

# ANNUAL REPORT

F O N D A T I O N  
 SIERRA  
CLUB CANADA  
F O U N D A T I O N

2016



## Message from our President

Basking in the sunny ways of the Paris Climate Agreement, 2016 started off well with 175 parties, including Canada, signing the Agreement on the first day it was open for signature. With ratification by the European Union, the Agreement obtained enough parties to be entered into effect on November 4, 2016.

But storm clouds were gathering south of the border and only a few days later it appeared that many hard-fought gains to protect the environment were at serious risk of being rolled back.

Having lived under a similar cloud for a decade, we wondered whether Canada would backslide on environmental issues just when our leadership was needed the most. We resolved that Sierra Club Canada Foundation needed to redouble our efforts to encourage action at the municipal, provincial, territorial and federal levels to tackle climate change and other important environmental issues. In 2016, that grassroots resolve was reflected in innovative programs and activities led by our volunteers and staff, which are outlined in the following report.

I am proud to say that through grit, hard work and support from our members and donors, we have seen through other challenges, including a CRA charity audit, which we successfully concluded. I wish to thank our former interim Executive Director, Diane Beckett, for helping to stabilize us through that time. We have our fiscal house in order and will continue to grow on our strong and deep grassroots ethos.

On January 4, 2017, we lost an environmental hero, Dan McDermott, former Director of the Ontario Chapter. Dan dedicated his life to environmental advocacy, fighting for clean air, clean water, green spaces and putting a stop to dangerous nuclear power. He was a fearless leader and mentor, who worked tirelessly to support the people working on the ground. Let Dan's legacy and work be our inspiration to face the storms ahead and redouble our efforts to advocate for the environment.

Yours truly,

David M.W. Snider, B.Sc., LL.B.

# Protecting Wildlife

## Watch for Wildlife

In 2016 we launched a new and innovative program aimed at protecting wildlife from collisions and injury on our roads. Every year, thousands of animals are killed and injured on our roads. With better planning, research, and education these collisions could be avoided – and our roads would be safer.

In 2016 we launched the Watch for Wildlife website and distributed 700 bumper magnets to remind drivers to Watch for Wildlife. Program lead, Wanda Baxter worked with partners and other wildlife rescue organizations to promote the program by attending events, distributing materials and sharing resources.

The Thanksgiving Day Watch for Wildlife Alert received massive pick up on social media and traditional media outlets.



"Mom," the male fox and caregiver to so many kits, in whose memory we dedicate our work to prevent loss of wildlife on our roads.

This beautiful image was captured by Ian Murray, Wallace River Photography.

## For the Blue Whale

2016 was all about getting the word to our leaders to protect endangered blue whales. Every new Member of Parliament received Our Marine Treasure – scientists speaking directly about why the Gulf of St. Lawrence is precious and why it needs protection from oil and gas.

An update as we go to print: Our members and supporters received word that instead of letting the oil and gas licence expire as it was meant to in January 2017, that in fact, the licence for drilling in the Gulf was granted renewal by the government. We created a groundswell of response when thousands of our supporters submitted letters in opposition. Our plans to fight this in 2017 will be a major focus of our work, with a court case to save them already launched.

### Bioblitz!

Our Quebec Chapter continued efforts to work with biologist and citizen scientists to identify biodiversity in the Montreal region. On May 7th, we conducted a guided walk and Bioblitz as part of a Jane's Walk, an annual event that honours the work of legendary urban planner Jane Jacobs. Some 75 people walked through NDC's St. Jacques Escarpment urban wilderness, organized by Sauvons la Falaise. Please check out our map of urban biodiversity here: <http://montrealbioblitz.com/>

### Road Ecology in Ontario

In Brampton, Ontario, David and Dayle Laing actively represent us on Heart Lake Road Ecology Management. Their work continues in ecology monitoring sessions and the collection of information on animal crossings, where only until recently there were hundreds of animals dying along this stretch of road. With wildlife nature fencing installed, they note very few victims on the road where the fences are located.

# Protecting Nature in Urban Areas

From Halifax to Edmonton, we've been working on the ground to protect green spaces in urban areas for people to play in and for nature to thrive.

All of our Chapters are involved in protecting, restoring, and enhancing green spaces through advocacy and hands-on projects to plant trees and enhance green infrastructure.

