



F O N D A T I O N

SIERRA CLUB CANADA

F O U N D A T I O N

Annual Report 2015

One Earth • One Chance

Sierra Club Canada Foundation

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A message from the President

All that the Sierra Club Canada Foundation has accomplished this year is due to the incredible hard work and devotion of our team of staff and volunteers. I would like to extend special thanks to long-time staff. They have been champions of the environment and have brought about significant positive changes in many parts of the country. Their work has been augmented and amplified across the country by our members acting as volunteers in Chapters, Local Groups and national programs. More of their successes can be read in this report.

We are proud of the work we do at the national and local level. Nationally, we have garnered media attention on the key environmental issues facing the country. We continue to make presentations to government boards and standing committees – on climate change, clean energy, pipelines, nuclear power, tar sands, environment and democracy. We continue to educate the public through releases, blogs, conferences, panels, and lecture presentations. Our work on pollinators and the impacts of neonicotinoids played a key role in new legislation in Ontario phasing out the use of neonicotinoids. Through these efforts and all those we are making at the local level, we make a real difference.

It has been an honour to have served Sierra Club Canada Foundation as its President for the past two years and as a volunteer for the past decade.

Michael Bernard
President
Sierra Club Canada Foundation

Victories

At Sierra Club Canada Foundation, we pride ourselves on our history of driving grassroots change. Here is a small sample of some of the big wins for our environment in which Sierra Club Canada Foundation played a leading role over the last 10 years:

2014:

- Ontario restricts the use of bee killing neonicotinoid pesticides. Neonic use is expected to drop by 80% on 8 million acres of corn and soybeans.
- Nova Scotia & New Brunswick establish moratoriums on "Fracking" for natural gas.

2013:

- Sierra Club Canada Foundation's #SavetheBees program draws national attention to the dawning of new Silent Spring caused by neonicotinoid pesticides.

2012:

- The Endangered Woodland Caribou recovery plan presented by the federal government that relied on culling wolves was withdrawn and replaced with a plan to protect more habitat after a campaign orchestrated by Sierra Club Canada Foundation.
- With partner universities, researchers, and environmental and policy organizations, the Sierra Youth Coalition launched the Sustainability Education Policy Network, based at the University of Saskatchewan.

2011:

- Launched the Campus Food Systems Project with Meal Exchange and Sierra Youth Coalition, which worked with campus stakeholders to improve procurement practices and offer applied student research opportunities on food and environmental issues.

2010:

- A North American vehicle energy efficient standard that will see all cars and light trucks 40% more fuel efficient by 2016.

2009:

Initiated and led a process to establish a comprehensive federal & provincial regulatory regime to improve air quality standards (smog), an air zone approach to managing air quality, and a multi-stakeholder Air Quality Council to oversee the regime.

2008:

Won Federal Court of Canada law suit requiring greenhouse gas emissions be assessed as part of the federal environment assessment for a tar sands mine, specifically the Kearsy Tar Sands Project.

2007:

Nova Scotia's infamous Sydney Tar Ponds will be cleaned up and the toxic waste will not be incinerated, which would have further polluted local communities.

2006:

2 million hectares of British Columbia's Great Bear Rainforest protected from logging.

2005:

The passage of Bill C-15, which was designed to end dumping of bilge oil from ships, which was causing the deaths of some 300,000 seabirds annually off the coast of Newfoundland alone.

Here's how we added to
that list in 2015...

National

The National Office of Sierra Club Canada Foundation serves to support grassroots environmental efforts across Canada, but also takes on numerous programs to protect nature. Two of our largest and most successful efforts this year are progress against neonicotinoid pesticides and our efforts to help green 24 Sussex.

Save the Bees

As the first national environmental organization to take on the issue of the effects of neonicotinoid pesticides on bees and other pollinators, we're pleased by some of the latest developments on this issue. As of July 1st of this year, the Province of Ontario has begun to substantially reduce the use of neonicotinoids on agricultural land. While the evidence of the impact of neonicotinoids on bees has been clearly laid out, evidence continues to mount that these pesticides are having impacts on birds and other animals. Sierra Club Canada Foundation will continue on longstanding work to educate the public on the dangers of many pesticides, including neonicotinoids.

Greening 24 Sussex

With the recent announcement that our new Prime Minister and his family would not be moving in to the official residence at 24 Sussex in order to allow for much needed repairs, Sierra Club Canada Foundation was able to advocate for the integration of green technology and energy saving designs into the building. Thousands of Canadians responded to show their support for this idea, and the National Capital Commission, which is responsible for the property, has shown great interest. We have helped collect information and experts to demonstrate what the Prime Minister's official residence could be: a shining example of how to transition to a low-carbon future. We look forward to continuing this campaign in the new year!



