

# Annual Action Report

## 2016-2017

### Our Mission:

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

### Where to find us:

24 Trent Lane,  
University of Guelph  
Guelph ON  
N1G 2W1\*  
519-824-2091  
opirgguelph.org  
opirg@uoguelph.ca

## Reflection & Action: OPIRG Guelph in the late 2010's

This year has been one of implementing changes and moving to improve how OPIRG engages in projects throughout the community and campus. We sought to do all this to further our central mission surrounding social and environmental justice.

A lot of this year has been focused on developing strategies and actions from conversations in previous years in the community. For the 2016/17 year we set out to continue our work to build deeper relationships 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. This work has continued to grow and change over the past year, with bumps along the way, but we have made strides to do better and build these processes into our bedrock.

With some transitions closing out the previous year, we've continued forward with new and continued successes. A successful year of the Speed River Project has been met with increased grant funding while the Two Rivers Clean-up has continued to be a linchpin in our relationship with the community. OPIRG Symposium has grown further and expanded its focuses

to challenge the boundaries what a research symposium can be.

We've been able to expand our capacity for outreach and further our efforts in building relationships in the community and on campus, while maintaining old ones. While RadiOPIRG continues to blast current issues over the air waves, we've started new and vibrant projects like RADICAL REELS and the People's History Project to further our objectives on education and research.

But in the wider world and here in Guelph, it has been a challenging year. As the far right continues to grow on campus and community spaces across Turtle Island, OPIRG looks to develop new campaigns and resources to support directly affected communities. From overt and direct violence to the society which actively permits said violence through more subtle forms of oppression, our communities will resist. At OPIRG, we strive to serve communities here in Guelph and beyond in that resistance.

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.

# Who's Behind the Scenes?

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Adjowa Karikari  
Aidan Lockhart  
Baljit Mall  
David James Hudson  
Dawn Dietrich  
Lema Najibi  
Liz Homer  
Malissa Bryan  
Paul Stephany  
Rachel Taylor  
Sarah Rotz

## STAFF

Kiran Bhattarai  
Office & Speed River Project  
Coordinator  
Brad Evoy - Organizational &  
Policy Development Coordinator  
Mandy Hiscocks  
Volunteer Programming &  
Community Engagement  
Coordinator  
Melody Mikhail, Symposium  
Coordinator  
Workstudy Students:  
Celeste Lopreiato, Emma Legere,  
Jessica Armah, Lauren Thompson

**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!

Throughout the year, OPIRG Guelph hosted numerous anti-oppression trainings with Malissa Bryan—both for OPIRG but also due to an influx of requests from external organizations and CSA services for anti-oppression training. These ranged in specific focus, but were all notably successful in their attendance and implementation.

This year, the OPIRG Board determined to open up its own trainings to wider community members and supporters going forward, in an attempt to further the benefit of these workshops

and ensure that access to our resources were furthered in the community.

OPIRG Guelph has also supported numerous workshops related to Guelph's indigenous community. Notably, this included a workshop on rattle-making and on building community available smudging kits.

If you would like to offer or see a type of workshop offered in the coming year, drop us a line

**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 have not had these trainings yet please get in touch with the Volunteer Coordinator.**

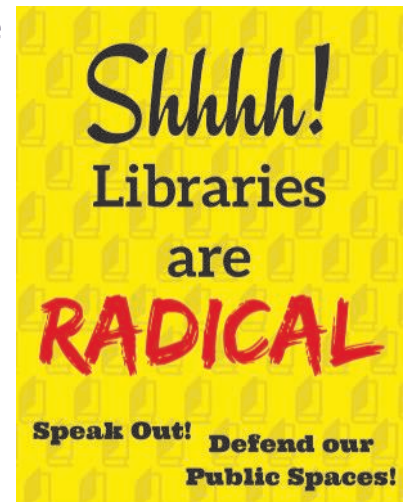


## Radical Resource and Zine Library

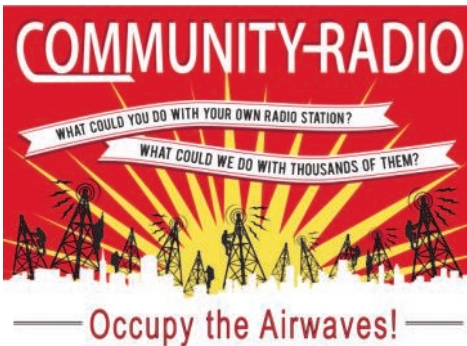
The OPIRG Guelph resource library is dedicated to providing alternative and independent publications to our action groups, volunteers, community members, and University of Guelph students. We aim to carry books, zines, and periodicals that are not available in most libraries, particularly those from 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**. Over the last year, we've been working to integrate more of our collections into the Library system.

