

# Annual Action Report

## 2015-2016

### Our Mission:

To bring about greater environmental and social justice through research, education and activism.

### Where to find us:

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## Our Past and Our Future: 40 Years of OPIRG Guelph

This year has been one of reflection and change. OPIRG has been at the University of Guelph since 1976 and has been fortunate to engage in projects throughout the community and campus that further the great cause of social and environmental justice.

A lot of this year has been inward-looking, as we moved to review and evaluate our strategies, our directions, and how we build relationships on campus and off. We've had some tough lessons to learn about how we've carried ourselves and what our various communities need. For the 2015/16 year we set out to build deeper relationship and focus more of our energy and finances on the anti-racism, indigenous solidarity and native sovereignty, and anti-poverty work that is happening throughout Guelph. Have we been successful? Not perfectly, but our aims are clear and our work to direct ourselves to serve these relationships is growing.

With all we've learned, we've also had so many successes this year. Another successful Speed River Project and Two Rivers Clean-up has continued on the energies of our longest-standing work. While our more recent work of the OPIRG Symposium has had two

years come and go since the last OPIRG AGM. We've been able to outreach and build new relationships in the community and on campus, while nurturing old ones. And we've even started new programs focused on the Library, Archives, and Research areas within OPIRG—bringing our history forward to today. Meanwhile, our voices echo loud and clear on the air with RadiOPIRG.

It's been a good year to be at OPIRG—a lot to reflect upon, genuinely, but a lot of work that pushes us forward.

Over forty years, OPIRG has had much change pass through its doors and this year has been no different. We've had to say good-bye to Sarah Scanlon, whose work and passion at OPIRG lit many of the fires that burn within our space today. We've also welcomed Brad Evoy as full-time staff, along with so many Workstudy and part-time contract workers into the OPIRG Guelph space.

As with previous years, OPIRG continued build its internal processes, so as to serve you better. Some of this work will be present at our AGM, as we clarify and fix older models and structures within OPIRG. We want to thank our amazing Directors for all the work and passion they consistently give to help OPIRG grow! Without them, we'd not be the organization we are today.

So, to another forty years and to our struggle together for justice!

# Who's Behind the Scenes?

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Malissa Bryan  
Aidan Lockhart  
Adrian D'Alessandro  
Liz Homer  
Naomi Horst  
Sarah Rotz  
Katie Baker  
Dawn Dietrich  
Lema Najibi  
Handel Callender

## STAFF

Kiran Bhattarai  
Office & Speed River Project  
Coordinator  
Brad Evoy - Organizational &  
Policy Development Coordinator  
Sarah Scanlon - Former  
Organizational & Policy  
Development Coordinator  
Mandy Hiscocks  
Volunteer Programming &  
Community Engagement  
Coordinator

**All permanent and term staff are unionized with CUPE 1281. This means along with other staff and other OPIRG chapters, we have a collective agreement that outlines the work conditions and relationship with that staff have with the Board of Directors.**



### **Did you know that the OPIRG Board and Staff use Consensus for all Decision Making?**

Consensus is an inclusive and participatory model of decision making that the all groups at OPIRG use.

It is a creative and dynamic way of reaching agreement between all members of a group.

Read more here: <http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/>

## Activist Training—Workshops

OPIRG workshops are fun, and free! Do you have an idea for a workshop you'd like us to offer, or one you'd like to facilitate? Get in touch with us! We have some funding to make it happen! In 2015-2016 we hosted:

In the fall of 2015 the Action Groups (through the Volunteer Committee) teamed up to bring Chris Dixon in for a workshop entitled For the Long Haul: Care, Intention, and Steadiness in Radical Organizing. Chris Dixon is a longtime anarchist organizer, writer, and educator with a PhD from the University of California at Santa Cruz. He is the author of the book Another Politics: Talking Across Today's Transformative Movements and runs the web-site [writingwithmovements.com](http://writingwithmovements.com).

OPIRG also collaborated with other campus and community groups to organize 2-Spirit Who? A Workshop with Aiyyana Maracle. Aiyyana was a transformed Haudenosaunee woman, an awarded multi-disciplinary artist, a scholar and educator. Aiyyana passed away in April 2016.

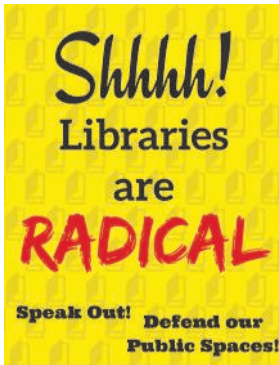
The workshop was a joint effort between Aboriginal Awareness Week and Queer Identities Week.

