

BOARD CANDIDATE (3 to be elected)



Matthew Salmon, P.Eng. | Lake Country, BC

Who is Matthew Salmon, sounds fishy? A valid question indeed. Let me introduce myself and explain why I'm here.

I proudly served the British Army for 24 years in the Corps of Royal Engineers. In 2015, I transitioned from military to civilian life, joining Local Government and serving the growing community of Lake Country. This transition provided me with unique experiences and valuable lessons.

During my military career, I frequently found myself in conflict zones. This intense period taught me effective assessment, planning, and action. Juggling civil engineering projects amidst military operations was both humbling and enriching. The impact of military engineering projects on communities, both near and far, left a lasting impression.

After relocating to Canada with my wife and three young daughters, I volunteered as a Fire Fighter while pursuing a career in my local municipality. Eventually, I became the Director of Engineering and Environmental Services, gaining firsthand exposure to the challenges our professions face amidst change and notable progress.

My wealth of experiences acquired across diverse work environments will make me an asset to the board. I am passionate about raising standards, ensuring accountability, and safeguarding the public.

I believe investing in the future generation is crucial and the new Permit to Practice and CE Program requirements are burdensome and can be improved. We must also prepare for the rapid development and integration of automation and artificial intelligence.

I may not have any history serving Engineers and Geoscientists BC yet, but is that a bad thing? My unique background allows me to represent your interests with a mix of respect, courage to make challenging decisions, diplomacy, and a healthy sense of humour. I always strive for excellence and relish the opportunity to shape a brighter future for engineering and geoscience in BC. As the only candidate from outside Vancouver and Vancouver Island, I will bring a different perspective to the Board.

Choose Salmon, the special catch of the day! Don't let this opportunity slip away!

EDUCATION

BSc (Hons) (Engineering Management–Construction), University of Greenwich, 2013
Higher National Diploma, (Civil Engineering), Royal School of Military Engineering, 2005

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

Director of Engineering and Environmental Services, District of Lake Country, 2016–present
Warrant Officer Class 1, British Army, Corps of Royal Engineers, 1991–2015

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Volunteer Firefighter, Lake Country Fire Department, 2015–2019

Q&A WITH CANDIDATES

Engineers and Geoscientists BC is the regulatory authority charged with protecting the public interest with respect to the practice of engineering and geoscience in the province of BC. What is the key challenge facing the organization?

There are so many challenges as the organisation must navigate various complex issues in these ever changing and unpredictable times, such as:

- Attracting and nurturing the future generation of engineers and geoscientist, particularly with regards to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Keeping pace with innovation.
- Increased scrutiny and overwatch of the professions by the government.
- The increased polarization of society that is exacerbated by sensationalism and alternative truths is contributing to a lack of critical thinking.

If I must choose the 'key' issue, from the non-exhaustive list above, it will have to be 'keeping pace with innovation'. Why? Keeping pace with technological advancements and emerging trends such as artificial intelligence, automation, and other transformative technologies is going to be challenging as it develops at such a rate that the industry and its regulators will struggle to keep pace. It's already here and widely used. Engineers and Geoscientists BC must stay ahead of these developments to effectively regulate and guide the professions use of these technological advancements and ensure public safety. Although the question focusses on the 'challenge' which can have a negative connotation, I'd like highlight that there are positives to the technological advancements, they offer exciting opportunities if embraced and utilised appropriately. Striking the correct balance will be the 'challenge'.

What are the key issues facing the engineering and/or geoscience professions?

Many of the issues encountered by the professions align with what I previously mentioned, as both the organization and its registrants operate within the same environment and are subject to similar influences, albeit with slight variations in perspective. Here, I outline my top four concerns:

- **Erosion of trust and respect:** Widespread mistrust towards governing bodies necessitates upholding high standards and actively demonstrating commitment. Fostering accountability, preserving professional standards, and engaging effectively with the public, government bodies, and industry stakeholders are crucial.
- **Globalized delivery of goods and services:** Economic uncertainty leads to volatile markets domestically and globally.
- **Balancing mandatory requirements:** Managing the burdensome Permit to Practice and CE Program requirements is a challenge. Redirecting energy towards a more effective model that prioritizes accountability, enhances standards, and explores self-governance options is essential.
- **The changing climate is a significant issue:** Our natural environment is undergoing transformations, leading to weather events that exhibit heightened intensity and unpredictability. We are witnessing unprecedented occurrences of floods, fires, and wind disturbances, which impact not only critical infrastructure and the built environment but also natural ecosystems such as aquatic and terrestrial habitats. These changes raise concerns about food and water security, emphasizing the need for proactive measures.

Looking five years ahead, what is your vision for Engineers and Geoscientists BC as a professional regulatory body in BC?

My vision is centered around addressing the key points I emphasized in response to the previous questions. It is crucial to align these objectives with the Engineers and Geoscientists BC Strategic Plan (2022-2027).

I wholeheartedly support the overarching Vision of the Strategic Plan: 'Modern regulation for a resilient world,' as well as the Mission: 'We serve the public interest as an inclusive, progressive, and future-focused regulator.'

While strategic planning itself may seem relatively straightforward, the true challenge lies in implementing those plans. The manner in which we act upon and deliver these objectives, while upholding the four Values, is of utmost importance. Strategic Plans are intended to guide and provide direction, and it will be the responsibility of the Board to create roadmaps ensuring the fulfillment of Strategic Imperatives. This collaborative effort necessitates commitment and the collective will of the registrants and stakeholders. To drive positive and meaningful progress, strong leadership from the Board is essential, and it is a quality I bring to the table wholeheartedly.

While there is a solid vision, we must not blindly adhere to the Strategic Plan for the next four years. It is vital to remain mindful of the turbulent and ever-changing environment in which we operate and continuously monitor our progress. We must be attuned to our surroundings and be receptive to adjusting our plans to effectively respond and adapt to the evolving climate.

For the Board to achieve its goals and meet its fiduciary responsibilities, the Board has identified the need for diverse voices on the Board, with a blend of the following skills and competences: leadership, financial literacy, risk management, human resources, strategy, regulatory understanding, governance and technical proficiency. Please highlight the areas of strength you bring to the role.

As a member of the Senior Leadership Team at the District of Lake Country, I possess the necessary experience across all competency areas required by Engineers and Geoscientists BC for its board members.

Serving on the Engineers and Geoscientists BC Board aligns harmoniously with my multifaceted responsibilities in Local Government. My current role entails being accountable for governance, administration, and service delivery under Provincial Acts, which closely parallels the authority held by the Engineers and Geoscientists BC Board. Within the Senior Leadership Team, I actively contribute to policy-making, direction-setting, and assume budgetary responsibilities for financial planning, service delivery, and reporting within my department.

In addition, I offer valuable support to Council in strategic planning and establishing priorities. Council's Strategic Plans play a vital role in shaping our organization and the community we serve, outlining the vision, mission, values, and goals. The similarities between my role in supporting a Local Government Council and the responsibilities of the Engineers and Geoscientists BC Board are evident.

Like the Engineers and Geoscientists BC Board, I am deeply committed to serving the public, fostering a positive organizational culture, providing education and mentorship, driving innovation, addressing professionalism issues, and managing social expectations. Although terminologies may differ, the core responsibilities and tasks remain fundamentally the same.