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 main-stream 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. 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 2017 we partnered with the Guelph Resource Centre for Gender Empowerment and Diversity to organize the 11th annual Summer Institute. For more information about GRCGED, go to [grcged.com](http://grcged.com)

## 2017 Workshops

- ★ **Re-Examining Allyship with Aboriginal People and Communities**—with Maria Shallard and Cara Wehkamp
- ★ **Calling In and Resolving Conflict in Activist Communities** – with Malissa Bryan
- ★ **Standing Rock to Six Nations: Land Defense Across Turtle Island**—with Vanessa Gray, Myeengun Henry, Todd Williams, Kayla Sutherland, and Jaydene Lavallie
- ★ **Don't Just Stand There: Bystander Intervention** – with Erin Crickett
- ★ **This Party is Bullshit: Nationalism, Colonialism, and Canada 150** – with Darius Mirshahi
- ★ **Monstrous Love: a workshop about relationships for lgbttiqq2s folks** — with Kai Cheng Thom
- ★ **Self Care Tools for Activists** — with Cee/illogik (Chris Bowen)



If you'd like to facilitate a workshop during the 2018 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, Migrant Justice Guelph and Students Offering Welcome 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 at [volunteer@opirgguelph.org](mailto:volunteer@opirgguelph.org)*

## 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. After a referendum on divestment in 2015-2016 showed that undergraduates overwhelmingly want divestment, the University agreed to begin a consultation process to consider 'responsible investment' – a process in which FFG played a large role and which led to the creation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Special Action Requests.

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 Política (progressive & rad films!)



## *Fossil Free Guelph (cont.)*



As always, this year the group was busy with skillshares, bake sales and tabling, marches and rallies, panels and workshops, and a vigil.

Much of the year was spent researching and writing their proposal to this committee, gathering the signatures needed in order to submit it, meeting with Board of Governors representatives, and continuing to raise awareness about the University's investments and the divestment campaign. Amidst massive student support, the proposal was submitted on April 6 and presented at the April 21 Board of Governors meeting for them to consider over the summer months.

## *Migrant Justice Guelph*

Migrant Justice Guelph was formed in the winter of 2017, partly as a response to the January 29 shooting at the mosque in Quebec City and the rising Islamophobia in Canada and the U.S. since the inauguration of Donald Trump. Their aim is to help secure and defend migrants' rights, as well as to expose and challenge the oppressive systems that subject migrants to exclusion, marginalization, exploitation and systemic discrimination. The main project of the group during 2016-2017 was looking into the challenges people without status face when trying to access services in Guelph.

## *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 resource extraction campaigns through awareness campaigns, supporting land defenders, and fundraising. They take direction in their work from Indigenous land defenders. GAP was the main organizer of the Guelph Fundraiser for Standing Rock and Chippewas of the Thames – an evening of music, spoken word, teachings from land defenders, and a silent auction – that raised close to \$5000. They continued to raise money through empties collection and a used book sale, and capped off the year with a workshop organized as part of the Summer Institute entitled Standing Rock to Six Nations: Land Defense Across Turtle Island.



## *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 of refugees and newcomers, to help with settlement, and to raise



funds for people still living in refugee camps. This year SOW partnered with the Guelph Film Festival to screen *The Crossing*, hosted a meet and greet with the group *Crossing Borders*, organized a free science workshop for newcomer children, and participated in World Refugee Day, all while continuing to support recently arrived families in Guelph. Their event *Stories From Near and Far* combined Guelph students' experiences of immigration with videos from the Guelph-Wellington Local Immigration Partnership's Global Storytelling Project. In 2016-17 SOW raised money for Chios Eastern Shore Response Team, The Athena Centre for Women in Chios, and to buy bus passes for refugee families living in Guelph.