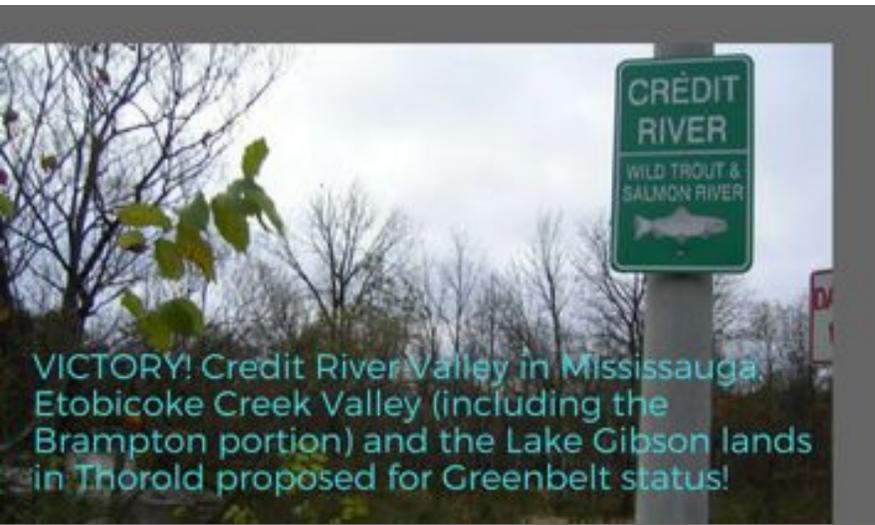
## Southern Ontario Greenbelt

As part of the most densely populated parts of Canada, the Southern Greenbelt is continually under threat. Our Ontario Chapter members were on the ground, fighting proposals to remove areas from the Greenbelt, weakening restrictions on development in green areas, and "biodiversity offset" proposals that would enable the loss of irreplaceable ecosystems. In what appears an obvious concession for the benefit of developers, one of our areas of interest, the headwaters of Carruther's Creek in Durham Region, was noticeably left out of the plan despite claims of protection of significant water features.

Local activities for the Greenbelt in Peel Region have paid off. Our 5 years of work was validated as City of Mississauga's resolution to protect Credit River moved on to Peel Regional Council where it was unanimously approved. Mississauga has done its part to join the Greenbelt!

Brampton was not moving to protect Etobicoke Creek – it appeared to intend to use parts of the floodplain for its new LRT (light rail) route. Sierra Peel took a strong position against this. Led by David Laing, Volunteers went door-to-door along the proposed corridor, alerting residents to the proposed construction and generating an impassioned protest. Brampton Council subsequently voted

to remove Etobicoke Creek as a possible choice for the LRT route. And our very committed Peel Group organized two tree plantings, one pollinator planting, and a Dragon boat fundraiser.



VICTORY! Credit River Valley in Mississauga, Etobicoke Creek Valley (including the Brampton portion) and the Lake Gibson lands in Thorold proposed for Greenbelt status!



We're standing up for migratory birds who are at risk from development in Montreal

## Montreal

Forum Nature Montreal was the first citizen symposium on natural areas of the island of Montreal. The theme of the forum is "the need for Montreal natural areas: the case of [Anse à l'Orme](#)."



Quebec Chapter is working to protect 270 species that are threatened by development on this 185 hectare natural area in west Montreal, which also includes development at the Anjou Golf Course.

A Charter of Rights for access to the nature of Montreal was presented at City Hall. Most recently we worked to raise the profile of loss of critical habitat for birds due to the expansion of the Montreal Technoparc, and called for Environment Minister Catherine McKenna to protect migratory birds and endangered species found there.

## Halifax

Halifax Diverse works through educational events (including Speed-dating Your Park event), tree planting, and creating a educational video on the importance of parks and green spaces for managing water in urban areas. The program surveyed municipal leaders in advance of the municipal election to gage their support for protecting and enhancing the urban forest.



## GETTING IT RIGHT - ON THE GROUND.

Volunteer experts in the Edmonton Group contributed to consultations on the following urban planning and strategy development processes:

- Mill Creek Park Bridge Restoration
- Dawson Park
- Terwillegar Park
- Confederation Park
- Oleskiw Park
- Breathe Green Network Strategy
- Edmonton Climate Change Strategy
- Environment Hazard Strategy
- Invited consultations for Ecological Sensitivity modeling and Mill Creek water quality.