**Consensus decision-making and Anti-oppression are both mandatory workshops for active OPIRG members. If you are currently involved in OPIRG, or would like to get involved, and haven't had these trainings yet please get in touch with the Volunteer Coordinator.**

**TRAINING FOR CHANGE**

## Radical Resource and Zine Library

The OPIRG Guelph resource library is dedicated to providing alternative and independent publications to our action groups, volunteers, community members, and University of Guelph students. We aim to carry books, zines, and periodicals that are not available in most libraries, particularly those from small and independent publishers.



We achieve this through careful selection of materials, coordinating with the community, volunteers, staff, and board on acquisition decisions, and having our book collection available through the University library system **TRELLIS**.

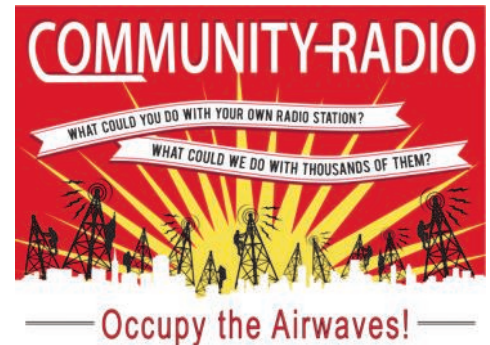
Suggestions for new materials are always welcome!

## RadiOPIRG

RadiOPIRG is our weekly radio show on CFRU 93.3FM, Guelph's campus community radio station. We keep you updated on OPIRG activities and events; and play talks, interviews and music focused on environmental and social justice that you won't hear on mainstream radio.

RadiOPIRG continues to air on Thursdays on CFRU 93.3FM in the 12-1pm time slot. Tune in, or listen live or to the archives online at [www.cfru.ca](http://www.cfru.ca).

Volunteers are always welcome – it's fun, and no experience is necessary! All CFRU training is free but is not required to participate in RadiOPIRG. Let us know if you're part of a group or project focused on environmental and social justice and would like to come on the show.



## OPIRG—The Provincial Network

OPIRG Guelph is one of the twelve Ontario-based PIRGs that participate as members of Ontario PIRG. Each OPIRG chapter has two seats on the Board of Directors of Ontario PIRG, which is incorporated as a charitable organization. Ontario PIRG meetings are held at least twice yearly in person, one of which is the AGM.

Membership in Ontario PIRG means access to great programming and development opportunities like the Public Interest Schools, Board Training Schools and Issue-based Network Meetings. This network provides the PIRGs with a valuable tool for sharing skills and experiences that make us stronger organizations. Any volunteer at an OPIRG can contribute to the provincial network!

Each PIRG holds a portfolio which are designed to spread the responsibility for tasks amongst the chapters so that each chapter member can be involved with the running of the organization. OPIRG-Guelph holds the Financial and Archiving Portfolios. Want to know more? Just Ask!

**Provincial Board Members:** Rachel Taylor (Chapter Board), Brad Evoy (Chapter Staff)

# The Summer Institute

During the summer of 2016 we partnered with the Guelph Resource Centre for Gender Empowerment and Diversity to organize the 10th annual Summer Institute. For more information about GRCGED, go to <http://grcgcd.com/>

## 2016 Workshops

- ★ **Anti-oppression & Intersectionality** – with Malissa Bryan
- ★ **Self Care for Advocates in Vulnerable Sectors** – with Tanisha Jones
- ★ **Truth and Decolonization** – with Sâkhitwain Awâsis
- ★ **Traveling Inward: Conflict Transmutation** – with Sharrae Lyon
- ★ **WTF is Solidarity?** – with Shabina Lafleur-Gangji and Galme Yasmin Mumed



If you'd like to facilitate a workshop during the 2017 Summer Institute, or if you'd like to suggest a facilitator or a topic, please email **mandy at [volunteer@opirgguelph.org](mailto:volunteer@opirgguelph.org)**.

## Action Groups—The heart of activism at OPIRG!

Action Groups are made up of five or more people who choose to focus on a particular issue or area related to social and environmental justice. Each Action Group receives funds, organizational support, training, space to meet and organize, and access to OPIRG's networks of student and community activists. All you need to start a group is an idea for a project or campaign that fits within the OPIRG mandate. We can help you to find other interested people to work with, and go over the proposal form with you.