# 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 2016-17 partners:

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

### TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION CIRCLE GUELPH:

OPIRG's support for Guelph

Wellington's TRC Gatherings has been very much appreciated.

These Circles have continued to 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. Some additional OPIRG Guelph funds were saved for the Seven Generations Forward Initiative, which seeks to build indigenous community capacity for revitalization of our practices and languages in Guelph and area.

## Winter Gathering

March 19, 2017  
The Bookshelf Green Room and Gathering Room  
11am-4pm

You are invited to share....

**Nbwaakaawin**  
winter

11:00 Traditional opening ceremonies and teachings  
11:30 Poet Laurie Graham, Settler Education  
12:30 Traditional tastings—Grassroots Catering  
1:15 Films and Conversations  
Ame Papatsie, *Qalupalik* (2010), 5 mins  
Erika MacPherson & Katherine Vermette  
*This River* (2016), 19 mins  
Maria Shallard—Faceless Doll Exhibit and Crafting with Children  
3:00 Community Sharing Circles and Teachings

  
41 QUEBEC ST., DOWNTOWN GUELPH, BOOKSHELF.CA



**40X MOBILE:** Following the purchase of 40 Baker by the Church of Scientology, the Guelph Out of Poverty Society has continued to operate a mobile unit outside of the premises with the continued support of the broader community for the homeless and at-risk populations in downtown Guelph. Continued support is being collected through their ongoing 200 for 40 campaign which has been OPIRG Guelph's central area of support in previous years.

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

**CANADIAN SUPPORT COMMITTEE FOR DUBBOK TALLUBARAN UMPEN INACOGBE:** The Canadian Support Committee for Dubbok Tallubaran Umpen Inacogbe works to support grassroots efforts in Northern Mindanao (part of the so-called Philippines) to protect and support human rights defenders in their work within the region and locally in Turtle Island. The Support Committee has been deeply engaged in support work locally for indigenous populations made vulnerable by encroachments and violence exacted by the colonial Duterte Government and by other forces in the region. This grassroots collective sought OPIRG Guelph's support in this work in 2016-17 which we were happy to assist with as best we could provide.

### Did you know that OPIRG Guelph is a member of a whole slew of organizations?

Currently, OPIRG Guelph is a member of 10C (*formerly 10 Carden*), Volunteer Centre of Canada, The People and Information Network (*formerly Volunteer Centre Guelph-Wellington*), Yorklands Green Hub, the Archives Association of Ontario, and the Guelph-Wellington Coalition for Social Justice!

## CAMPUS PARTNER

**GUELPH BLACK STUDENTS ASSOCIATION:** The Guelph Black Students 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 of *Black and Boujee*, their annual formal with the West Indian Students Association.

[www.uoguelph.ca/cjmunford/](http://www.uoguelph.ca/cjmunford/)



**ABORIGINAL STUDENTS ASSOCIATION:** Aboriginal Student Association (ASA) welcomes all Aboriginal people to the University of Guelph. The ASA provides a culturally supportive environment and promotes academic excellence. We aim to develop mutually productive relationships between the University of Guelph and the Aboriginal community. The ASA strives to increase awareness of Aboriginal Affairs and provide extra-curricular social activities, resources, and peer support. This year the funds provided to the ASA helped towards running

of the event *Indigenous Wellbeing in Urban Settings* at 10 Carden.

[studentlife.uoguelph.ca/aboriginal/aboriginal-student-association](http://studentlife.uoguelph.ca/aboriginal/aboriginal-student-association)

## People's History Project — Guelph

This past summer, OPIRG Guelph launched the first trial of the People's History Project with the goal of creating a digital archive that holds the history of social movement building in our region. The focus of this year's research racial justice organizing carried out by and for racialized students at the University of Guelph Our summer student was Mina Ramos, who published initial findings in *The Peak's Honouring Legacies* issue. We hope to continue to develop this project year-round with assistance from the UofG Library and others in the community! We also have a new draft website to hold our PHP Guelph work at [php.opirgguelph.org](http://php.opirgguelph.org)



## Research @ OPIRG Guelph

Do you have social and environmental research projects that you would like to see developed at OPIRG Guelph? Drop Brad ([organizational@opirgguelph.org](mailto:organizational@opirgguelph.org)) a line and we'll see what resources OPIRG can provide to your project or how we might be able to develop such projects with partners on campus and in the community!

