S. Congress are once again busy with lawmakers doing their job. The House Authorization Committee responsible for NASA has passed its bill, the corresponding House Appropriations Subcommittee has passed theirs on to the full Appropriations Committee, and the respective committees in the Senate should hold hearings this month. The news is remarkable in three ways. One, it would appear that NASA will get an appropriations bill passed and signed before the beginning of fiscal 2015 (1 October 2014). Two, support for NASA and the Planetary program in particular is bipartisan, as it should be. And three, Congress has heard you, the planetary community, and is continuing to act to restore the onerous cuts to the Planetary program that began two years ago.

While we applaud the actions of Congress, AGU Planetary Science Section members also have an important role to play (as least those of you who are U.S. citizens). We are asking you to once again pick up your virtual pens and contact your elected representatives, and thank them for supporting exploration of our solar system (and indeed, other solar systems). It is well worth reminding whom you write that the ambitious yet balanced program recommended by the recent Decadal Survey can be carried out with a level budget no larger than what we had just a few years ago. Our website (<http://planets.agu.org/>) keeps members informed of updates on the planetary science budget. In addition, other partner organizations, such as the Division of Planetary Science of the American Astronomical Society (<http://dps.aas.org/>) and The Planetary Society (<http://planetary.org/>), contain many more background details, as well as sample letters, useful addresses, etc.

This is an important moment. While we started from behind, the trend is as positive as it has been in a long time. Congress is doing their job. Let's do ours.

Sincerely,

Bill McKinnon  
AGU Section President, Planetary Sciences

Lindy Elkins-Tanton  
AGU Section President-Elect, Planetary Sciences

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## 2) AGU PS Endorsement of Jim Bell's Open Letter to the Planetary Science Community

In regard to planetary science funding and advocacy, where appropriate, AGU PS endorses efforts by other organizations. Toward that end, we support the open letter written by Jim Bell, on behalf of the Planetary Society within which he is the President of the Board of Directors. [Please see Jim Bell's open letter posted on the Planetary Society website.](#)

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## 3) Planetary Sciences Section Candidates for 2015-16

We are pleased to announcement the following candidates for President-Elect and Secretary who are volunteering to serve AGU in the 2015-16 term:

President- Elect:

Nathan Bridges  
Sarah Stewart

Secretary:

Barbara Cohen  
Jorn Helbert

The ballots will be published in June or July, with voting open from 18 August to 17 September. The winners will start their positions on 1 January 2015, joining new Section President Lindy-Elkins Tanton (Bill McKinnon will become President Emeritus). These highly qualified candidates should be commended for offering their time and service to AGU in the coming years.

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## 4) New Graduate Student Representative for 2015-16

Alexander Morgan of the University of Virginia has been chosen as the new Graduate Student Representative for the 2015-16 term. He will replace Sona Hosseini, who is stepping down from the role on 31 December after two very productive years in which she made significant contributions to student services at the AGU Fall Meeting and within the organization. Our congratulations go out to both Alex and Sona.

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## 5) AGU Student Survey Released

Exemplifying the work of the Graduate Student Representative, our current office holder, Sona Hosseini, has put together an AGU Student Survey. This is designed to help shape future AGU programs for students and early career scientist. [Please fill out the Student Survey online.](#)

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## 6) Upcoming PS Student Webpage

Keep your eyes on the [AGU Planetary Sciences section website](#) where we will soon have a linked webpage devoted to PS students. Organized by Graduate Student Representative Sona Hosseini and our webmaster Mark Hilverda, this page will keep students informed of the latest AGU events, opportunities for Section and Union involvement, and resources.

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## 7) New AGU Journal: *Earth and Space Science*

AGU is launching a new journal relevant to the PS Section: *Earth and Space Science*. Advertised as a "new, fully open access, online-only journal welcoming high-quality original research papers spanning all of the Earth, planetary, and space sciences," this will increase the options for publishing within AGU and offer a diversity of papers. Some of our members have expressed sentiments that *JGR-Planets* and other AGU journals do not offer options for publishing papers on missions, instruments, calibration, and other activities that, in addition to basic research, are central to our enterprise. *Earth and Space Science* should fill this gap by considering a greater breadth of topics. For more details,

see [AGU's press release announcing \*Earth and Space Science\*](#).

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**8) Editor In Chief Search: *Journal of Geophysical Research: Planets***

*JGR-Planets* is currently seeking a dynamic, well-organized scientist with high editorial standards, and strong leadership skills to serve a 4-year term as the editor in chief for JGR: Planets. An active scientist, well known and well regarded in his or her discipline, the editor in chief is the principal architect of the scientific content of the journal. See [Editor Search](#) for details.

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Keep abreast of the latest AGU PS updates:

<http://planets.agu.org/> (for job advertisements, click on Jobs in the Menu bar; if you are interested in posting a job ad, please contact [Nathan Bridges](#) and [Mark Hilverda](#))

[AGU Planetary Sciences Facebook page](#)

[AGU Planetary Sciences Twitter page](#)

[AGU Planetary Sciences LinkedIn page](#)

For future newsletter items please contact the Section Secretary, [Nathan Bridges](#)

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