*As of the writing of this report, Guelph Anti-Pipeline, Fossil Free Guelph and SOW are still active. If you're interested in getting involved with one of them, or in starting your own group, please get in touch with the Volunteer Coordinator.*



## Fossil Free Guelph

Fossil Free Guelph is calling upon the university to freeze all new investments in fossil fuel companies immediately and to divest completely from these companies in five years. Originally part of Guelph Anti-Pipeline Action, they became a separate group in the spring of 2014 in order to put more energy into the divestment campaign. This year the focus was on outreach and education leading up to a CSA referendum on divestment. In February the group co-hosted the film *This Changes Everything* as part of OPIRG's *Movies That Matter* series, and in March they organized a very successful panel discussion on divestment at U

of G. Despite the CSA elections not reaching quorum, the undergraduate students voted overwhelmingly in favour of divestment. As a result of FFG's tireless advocacy work, the University agreed to begin a process to consider 'responsible investment'. FFG played a central role throughout this consultation process. While the resulting policy leaves much to be desired, FFG continues to work toward divestment through the University's process.

There are currently OPIRG members interested in forming new Action Groups. If you're interested in any of these issues please get in touch:

Solidarity with Palestine • Nestlé in Guelph/Bottled Water • Food Ethics/Justice/Sustainability  
Migrant Justice • Rhythms of Resistance (radical drum group!) • Cinema Politica (progressive & rad films!)



## Growing Community Health

Growing Community Health was a migrant justice group focused on improving access to health care and resources for migrant workers and newcomers. They formed in the summer of 2013. A loss of core members through graduation, full-time employment, new family members, and leaving Guelph made it impossible for the group to continue and it is no longer active. If you are interested in doing migrant justice work, OPIRG would like to support you! We are looking for a group of people to pick up some of the work Growing Community Health was doing, and to broaden the focus to wider campaigns to improve immigration policies and to end immigration detention.

In April Growing Community Health received a VOICE award (Victory Over Illness by Consumer Empowerment) from the Haldimand-Norfolk Resource Centre for their ongoing contributions in supporting a mentally healthy community. GCH can be reached at growingcommunityhealth@gmail.com.

## Guelph Anti-Pipeline (GAP)

Guelph Anti-Pipeline Action aims to raise awareness and engagement in challenging oil dependency.

Since coming together in early 2013 GAP has been opposing the reversal of Enbridge's Line 9 through awareness campaigns, supporting land defenders, and fundraising. They kicked off the year by organizing a free bus to the Toxic Tour of Chemical Valley in Aamjiwnaang, ON. They continued to challenge Line 9 while expanding their focus to include other extraction projects. In February GAP co-hosted the first film in OPIRG's Movies That Matter series: Fractured Land, the story of a young Dene lawyer and his struggle to protect his territory. In March they joined with Spatial Integrity to screen Last Stand for Lelu, a documentary about the proposed liquefied tracked gas terminal on Lelu Island. The event was a fundraiser for the Lax Kw'alaams people and their allies who are fighting against the project.



## Students Offering Welcome

Students Offering Welcome was formed in January 2016 in response to the escalating refugee crisis and the expected arrival of hundreds of Syrian refugees in Guelph. Their goals are to raise awareness about the situation, to help with settlement, and to raise funds for people still living in camps. SOW hosted one on-campus and two off-campus screenings of the Salam Neighbor, a documentary about life in a refugee camp in Jordan. They raised money for Madaya, a community in Syria facing starvation, and volunteered with Guelph's Refugee Sponsorship Forum, a network set up to help connect refugees and their sponsors with donations and community supports.

## Students for Justice in Latin America / Students for Justice: Local Responsibility and Allyship (SJLA)

Students for Justice in Latin America (SJLA) was formed in September 2015, in order to draw attention to political situations in Latin America and to encourage solidarity with those on the front lines of struggles for social and environmental justice. They raised money for community members in Lote Ocho, Guatemala, which was destroyed by police and soldiers in 2007 during a mining related conflict between the community and Hudbay Minerals. They also co-hosted the third film in OPIRG's Movies That Matter series, Resistencia: The Fight for the Aguan Valley. In the winter of 2016 they changed their name to Students for Justice: Local Responsibility and Allyship, in order to focus on under-represented social justice issue in Canada and more specifically at U of G. SJLA is no longer active.