## Events

We kicked off the year with an Open House and lots of outreach during Orientation Week. We participated in DisOrientation 2016, collaborating with many other organizations to host a slew of events a Social Justice Trivia Night and Art of Resistance V.2.

The Winter semester saw us launch RADICAL REELS: an ongoing film series focused on social and environmental justice, often in partnership with Cinema Politica. 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!

Also, this year we launched RADICAL READS: an ongoing zine reading group series based in our Radical Resource Library. Together, we explored zines like Don Hamerquist's *Fascism & Anti-Fascism* and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, "Don't Shame The First Steps Of A Resistance" If you have suggestions for zines or other materials, please drop us a line!

**Here are some more events we organized, funded, and supported in 2016-2017. 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!**

**OPIRG Open House**

**Zine and Button Making Workshop**

***Snacks and Chats Series* — Indigenous Land & Colonialism and Race & Racism**

**Harvesting Freedom Tour and *Migrant Dreams* Screening**

**Guelph: Sisters in Spirit Vigil**

**Book Launch of Yves Engler's *A Propaganda System***

**Guelph Film Festival — *Angry Inuk* and *The Crossing***

**Take Back the Night!**

**Alternative Media Sale**

**TRC Circle Seasonal Gatherings**

**Indigenous Sovereignty, Resistance and Allyship with Lee Maracle**

***Bloc by Bloc*: Guelph Gaming Launch**

**Benefit Concert for Chippewas of the Thames and Standing Rock**

**Chippewas of the Thames - Supreme Court Transport Support**

**November Land Defense Film series**

**December 6<sup>th</sup> Vigil**

**Buy Nothing Day**

**OPIRG Day**

**Sustainability Week**

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

**CROWD THE BOG!: Fight for a Fossil Free Guelph and Freeze the Fees!**

**Indigenous Community Smudging Workshop**

**We Believe Survivors: Sexual Violence and the Extraction Industry**

**State of Control: Canadian Prison and Immigration Systems**



**MORE PROJECTS**



## Social and Environmental Justice Symposium

The third year of the OPIRG Social and Environmental Justice Symposium was held in March 2017 with a call to “Crackdowns and Creativity!” Our third Symposium Coordinator, Melody Mikhail, did an amazing job—with the help of our committee, other staff, and volunteers—of continuing the evolution of our Symposium space!

This year our keynotes included: “Cultivating Resilience: Organizing Resistance in an Era of Populism Fascism” with Akio Maroon and the amazing panel “From Crackdowns to Creativity: Organizing Resistance in 2017” with Adrián Pérez Fernández, Enaemaehkiw Kesignaeh, Syed Hussan. Our sessions included:

- \* The Borders Crossed Us: Immigration Detention and Refugee Crisis
- \* On Reproductive Justice: Radical Approaches to Pregnancy, Birth, and Parenthood
- \* From the Field to the Landfill: How Might We Produce, Eat, Share, and Dispose of Our Food?
- \* Dismantling Disablism: Examining and Eliminating Disablism in Our Lives and Our Organizing
- \* Professions and the Movement
- \* Mobilizing Differences: Drifting Away from Trans/national Imperialisms
- \* Pushing Back Against Austerity: Anti-poverty Research and Action
- \* Demand the University of Guelph to Say No to Nestlé and Bottled Water
- \* Bad Science: A Forum for Medical Justice
- \* Stories of Hope from Life in Capitalist Ruins
- \* Healthcare Access for Migrants in Ontario: The Current State and Necessary Action



At this time, we’re just wrapping up from our 2018 Symposium, now called Rebel Knowledge with our coordinator Tammy Kovich! More will be in the 2017-18 AAR on this, but if you have feedback or want to get involved in future planning email Brad ([organizational@opirgguelph.org](mailto:organizational@opirgguelph.org))

## 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 2016 to spring and summer 2017.

We 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 “2 Rivers Restoration: Improving Water Quality and Riparian Biodiversity” which was run from spring 2016 to winter 2017. 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 of Directors.