## Heroes of the Prairies

Charlie Richmond and PearlAnn Reichwein

## Edmonton

Our Edmonton Group of the Prairie Chapter continues their very focused work, with particular emphasis on the following areas:

- Encouraging environmental best practices for urban planning and infrastructure
- Protecting surface and groundwater through establishing standards and encouraging the establishment of rain gardens, swales, naturalized (for bioremediation) storm-water retention ponds, increased use of street trees and related practices
- Encouraging protection and enjoyment of green spaces and providing expert advice in public consultations
- Participated in public and invited consultations with the City and Province on the Mill Creek Daylighting Project – a proposed restoration of over 1 km of creek, diverted in the 1970s into a drainage pipe to the North Saskatchewan River, and its fish habitat.
- Successfully advocating for the protection of Whitemud Creek, home to the last remaining spawning ground in this area, in consultations on Edmonton's proposed riverside Boat Docks and Launches.
- Continuing our 15-year involvement in the City planning process on the proposed Woodbend-Big Island Park, and contributing to a master plan for Edmonton Sand Dunes Natural Area, a significant natural feature within the proposed park, and its reforestation
- Advocacy for two new Natural Areas – Prairie Donuts and Bedrock Park

# Safeguarding Environmental Laws

With our friends at East Coast Environmental Law and represented by Ecojustice, we are intervening to appeal the decision made by a NAFTA Tribunal that the Digby Quarry environmental assessment process was unfair and invalid. Bilcon, the US company wishing to start the quarry, is claiming Canada owes them upwards of \$300 million dollars in lost revenue because their project was rejected by Canada and Nova Scotia's Minister of Environment.

In addition to donating generously to an emergency appeal to support our legal costs, our supporters responded in droves to a call out to ask the federal government not to settle with Bilcon and to see this important case to the end. We need to know once and for all: do trade deals trump Canadians' rights to make choices to protect our environment?

Members contributed to ongoing consultations on changes to our environmental laws, such as the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

We also worked with volunteers and staff to research the implications of the TransPacific Partnership (TPP) on the environment which will help us engage the public on this critical but complex environmental issue in 2017.

A photograph of two humpback whales leaping from the ocean. The whales are captured mid-air, with water splashing around their bodies. The background is a clear, light blue sky.

1,400 Letters from you got our point across  
+ generous donations made to an emergency  
appeal to support our legal costs.

Now that's worth a leap for joy!

## Connecting Kids with Nature

We have expanded Wild Child Forest Schools to two locations near Halifax, and are providing Wild Child Nature Immersion programming to over ten daycares and after-school programs on Prince Edward Island.

The programs have resulted in children spending thousands of hours outdoors, exploring and being active in nature. The forest schools also work with volunteers and interns who support the program and gain experience in nature immersion programming.

# Our Wild Ones!



- Number of hours outside in 2016: 6,000
- Over 1,000 children have participated in Wild Child activities
- 35 early learning centres, afterschool programs, and summer camps engaged
- Number of childcare educators trained: 60

As we like to say about our little participants, we'll send them home tired, dirty and happy!



## UN Climate Talks: SYC was there.

Dominique Souris is a member of the Sierra Youth Coalition ExComm and a graduate student at the Balsillie School of International Affairs. One of Canada's Top 30 under 30 Sustainability Leaders, Dominique supports the efforts of YOUNGO, the official youth constituency of UNFCCC, which engages young people in negotiations relating to loss, damage and climate finance. During COP21 and 22, she was part of the negotiating delegation for the Seychelles. She is also on the advisory board of the Youth Arctic Coalition.



Always great to @ec\_minister & energetic young Canadian climate activists. Merci de votre soutien!  
#climateaction #cop22



This really happened! SYC's Dominique Souris with Minister of Environment and Climate Change Catherine McKenna and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon at COP22

## Green Rights – The Film

We were delighted to play a supporting role in the making and national tour of the film *Green Rights: The Human Right to a Healthy World*. The film's host and executive producer, author Silver Donald Cameron, and his wife, author Marjorie Simmins, travelled across the country to bring the film's important message to Canadians.

The film tells the story of the dramatic, innovative legal battles going on in nations around the world: dramas in the courts and on the land, where devoted citizens and courageous lawyers take on national governments and international corporations – and win.

## GREEN RIGHTS

*the film*



### NATIONAL TOUR & PREMIERE

WOLFVILLE SEPT 19 • HALIFAX SEPT 25 • ANTIGONISH SEPT 28 •  
OTTAWA GRAND PREMIERE! OCT 4 • KINGSTON OCT 6 • TORONTO OCT 12  
WATERLOO OCT 17 • GUELPH OCT 18 • THUNDER BAY OCT 24 •  
WINNIPEG OCT 26 • CALGARY OCT 30 • VANCOUVER NOV 2016

Save  
the  
date!

Sierra Peel Group and their Bike Brampton allies continue to lead, facilitate and promote monthly events including community bike rides, bike repair clinics, safety sessions and community outreach in support of cycling.



In Brampton, 550+ participants  
Biked the Creek!