## Partnerships

At OPIRG we recognize the value of working in solidarity with other groups in the Guelph community to build stronger movements for social change. One of the ways we do this is through our campus and community partnerships in order to reach a greater audience, to benefit from the skills and knowledge of others, and to live out our values of cooperation and diversity of tactics.

Listed below are our 2015-16 partners:

### COMMUNITY PARTNERS

**TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION CIRCLE GUELPH:** OPIRG's support for Guelph Wellington's TRC Gatherings has been very much appreciated. These Circles occur every 3 months / 4 times a year during each season and have been graciously hosted at the Bookshelf by Barb Minett. The Green Room and Gathering Room, the Bookstore and its patios have provided a fun, safe space for traditional ceremonies, indigenous and ally guest speakers, authors, poets, singers, drummers, films, exhibits of children's indigenous art, along with delicious traditional tastings that delight families and friends of all ages... and everyone in Guelph Wellington is invited to participate. Our community will have journeyed around the Medicine Wheel one full circle by this March 19th. Chi Miigwetch OPIRG for sharing your gifts for the greater good of our community.



**40 BAKER:** Abbeyfield Houses Society of Guelph purchased, upgraded and renovated the property at 40 Baker Street to provide a home for Freshstart and Our Place Youth Centre and the Baker Street Art Gallery – and as well now provides a home to other separately incorporated charitable organizations such as Ed Video, Chalmers Community Service Centre, Room For Us (Wellington) and Matrix Affordable Homes. As commercial tenants these latter organizations provide a sustainable economic base which in turn permits Abbeyfield Guelph FUND to act as an incubator for programs such as Fresh Start, Our Place Youth Centre, Our Shelter Network, and the Baker Street Art Gallery.

<http://www.mytown.ca/>

### CAMPUS PARTNER

**GUELPH BLACK STUDENTS ASSOCIATION:** The Guelph Black Student Association (formerly known as the C.J. Munford Center), established in 1994, functions as a resource center for diverse and minority students on campus. The association focuses on issues of diversity, race, and other significant factors relevant to the lives of students of colour, and tries to encourage the inclusion, respect, and education of the beautifully unique and present black and minority faces on campus. This year the funds provided to the GBSA helped towards running the Black History Month programming on campus. <https://www.uoguelph.ca/cjmunford/>



## Events

We kicked off the year with an Open House and lots of outreach during Orientation Week. We participated in DisOrientation 2015, collaborating with many other organizations to host a Social Justice Carnival, an alternative book and poster sale, a Social Justice Trivia Night and an all-ages drag show. In late September we held an Orientation Night.

In the Winter semester we held our AGM with keynote speaker Megan Bertasson, a 2spirit Ininiw iskwew from Norway House Cree Nation, and a family- and community-oriented scholar active in both Toronto and Norway House. Megan spoke on the need to continue asserting Indigenous sovereignty in a context where terms like reconciliation, Indigenize, and decolonize are misunderstood, misused, and appropriated in service of the Canadian settler colonial regime.

The Winter semester also saw us launch Movies That Matter: A 5 part film series focused on social and environmental justice. We screened Fractured Land, This Changes Everything, Resistencia, The House I Live In, and The Square. OPIRG continues to run film series. If you have any suggestions for films or topics, please let us know!

**Here are some more events we organized, funded, and supported in 2015-2016. If you have ideas for events, or events you'd like to run and need help with, we might be able to provide funding and/or logistical support. Get in touch!**

**Free Bus to the Toxic Tour of Chemical Valley, Aamjiwnaang ON.**

**Fresh Water Jamboree in Royal City Park**

**Book Launch of Yves Engler's Canada in Africa: 300 Years of Aid and Exploitation.**

**Redefinition: Art, Space & the Telling of Our Stories**

**Take Back the Night!**

**'Zine Launch of "The Hot Tray Hooper and other stories told while doing time" by Cedar Rabbit. Hosted by OPIRG's Zine Library.**