Chapters

Atlantic



Wild Child Forest School

This year was an exciting one for the Atlantic Chapter, which piloted Wild Child Forest School in Halifax. The new program delivery model, based on the Forest School methodology, proved to be extremely successful and demand is on the rise for more Wild Child Forest Schools to be set up in our region. This model is based on providing high quality programming to children in a single site, developing a familiarity and attachment to a natural space that deepens with every visit. WCFS encourages

free play, self-directed learning, and wilderness skills. The program is also new because it is our first foray social enterprise; we are asking parents to support program delivery costs through fees.

On PEI, we continue to provide Wild Child programming to preschool children with the support of the PEI Wildlife Conservation Trust. We are exploring ways to change this delivery model as well to embrace more of the Forest School methodologies.

Protecting the Gulf of St. Lawrence

In partnership with the Save Our Seas and Shores Coalition and the Mi'gma'we' Mawio'mi Secretariat, we helped coordinate a water ceremony honouring the sacred waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence hosted by Paq'tnekek First Nation. Special guest at the ceremony was actor and sometime Gulf resident Ethan Hawke, who came to support his neighbours in their fight to protect the Gulf from oil and gas development. The event was covered nationally and internationally, raising the profile of an issue that desperately needs greater scrutiny.



Volunteers with the Chapter also worked to develop an *Ask the Experts* document. The document outlines responses from scientists working in various areas of the Gulf ecology and social sciences, giving their reasons why the Gulf of St. Lawrence should remain free of oil and gas development.

Blue Whale Campaign

The Blue Whale Campaign wrapped up its Name-A-Whale Challenge early in 2015. Almost 40 public presentations were given to school students and at other venues to inspire entries in the contest and to share with audiences the unique features of these magnificent creatures. The winning entry, Iris, has provided a mascot for the program.



We also asked Sierra Club members and supporters to ask the federal government to designate critical habitat for the blue whale, as it was required to do by the end of 2014.

Please read the latest Endangered Perspectives, a series of articles that is carried in a number of newspapers an Alternative Magazine, detailing an up close and personal encounter with a blue named Alacran ([*Her Name Was Alacran*](#)).



JOIN US!
Public information session for the Black Point Quarry - Fogarty's Cove Environmental Impact Statement.
Come hear expert presentations and participate in a question and answer session. Don't miss this important public event.
WHERE: Chedabucto Fire Hall March 25th
WHEN: 4:00 p.m. -to- 7:00 p.m.
Teleconference Number: 1-888-882-9090 (code: 97755041)
For more information visit: <http://tinyurl.com/BlackpointQuarry>



Quarries and Mines

Our work to reduce the impact of quarries and mines on the environment was extremely intensive in 2015. We submitted our proposal to amend the Mineral Resources Act of Nova Scotia in early 2015 and commented on the amended Act before year-end.

We participated in environmental assessment for a mega-quarry in Fogarty's Cove, providing input on community concerns, lack of full assessment of alternatives to the project, and impacts on the watershed.

We also worked closely with numerous community groups fighting smaller quarries in the province, raising common concerns about lack of consultation, lack of environmental assessment, and lack of a comprehensive plan for siting quarries. The year was capped off with one quarry being rejected after the NS Minister of Environment concluded the quarry company had not performed adequate public consultation. Hopefully a sign of changes to come!

Community Connections

Volunteers took time to celebrate World Water Day and at our annual Earth Day Expo in Charlottetown, which features dozens of community groups and businesses focused on protecting the planet.



Quebec

Bioblitzes

In August 2015, Sierra Club Quebec has organized four bioblitzes along the proposed route of the Energy East pipeline. Two of the events took place in Saint Aubert, one in Mascouche and one in Pointe-Fortune. In total, 32 volunteers participated in the events. Over 250 different plant species were identified as well as several animals of particular interest such as the collared snake, the blue dotted salamander and the green heron. The results of these bioblitzes were presented during Energy East hearings and will be used in future presentations also.

Land stewardship



Sierra Club Quebec's Land Stewardship Committee aims to protect green spaces in and around the island of Montreal, which are under constant strain from urban sprawl. Main activities undertaken by the Land stewardship committee in 2015 were the following:

- Submission and presentation of several policy briefs for consultations on Schéma d'aménagement et Développement de Montréal, Schéma d'aménagement et Développement de Longueuil and consultations on development project in Sainte Anne de Bellevue;
- Active participation in numerous town hall meeting of relevant municipalities
- Filing of complaint to lobbying commissioner for illegal lobbying activities by developers in Western Pierrefonds
- Filing of various law suit against city of Montreal for ignoring environmental regulations in construction project in Western Pierrefonds
- Filing complaints to the Quebec Ministry of Environment for illegal dumping of construction waste
- Creation of an interactive map showing green spaces in and around Montreal and organization of conference about the issue, to take place in April 2016

Results of these actions in 2015 include the announcement of the city of Montreal to increase surface of protected areas on the island of Montreal from 6% to 10% and protecting Parc Meadowbrook. Sierra Club Quebec has been featured in several newspaper articles, radio interviews and TV news items about this topic.