## Climate Change Green Energy – Ontario Chapter

The Green Energy Campaign, chaired by Christine Elwell, wrote two successful applications for funding to the National Energy Board to participate in the Energy East and Eastern Mainline proceedings. We intervened at the International Joint Commission public forum on the proposed liquid nuclear waste shipment from Ottawa to South Carolina and we were part of a number of public protests about proposed pipelines in 2016.

Sierra Peel Group and their Bike Brampton allies continue to lead, facilitate and promote monthly events including community bike rides, bike repair clinics, safety sessions and community outreach in support of cycling.

## Waste Reduction

Building on 2015 success blocking plans to build a Brampton-area waste incinerator, Peel Group created a Waste Diversion Committee. Reps attend Waste Management Advisory Committee meetings, continuing to pursue ways to assist Peel in its efforts to develop an effective 75% waste diversion plan. The committee attends relevant meetings and communicates frequently with the Education and Communication staff. They created a Waste Sorting Game and ran it at 6 community events. With municipal equipment support, the committee has successfully operated waste sorting stations for two small events and hope to expand on this.

# Clean Water

Sierra Club Ontario is an active member of the Great Lakes Protection Act Alliance. The group worked to improve important language in the GLPA in two critical ways: persuaded the Minister to remove an article giving the Minister authority to over-ride the GLPA provisions, and campaigned to improve the language of the GLPAA comment to the Ministry regarding wetlands protection. Ultimately, the focus of these letters regarding wetlands has shifted to protection of existing wetlands rather than off-sets and rehabilitation.

Co-Chaired by Dr. Lino Grima, the Sierra Club Binational Great Lakes Committee spent the early part of 2016 focused on the application from the City of Waukesha (Wisconsin) to take water from Lake Michigan. This application is a challenge to a Canada-US agreement restricting access of out-of-basin communities to Great Lakes water. Ultimately, the Great Lake governors approved a limited diversion for Waukesha, against the protestations of Sierra Club in both Canada and US.

In 2015, the Ontario Chapter used many opportunities to protest a permit application to triple phosphorus discharge from Duffin Creek water treatment plant into Lake Ontario. Finally in 2016, Ontario Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Glen Murray announced a review rather than approval of the request. It is believed that efforts, like those of Ontario Chapter Director Dan McDermott, to raise the issue of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement Nutrient Annex in this context may have been the deciding factor in Murray's decision.

Moving forward, we believe Annex IV to be our best tool to gain reduced nutrient output from the Duffins plant and may be the lever that enables us to achieve reduced nutrient flow from sewage treatment plants throughout the Great Lakes.

## Action H2O

Sierra Club Quebec volunteers in the Longueuil region conducted outreach on the need for water conservation and provided input on the urban plan for infrastructure and coordinated a tour of a local waste-water treatment plant.

## Tailings from the Tar Sands

Our Prairie Chapter continues consultation with the provincial government and the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) on immediate environmental concerns surrounding Tar Sands tailings ponds remediation, benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylenes (BTEX) emissions and water management.

### WAY TO GO TEAM!

Sierra Club Ontario Chapter had a great team participating in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon and 5K in October. Well done!



## Awards & Recognition

### Dan McDermott

Ontario Chapter Director Dan McDermott delivered the annual Robert Hunter Memorial Lecture at the University of Toronto, April 14, entitled *The Environmental Movement: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*.

In September, SCCF held an appreciation event for Ontario Chapter Director Dan McDermott's years of service. The event was lovely, on an outdoor patio and included a brief memorial gathering at Helen's tree, in honour of Helen Rykens, Dan's partner and love of his life. Helen's Tree was planted on Ward's Island in Toronto.

## Dr. Lino Grima

On September 10th the co-chairs of the Sierra Club Binational Great Lakes Committee (BGLC), Dr. Lino Grima and Wayne Howard, were presented with the Raymond J. Sherman International Award honouring volunteer service toward international conservation. The award recognizes their work protecting the Great Lakes from multiple threats, including human-caused changes in water levels, invasive species and pollution. The Sierra Club awards committee noted the BGLC as an outstanding example of how we can work across borders to protect shared ecosystems. In addition to being the Canadian co-chair of the BGLC, Dr. Grima is an active member of the Ontario Chapter and long-time Water Issues advisor for Sierra Club Canada Foundation.

## Funders and Partners

In addition to our committed individual donors, support for our work comes from generous donations from funder partners across the country. Thank you!!