**We Are All Treaty People: Achieving the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations in our community.**

**Sisters In Spirit Vigil**

**#It'sNoSecret: Action for the Elimination of Tuition Fees**

**ACT: Decolonizing Thanksgiving Dinner**

**Guelph Film Festival**

**Let's Talk: Is School Too Expensive? A discussion about Post-Secondary Education Issues.**

**COOL THE PLANET 2015 Rally in Guelph  
December 6<sup>th</sup> Vigil**

**Anti-Black Racism Teach-In**

**Black History Month**

**"Stories and Spirits"**

**Sustainability Week**

**"Why Veg?" Panel discussion and dinner**

**Guelph Town Hall: Making Sense of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)**

**Info Night: Grassy Narrows, Resistance, and River Run 2016**

**Free bus from Guelph to Grassy Narrows  
River Run in Toronto!**

**Guelph Town Hall on the Greenbelt**

**PRIDE RIOT: Community Cafe & Queer Burlesque Charity Fundraiser**



**MORE EVENTS**

# Social and Environmental Justice Symposium



The first year of the OPIRG Social and Environmental Justice Symposium was held in March 2015 with a call to "Research! Educate! Agitate!" Our first Symposium Coordinator, Darius Mirshahi, did an amazing job—with the help of our committee, other staff, and volunteers—of creating the blueprint and foundations for our Symposium!

We started with the keynote panel "Freedom to Learn: Challenging the Education Paradigm in Ontario", led by local student activists, and the amazing film *The Internet's Own Boy*. On the second and third days, panels included:

- ⇒ The Impact of Environmental Movements on Indigenous Sovereignty
- ⇒ Capitalism Isn't Working: What Else Is There?
- ⇒ Money Walks: Strategies for Divestment From Mining, Fossil Fuels, and Israeli Apartheid
- ⇒ We Don't Want Your Pipelines: Strategies for Challenging Pipelines in Ontario
- ⇒ The Power of Storytelling: Using Stories to Create Change and understanding
- ⇒ Using Academia to Further Indigenous Sovereignty
- ⇒ The Borders Crossed Us: Understanding the Impacts of Immigration Laws in Canada
- ⇒ Ontario's Electricity Future: Nuclear or Renewable?
- ⇒ The Borders Crossed Us: Understanding the Impacts of Immigration Laws in Canada
- ⇒ Food Industrial Complex: A Conversation About GMOs and Pesticides
- ⇒ Seeds of Change: Exploring and Unpacking Food Justice Movements
- ⇒ Climate Justice and the Dilemmas of Sustainable Development
- ⇒ Mining: Canada's Toxic Legacy
- ⇒ SLAPP Suits: Slapping Movements Into Silence
- ⇒ Resisting the Rise of Anti-Muslim Violence
- ⇒ We Are the Ocean: The Knowledge Within Indigenous Feminism and its Relationship to the Academy, Activism and Social Structures
- ⇒ Politics of Trauma: Alternative Healing Strategies

The second year of the Symposium was held in March 2016 with a focus on "Bridging Communities. Re-centering Movements.", our second Coordinators, Yasmin Mumed and Shabina Lafleur-Gangji were fantastic and continued—with the help of our amazing team—to grow the Symposium and build its roots in the broader community!

We started with the facilitated panel "Truth and Reconciliation Commission- Moving Forward in a Good Way in Guelph". On the first and second, panels included:

- ⇒ Academia and Community Work
- ⇒ Art, Reclamation and Resistance
- ⇒ Beyond the Pavement: Healing Justice and Cultures of Care in Black, Indigenous, People of Colour Activist Communities
- ⇒ Confronting Intimate Partner Violence
- ⇒ Creating Accessible and Engaging Avenues for Sharing Knowledge
- ⇒ Decolonizing and Re Centering Our Food Systems
- ⇒ Education, criminalization and transformative strategies
- ⇒ Food Sovereignty and Reconciliation: Mohawk Seedkeeper Farm and the "Good Mind" in Agriculture
- ⇒ Impact of Colonization on 2 Spirit Identities





## Social and Environmental Justice Symposium (cont.)

- ⇒ Indigenous Resistance Against Environmental Racism
- ⇒ Immigration in Canada: The trending of temporary and detention
- ⇒ Knowledge mobilization for community engagement: Insights and dilemmas from a study of community-based water activism
- ⇒ Navigating Poverty in Guelph: Research and Community based experiences
- ⇒ Reclaiming the Power of our Stories
- ⇒ Settler Police Violence on Black and Indigenous Women's Bodies in Canada

In the last two years, the Symposium has grown, developed, and learned from the wisdom and criticisms of our vibrant community. But, this convergence has brought together people from all parts of the campus and wider Guelph community to engage in research-in-action. One of the key missions of OPIRG Guelph has always been to apply the knowledge and resources of the ivory tower to the needs and issues facing our communities. We hope that the Symposium has and will continue to serve that end now and for many years to come.