Action H2O

Action H2O committee has resumed its activities, focussing on run off water in Longueuil. Recent activities include the submission of a policy brief to the Longueuil Agglomeration for hearings on Schéma d'aménagement et Développement de Longueuil, in November.



Opposition to Reform of Quebec Lobbying and Transparency Act

A Lobbying and transparency bill (#56) was submitted on June 12, 2015. Adoption of this bill will subject citizens' groups and non-for-profit organizations to the same rules and regulations as private companies regarding interaction with politicians. In practice this means an additional administrative burden for which small community organizations do not have sufficient capacity, thus effectively silencing civil society in the name of transparency.

Sierra Club Quebec has been part of a delegation representing more than 600 organizations, which met with responsible minister Jean-Marc Fournier. The same day the bill was filed, Sierra Club Quebec, together with 4 other organizations, organized a press conference about the issue, resulting in coverage of the subject by all large Quebec newspapers.

Bio-solids as agricultural fertilizers

On October 28, 2015, Sierra Club Quebec presented a policy brief on the use of bio-solid wastes as agricultural fertilizers to the MRC of Beauharnois-Salaberry. Bio-solid wastes are solid residues from sewage wastes, which are rich in minerals and organic matter. If well regulated for contamination with heavy metals, benzenes and other dangerous substances, these wastes can be an important resource, leading to both reductions in the use of chemical fertilizers and wastes ending up on land fills. However, the public discourse is still largely fed by fear and negative emotions associated to recycling human excrements. Sierra Club Quebec's intervention was an attempt to bring the focus back to facts and scientific evidence.

Ontario



Greenbelt

Sierra Club Ontario work in support of the Greenbelt has a substantial record of accomplishment that continues through this most recent year. Our efforts in collaboration with our active and vibrant Peel Region Group have resulted in the City of Mississauga now being on the cusp of approving the addition of publicly owned Credit River Valley lands to the Greenbelt. Years of hard work, initially started by Sierra Peel's late founder and leader Peter Orphanos, and continued by leaders like Peel Group volunteer Thaia Jones, are about to result in Canada's 6th largest municipality joining the Greenbelt. In Canada's 9th largest municipality, Brampton (also in Peel Region), our Greenbelt progress has been less dramatic but substantial nonetheless. Greenbelt expansion has now made it to Brampton's official natural heritage priority list after years of delay.

Our Greenbelt work in Niagara Region began a few years ago with a request by Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation that Sierra Club Ontario troubleshoot an organized effort, birthed there, with the goal of destroying the Greenbelt. We linked up with long term local land preservation activist Dr. John Bacher, whose work has resulted in Thorold's longstanding request to add land to the Greenbelt being recommended to the Ontario Government by Niagara Region.

We succeeded in putting together a Durham Region based program to add the headwater lands of Carruthers Creek to the Greenbelt. This goal had long been sought by the Town of Ajax and championed by its Mayor Steve Parish, but had been thwarted by the fact that, while most of Carruthers runs through Ajax to Lake



Ontario, the headwater lands are in Pickering and Whitby. This recent effort began when Sierra Club Ontario brokered a meeting between Parish and then-Pickering Deputy Mayor and environmental advocate Jennifer O’Connell. Five minutes into the discussion, the two Durham politicians were in lock step as to the way forward for adding the Carruthers headwater lands to the Greenbelt. Peter O’Connell joined our team to advance our on-the-ground effort, and he did great work in helping to get the Carruthers issue on to the agenda of Ontario’s Crombie Commission, now overseeing Ontario’s mandated review of the Greenbelt Act

In addition to the regional Greenbelt work, Sierra Club Ontario has a permanent seat on the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance (OGA) Steering Committee. In the last year, Dr. Bacher has joined us as the representative for Niagara Region. The OGA includes a wide array of Greenbelt supportive organizations at the provincial and local levels.