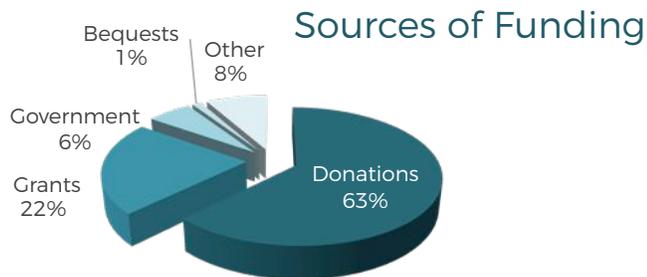
All Charities Campaign  
Animal Welfare Foundation of Canada  
ATCO Electric  
Bird Family Fund at the Strategic Giving Foundation  
Canada Running Series Inc  
Cardinal Brewing Inc.  
Centraide Outaouais  
Community Foundation of Ottawa -  
William H. and Nora Hickson Kelly Fund  
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eBay  
Edmonton Community Foundation  
Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation  
Goodpin  
Great West Life  
Key River Area Association  
Little Stream Bakery  
M. Kaushansky & Associates  
Mackenzie Investments  
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New Roots Herbal  
Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, Road Safety Division  
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TD Green Streets in partnership with Tree Canada  
Telus Corporation  
Tides Foundation  
Toronto Foundation  
United Way (Centraide) du Grand Montreal  
United Way of Ottawa  
United Way of the Lower Mainland  
Waddingtons

## Updating our face to the world

Special thanks to communications expert, volunteer Deirdre King for leading our website upgrade project and helping us put our best face forward to the world.

## Finances



### Statement of Operations

For the 12-month period ended December 2016

	2016	2015
<b>Revenue</b>		
Donations and Membership	278,671	210,352
Grants	98,594	252,637
Government (Note 1)	26,251	13,862
Bequests	5,357	107,487
Other (Note 2)	36,230	51,114
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>445,103</b>	<b>635,452</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
Programs	279,035	315,374
Communications	14,368	18,614
Operations	77,551	170,716
Development	63,650	59,347
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>434,604</b>	<b>564,051</b>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of Revenue Over Expenditures</b>	<b>10,499</b>	<b>71,401</b>

#### Note 1

Government - Federal	12,923	13,362
Government - Provincial	500	-
Government - Municipal	12,828	500
<b>Total Government Funding</b>	<b>26,251</b>	<b>13,862</b>

#### Note 2

In 2016 we suffered a flood in our storage container. The insurance proceeds of \$21,880 are included in other revenue.

# SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2016 CHAPTER, GROUP & BOARD LEADERSHIP

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Kelly Schnare  
Wanda Baxter  
Tony Reddin  
Ian Stewart

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A photograph of a man with a beard and a cap, wearing a green shirt and dark pants, hiking on a wooden boardwalk in a forest. He is carrying a backpack and using a trekking pole. The background shows dense green foliage and trees.

In memory

# Dan McDermott

The Freshwater Hero 2017 award is a lovely solid, smooth canoe-shape of wood. It feels good in the hands. The canoe shape indicates the close connection of humans and water. And in this case it symbolizes the respect of other enviros for Sierra Club's Dan McDermott.

Dan was posthumously awarded Hero 2017 by Freshwater Future. At Dan's memorial event in Toronto a powerful statement was read in his honour, "Dan dedicated his life and career to protecting the environment. He tirelessly and bravely fought for our air and water... taking on even the toughest of opponents, including the nuclear and coal industries."

Dan was not only a Freshwater Hero but a Hiking Hero to those who knew him best. He hiked some of the great walks around the world. He could tell you the best time of year to hike the Cinque Terra in Italy but his very favourite hikes were in the Bruce Trail. I was touched when he gave me his copy of the complete Bruce Trails maps. He didn't part with the maps because he retired from hiking - he only slowed down in his last months - but more because he already knew the trails so well and he wanted to share with a Canadian Newcomer (lucky me!)

Dan traveled afar but was especially devoted to the green space close to his home, dedicating years to protecting the Ontario Greenbelt. He often said this was inspired by weekend jaunts with his partner in hiking and love, Helen Rykkens. As they drove out of town to hike each year more and more of the agriculture and natural areas were being converted to ticky-tacky houses with no trees. This so frustrated him, he had to do something about it. Dan spearheaded Sierra Club's work on the Greenbelt that resulted in great success at the 10-year review.

Amongst many powerful memorial statements to Dan's legacy, the Freshwater Hero award also says, "Dan will continue to inspire all those who knew him to follow their passion, maintain the course, and fight for clean water and air."

- Kristina Jackson, Dan's dear friend and colleague

*But come ye back when summer's in the meadow  
Or when the valley's hushed and white with snow*

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CLUB CANADA**

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### Watch for Wildlife

Wanda Baxter

### Wild Child

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**One Earth** One Chance