At the time of this writing, we were preparing for the 2017 Symposium—Crackdowns and Creativity with our Coordinator, Melody Mikhail! We'll have a more detailed report back in the 2016-2017 AAR, but please let us know what you thought of how things went and sign up now to get involved in Symposium 2018! Finally, a deep and sincere thank you to Darius Mirshahi, Yasmin Mumed, Shabina Lafleur-Gangji, Melody Mikhail, Sarah Scanlon, & to all past members of our Symposium Committee. All of you make this event happen and without you there would be these amazing events.

## Speed River Project

Almost for about four decades, the OPIRG Speed River Project has done large-scale naturalization initiatives, ecological monitoring, and community outreach activities in the Speed and Eramosa river corridors. Now it has become apparent that regular planting of trees, shrubs and herbs into the river corridors help further the work of the ecological restoration. The objectives of the Speed River Project are as follows: first, to provide meaningful environmental stewardship opportunities for students and the broader community of all age, class, origin and orientation; and second, to engage in action-oriented projects intended to enhance the ecological health of the river corridors. This report provides a brief description of funding sources and different activities implemented during fall 2015 and spring 2016.

OPIRG Speed River project received an award from the Ontario Ministry of Environment through their Great Lake Guardian Community Fund to take its ecological restoration activities into the next level. The funding was requested under the project name "Riparian Enhancement of Eramosa and Speed Rivers" which was run from spring 2014 to summer 2015. In this project, OPIRG Guelph teamed up with the City of Guelph and their River System Advisory Committee to implement the project. Besides the generous funding from the ministry, successes of the Speed River Project have been possible through the support of many individuals and organizations, including volunteers, park stewards, OPIRG Guelph's staff and Board Directors.



## Speed River Project (cont.)



After the successful completion of the above project, we received another round of Great Lake Guardian Community Fund. This time the funding was requested to implement the project entitled “Rivers Restoration by Improving Water Quality and Riparian Biodiversity” which started in spring 2015 and will end in winter 2017.

The two main activities that this report discusses further are as follows:

- first, community tree planting;
- second, park maintenance which covers, mulching, tree guarding, trampling the grass around the previously planted trees, and removal of invasive species.

### Community Tree Planting

This initiative diversified and rehabilitated degraded Speed and Eramosa river banks through community-based naturalization activities. Specifically, this project focused on increasing plant diversity along the riverbanks through planting native trees, shrubs and herbaceous species, and controlling the growth of the exotic invasive plant species. The ultimate outcome of this work is to protect the habitat for urban wildlife (e.g., frogs, beavers, songbirds, etc.). During the fall 2015 and spring/summer 2016, several tree planting days were held at the York Road Park, Howitt Park, Hadati Creek, and Wolfond Park. On each of these planting days, dozens of enthusiastic volunteers turned out. Altogether, 849 native plants were planted; among these plants 549 were trees and shrubs, and 300 were herbaceous species. The trees and shrubs comprised 23 different native species – Red Maple, Silver Maple, Sugar Maple, Service Berry, Tamarack, Swamp White Oak, Bur Oak, White Birch, White Pine, White Spruce, Pussy Willow, White Cedar, Eastern Hemlock, Black Cherry, Chock cherry, Nannyberry, American Highbush Cranberry, Buttonbush, Silky Dogwood, Red Osier Dogwood, Elder Berry, Winter Berry and Staghorn Sumac. Herbaceous plants include 10 native species – Blood Root, May Apple, Anemone, Solomon Seal, Swamp Milkweed, Swamp Aster, Ohio Goldenrod, Marsh Marigold, Michigan Lily, and Wild Blue-Flag. Selections of these species specifically aimed to support the food and habitats for different wildlife as well as other aquatic and terrestrial species. The survival rate of trees and shrubs looks very good (approximately 80%).



### Park Maintenance

In the fall of 2015, chicken wires were installed on selected trees the Wolfond Park to protect them from Beaver damage. During the spring 2016, under the leadership of Meera Dyer and Sue Smith, the Wolfond Park Neighbourhood Group mobilized dozens of volunteers to pull out Garlic Mustard from about 60 square meter of area at the Wolfond Park. The cleared area is covered by about 120 native plants, such as Blood Toot, May Apple, Anemone, and Solomon Seal. These native species would help replenish the soil and stop the seeds of the Garlic Mustard from growing. In July and August 2016, over 400 previously planted trees at the Hadati Creek and Howitt Park received maintenance services – weeding, mulching and watering in particular.