Sierra Club Ontario is also part of the 2015 Review Summit, a by invitation multi-sectorial body brought together by Greenbelt Foundation that focuses on the provincial review process involving the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine and the Niagara Escarpment. The principle achievement of the Summit, to date, has been to create expanding cooperation between environmentalists and the agricultural sector, principally represented by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. This new spirit of shared purpose has been helped greatly by the fact that the local food movement is having a clear and positive impact on Ontario farm incomes.

Natural Capital Project (NCP)

This project was originally conceived by Peter Orphanos and brought to reality by Kristina Jackson. Building on our Peel Region base and bringing her biology expertise, people skills and organizational abilities to the NCP concept, Kristina secured a succession of small to medium sized grants that made it possible for SCO to work closely with the Credit Valley Conservation (CVC). Building on this success we succeeded in securing a substantial RBC Bluewater grant in 2014 for beach restoration work in cooperation with our friends at the Town of Ajax.



In the process, we created a positive relationship with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

Great Lakes

Sierra Club Canada Foundation has been active in Great Lakes work on both sides of the border for many years. Our two-year project focussing on the nutrient loading crisis was completed in 2015. Fortunately, we continue to benefit from substantial Great Lakes volunteer stewardship.



Peel Region

Sierra Peel continues to be an environmental leader at the local level in Mississauga and Brampton as well as a meaningful player at the provincial level. Most recently Sierra Peel, working with our national waste diversion volunteer Rod Muir scored a huge victory in their struggle to defeat a proposed waste to power incinerator and increase the Region's commitment to waste diversion. Their work moved forward in earnest in January. On October 6, partial success came as Peel Council voted to increase their diversion goals from its poor 45% rate to something in the 65% to 75% range. At the same meeting, Council committed to reviewing the incinerator project. Total success came unexpectedly on October 22 when Council and staff agreed that a 75% diversion rate would eliminate the practicality of an incinerator and the construction project was canceled. In the works now is a Sierra Peel initiative to assist the Region in achieving the

75% diversion rate.

The positive impact of Sierra Peel in Mississauga is of long standing. More recent are the gains being made in Brampton, where Group leaders David Laing and Rosemary Keenan are on the City's Environmental

Advisory Committee. Laing is the Committee Co-chair. Active Transportation is David's special focus and he will use his EAC role to continue to promote cycling and cycling infrastructure in Brampton.

In addition, Sierra Peel is involved in a plethora of community environmental events. These include tree plantings, festivals, walks and Seedy Saturdays.

Prairies

Wild Life Passage Project

A recent success which has garnered much media attention is the work done by the Prairie Chapter's Edmonton Group to convince the City of Edmonton to develop a wildlife passage program to ensure natural connectivity in the city. A series of wildlife bridges and culverts will be built in the city to help wildlife move between the natural areas within the city. The first structure has been built. It is an underpass that goes under a 4 lane highway underpass. It's designed for moose as well as small animals such as mice and skunks. It's thought to be the only urban structure of



its type. The homes in the neighbourhoods adjoining the bridge will receive rain barrels, have restricted hard surfaces, and will not be allowed to use pesticides or chemical de-icers on their driveways and sidewalk in the winter. The project won awards from the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators and the Alberta Emerald Foundation.

Tar Sands

Our local grassroots group consists of scientists and others with a deep knowledge about the science of the tar sands. We have developed positive relationships with colleagues in regulatory agencies, politics, industry and the bureaucracy to help advocate for evidence-based climate and environmental policy. We are concerned about the limits of best in class technology; while industry and government focus on best available technology, the real question that must be asked is, "Is that practice good enough?" Current regulations create outcomes that are untenable for the environment and human health; we're leveraging our work to improve them.

A sample of the Tar Sands activities included:

- Meeting with industry stakeholders, including a past-president of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and a board member of the Alberta Energy Regulator on tar sands issues;
- Consultations with Alberta Energy Regulator on their Tailings Pond Management framework;
- Group discussion on Dave Shindler's recent publication - Carbon Costs of Tar Sands mining in Proceedings of the National Science Academy;
- Reviewed University of Pennsylvania's (Prof Cary Coglianese) Best in Class report to Alberta Energy Regulator on Tar Sands mining practices.



