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Communication Science: What we say and what they hear

On its face, communicating science seems relatively straightforward, but studies conducted over the last two decades have identified a number of challenges that have become communication impediments. The Earth and Climate Sciences face several unique obstacles including a lack of public comprehension of geography, an overall disconnection from the natural world, and a confusing science vocabulary. Perhaps the largest challenge is the politicization of science, and particularly climate science, which has forced alienation at a time when we need a science-literate public. Despite these challenges, change is underway at the K12 level. A 2012 National Academy of Sciences consensus report “A Framework for K-12 Science Education” triggered a bottom-up national movement to develop and roll out the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) across the nation. These standards completely redesign the way science is taught in the schools, resulting in measurable student re-engagement and increased science literacy. This interactive talk will provide a framework for applying NGSS practices and principles in your own outreach for both the K12 population and the Open House life-long learners.