## 2 Rivers Cleanup: Revive. Restore. Rehabilitate

OPIRG has been doing a river cleanup for almost 40 years. By engaging our community in identifying and mitigating the sources of pollution both seen and unseen, we can revive our rivers. The Speed and Eramosa Rivers were once renowned for their teeming fish populations. The abundant river life that once thrived here were clear indicators of the health of these waters. By restoring natural habitats we can set the stage for the return of native populations. By rehabilitating the physical barriers to fish migration, we can clear a path for the speckled trout that once thrived here - to return.

**Once again OPIRG partnered with Wellington Water Watchers—local experts on all things water! The knowledge, skills and energy they bring this event helps us to grow it further.**

In 2013, the Cleanup saw a remodel. We know that removing harmful garbage from our rivers is a valuable endeavor but there is a lot more to keeping our rivers clean. Our new activities go further by addressing drugs and hormones in our waterways, increasing the tree canopy to cool the river and protect against toxic run off, and supporting the pollinator population to increase river health. With this focus in mind, alongside our traditional garbage pickup, we offered four amazing river-loving activities.

**1) Can you Dig It? Support Tree Growth!** GROW more trees along the river bank for river health

**2) Buzzin' Gardens and Habitat for Beemanity!** CREATE a pollinator garden along the beautiful Eramosa River and build and install bee apartments!

**3) Wade In! River Cleanup!** CLEAN UP the river by learning what stays, what goes and what is habitat. This is a 36 year tradition!

**4) Bug Out!** ASSESS the quality of the river by collecting, identifying and quantifying its aquatic 'bugs'.

***What's the ultimate goal of The Cleanup? To revive, restore and rehabilitate the Speed and Eramosa rivers for all species to enjoy.***

## 2Rivers Festival

The 2Rivers Festival celebrates the uniqueness of the Speed and Eramosa rivers and the inspiration they provide. OPIRG was one of the founding members of the festival and was a sponsor and organizer in 2016.

In this 5th year of the festival a whole month of free river-related events were held in Guelph. These included community discussions, guided walks and hikes, paddling, water-related talks, performances, river heritage and children's events. OPIRG and Wellington Water Watchers held the annual Cleanup as part of the festival again, and our Garlic Mustard Pull—as per the picture to the right. (*Eds. Note: I mean, this had to go in here.*)





# Finances

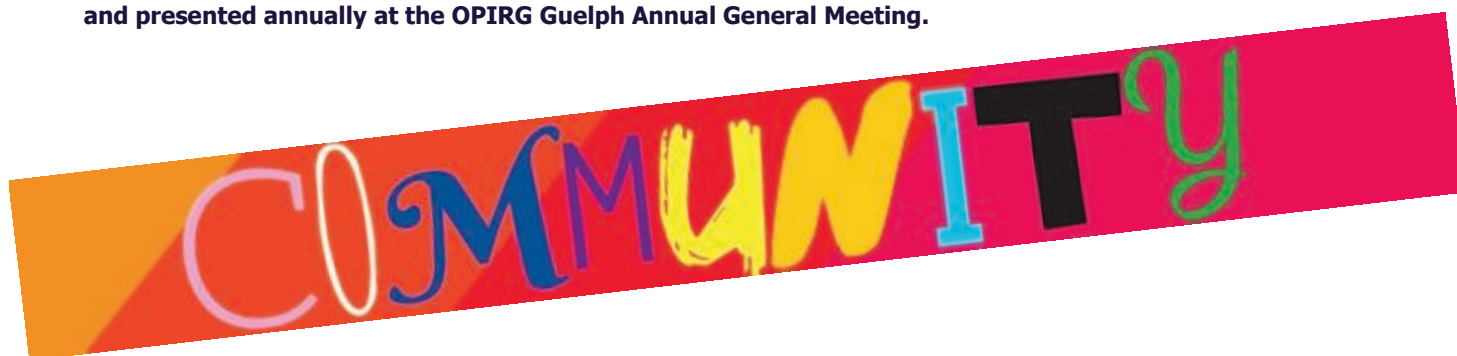
## Summary Statements of Financial Position as of August 31, 2016

Assets	2015/2016	2014/2015
Total Current Assets	\$150,264	\$119,631
Capital Assets	\$6,199	\$8,289
Total assets	\$156,463	\$127,920
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Account Payable and Liabilities	\$16,144	\$14,534
Income and other tax payable	0	0
Deferred Revenue	\$5067	0
Net Assets	\$140,319	\$113,386
Total Liabilities and net assets	\$156,463	\$127,920