Additional Local Activities in Alberta

- Renewed participation in the Fort Airshed Partnership program.
- Participated in the City Museum Strategy workshop, SCCF advocacy for inclusion of Natural History into their mandate.
- Consultations and meeting with Edmonton City Planning on terms of reference for Natural Areas Management Plans.
- Participation as a member of the North Saskatchewan River Valley Conservation Society (5th year).
- Investigation of City of Edmonton geotechnical modifications to stabilize a section of a major natural ravines with riprap, destroying a significant area of riparian habitat;
- Meeting with Edmonton City Parks on concerns over a powerboat launch proposed for the North Saskatchewan River at the outfall of a creek with a major fishery;
- Toured City of Edmonton staff and consultants to Natural Area NW384 to convey hydrological sensitivities;
- Participated in tour of Whitemud Ravine with Nature Club and other ENGOs and City Parks to consider trail rerouting due to bank instabilities.
- Documentary photos of Natural Area NW384 to City consultant.
- Invited to lecture to University of Alberta class on ENGO strategies for lobbying City and County councillors, with case studies.
- Discussions with Urban Developer Institute (developer lobby) on infill densification and Edmonton's anti-sprawl initiative.
- Presented seminar to City Planning on Sand Dunes Natural Area - with Curator of Archaeology at the Provincial Museum (occasional SCCF volunteer).

Sierra Youth Coalition

Sustainability Education Policy Network

Established in 2012, the [Sustainability Education Policy Network](#) (SEPN) is a national network of researchers and organizations advancing sustainability in education policy and practice. In 2015, the project entered its fourth year of a six-year project, and a number of scholarly articles and research have been published outlining the progress to date. Sierra Youth Coalition is a member of the board, and supports Theme 2 of the project, Community Engagement.



Canadian Youth Delegation to COP 21 in Paris

Sierra Youth Coalition supported the Canadian Youth Delegation (CYD) to COP 21 in Paris by providing access and accreditation. This year, CYD members from across Canada benefitted from improved access and went to great efforts to make their voices heard in Paris. We applaud their efforts and the ongoing efforts of the Canadian Youth Climate Coalition, which administers the CYD, and of which SYC is a proud member.



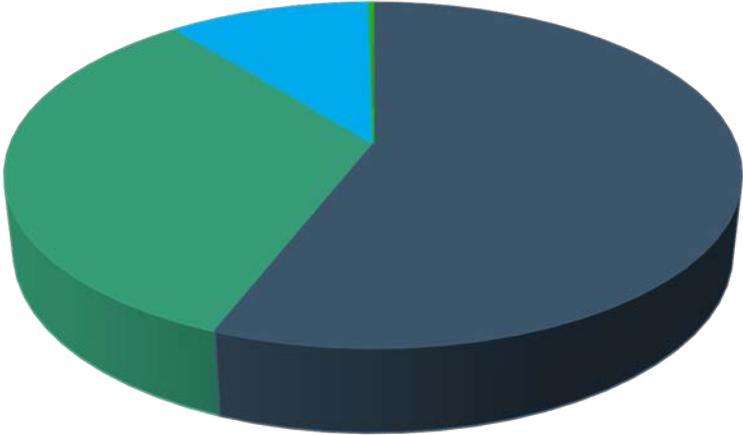
Financial Overview

Expenses

The vast majority – 56% - of our spending is on programming costs, followed by core costs at 33%, which primarily support the delivery of programs and activities. Fundraising composes 10% of our costs, and as with any charity, is key to ensuring our financial stability and the delivery of our programs.

2015 EXPENSES

Programs	\$315,374
Core costs	\$188,077
Fundraising	\$59,347
Other	\$1,253



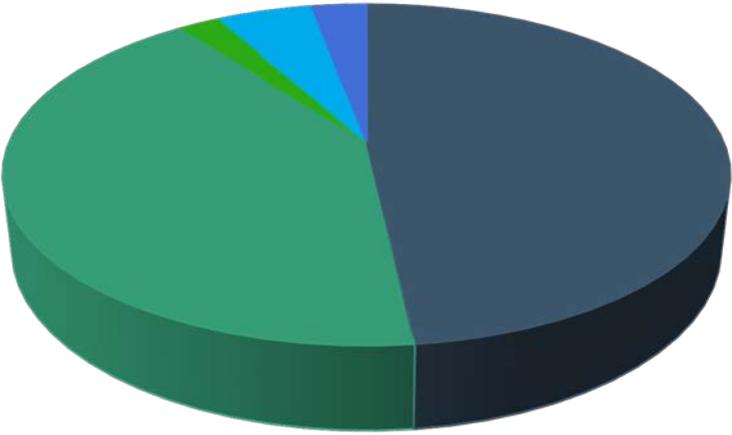
■ Programs ■ Core costs ■ Fundraising ■ Other

Revenues

While we obtain a great deal of support from grants from other charities and non-profit organization, our key source of support is from individual donors. Without the support of our donors, we wouldn't be able to support grassroots effort to conserve our environment across Canada.

2015 REVENUES

Donations	\$306,606
Grants	\$263,870
Government Contracts	\$13,862
Investments and other	\$32,429
Administration fees	\$18,685



■ Donations ■ Grants
 ■ Government Contracts ■ Investments and other
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