## Summary Statement of Operations as of August 31, 2016

Revenue	2015/2016	2014/2015
Donation and fundraising	\$515	\$355
Grant for program	\$8,606	\$12,965
Membership fee University of Guelph's Student Others	\$291,191	\$282,921
Others	\$785	\$798
Total Revenue	\$301,097	\$296,939
Expenses		
Wages and benefits	\$179,536	\$175069
Office administration	\$32971	\$32985
Programs	\$59,567	\$70125
Amortization	\$2,090	\$2843
Total expense	\$274,164	\$281022
Total Capital loss this year	0	0
Total net income (loss) for the year	\$26,933	\$15,917

**Note:** The summary financial statements are based on audited Financial Statements which are available upon request and presented annually at the OPIRG Guelph Annual General Meeting.





## Co-Sponsorship, Donations and Requests Fund

#	Recipient	Event / Project
1	Anti-Colonial Thanks Giving Dinner	ACT Dinner
2	Festival of Moving Media	Guelph Film Festival
3	Radio Grypon CFRU 93.3 FM	Redefinition Panel Discussion
4	C.J. Munford Centre	Admission to Ryerson's Black Students Conference
5	Guelph Student For Environmental Change	Sustainability Week
6	The University of Guelph	Footnotes Journal, 2016 Issue
7	Critical Knowledge Collective	Black History Month
8	C.J. Munford Centre	Anti-Black Racism Teach-In
9	Media Co-op	Special issue of The Dominion: Land Defense
10	Reclaim Turtle Island	RTI strategic planning meeting
11	Magnificence Collective	"Stories and Spirits" event
12	Critical Knowledge Collective	Black History Month
13	Wellington Water Watchers	Town Hall on the Greenbelt
14	Council of Canadians – Guelph Chapter	Town Hall on the Trans-Pacific Partnership
15	Earth Justice Action	Support Grassy Narrows – River Run 2016
16	Guelph Students for the Ethical Treatment of Animals	"Why Veg?" event
17	Training for Change	Judith C. Jones Fellowship of Trainers of Color
18	Guelph Community Food Forest	Launch event
19	Project Uprooted (Media Collective)	Grassy Narrows Youth Media Workshops

**Note: OPIRG Guelph's Co-Sponsorship, Donations and Requests (CDR) Committee makes the decisions regarding this funding.**

## Major Funding Sources of OPIRG Guelph — 2015/16

Name of Funding Source	Amount
Total University of Guelph Student Levies*	\$291,191
Great Lake Community Guardian Fund / Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (for Speed River Project)	\$7,433
Workstudy Program — University of Guelph	\$1173
Other Donations and Fundraising	\$1,300
Total Funding	\$ 301,097

**\*This includes full-time undergraduates and all graduate students.**



## How to get involved with OPIRG

### Join an Action Group, or Start Your Own

Action Groups are made up of people who choose to focus on a particular issue or area. They engage in research, education and action to meet a set of collectively determined goals.

### Radical Resource Library

Our Radical Resource Library is catalogued and searchable through the University of Guelph Library, however it is autonomously managed by OPIRG. Come by and check out our amazing collection!

### Workshops, Actions and Events

We organize regular speaking events, workshops, rallies and film nights. Is there something you'd like to learn or teach? A protest or action you wish would happen? A film you'd like to screen? A speaker you'd like to hear or a talk you'd like to give? Get in touch!

### Office, Events and Library Teams

Help us out in the office, organize and promote events, maintain and promote our library.

### Speed River Project

Plant and maintain native trees and shrubs along the banks of the Speed and Eramosa rivers. You can come out for a day, be part of the project year-round, or become a Park Steward in your community.

### RadiOPIRG

OPIRG's radio show airs on CFRU 93.3FM Thursdays 1-2pm. Tune in, or listen online at [www.cfru.ca](http://www.cfru.ca). We're always looking for volunteers. No experience necessary!

### Run for the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors make key decisions about the finances, policies, operations and direction of OPIRG. It's a great opportunity to learn some useful skills and gain experience working with a non-profit.

### Partnerships and Solidarity

Are you part of an organization that could benefit from partnering with OPIRG? Talk to us! We may be able to help.

[www.opirgguelph.org](http://www.opirgguelph.org)