After the successful completion of the above project, we received further rounds of Great Lake

## Speed River Project (cont.)



Guardian Community Fund to implement additional stages of the project in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Under this current phrase, we ran 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 and invasive species controlled by intensive planting native species which is the natural control of invasive species.

### Community Tree Planting

During the fall 2016 three tree planting days and 2 park maintenance days were held at Riverside Park, Wolfond Park and Hadati creek at Guelph. Similarly 6 tree planting days and 2 park maintenance days were held at Wolfond Park River side Park, Hadati Creek and Eramosa River trail at Eramosa Park, during the spring and summer 2017. We planted total 260 plant material during the fall 2016 and another 736 plants were planted during the spring and summer 2017.

These trees planting were held between fall 2016 to summer 2017 as below.

1. Wolfond Park -Saturday October 1, 2016 and May 22 2017 at north bank of Speed River at Wolfond Park.
2. Riverside Park - Saturday October 22, 2016 and May 13 2017 on both sides of the Speed River at Riverside Park.
3. Hadati Creek, - Saturday October 15 2016 and Saturday may27, Thursday August 3 and Monday August 14, 2017 on the both sides of Hadati Creek, a tributary of the Eramosa River.
4. Eramosa trail May 17, 2017 at the north bank of the Eramosa River

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 2016 and spring/summer 2017, several tree planting events were held at the Riverside Park, Wolfond Park, Hadati Creek, and Eramosa trail at Eramosa river Park. On each of these planting days, dozens of enthusiastic volunteers turned out. Altogether, 996 native plants were planted; among these plants 549 were trees and shrubs, and 450 were herbaceous species and focused on those native species which are more competitive with invasive species. The trees and shrubs comprised 27 different native species. 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 85%).



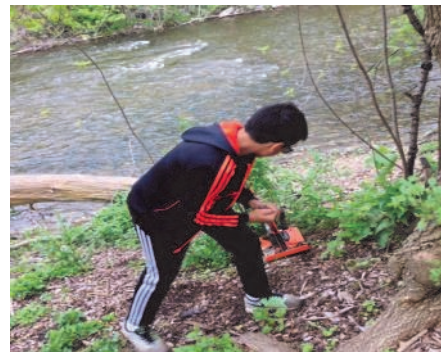
### Park Maintenance

In the fall of 2016, chicken wires were installed on selected trees the Wolfond Park to protect them from Beaver damage. During the spring and summer 2017, under the leadership of members Meera, Sue, and George, the Wolfond Park Neighbourhood Group mobilized dozens of volunteers to pull out Garlic Mustard from Wolfond Park. The cleared area is covered by about 40 native plant species. These native species will help replenish the soil and stop the seeds of the Garlic Mustard from growing. In July and August 2017, over 500 previously planted trees in Wolfond Park East, Hadati Creek, and Riverside Park received maintenance services. Similarly we removed the buck-



## Speed River Project (cont.)

thorn at Hadati creek about 800 square meter area with the help of the City of Guelph staff and applied the buckthorn baggies about 800 buckthorn trees. Once buckthorn trees removed we planted native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants to cover cleared area. Our staff, volunteer park stewards, and RSAC volunteer members have been regularly monitoring previously planted trees and shrubs along the river bank and water them as per required with the help of community volunteers and OPIRG staff.



## 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.**

For our 38th annual 2Rivers Cleanup, we went back to our roots and engaged once again with a shoreline cleanup along a wide expanse of our rivers. We met at the Gazebo in Royal City Park and will sent teams out to various stretches of the river.

In our teams we worked to clean up the litter we can see while trying to document possible sources of invisible pollution and habitat degradation in the area. As some of our areas were further from Royal City Park, we asked the public to bring bikes or good walking shoes—which was carried out and folks did go to some further afield areas. Afterwards we met in the Park itself for snacks and refreshments and for a facilitated discussion about how we can help restore the health of our rivers.

This back-to-basics approach follows several years of adding additional tasks to the Clean-up. Many of these sub-tasks have since developed into their own 2Rivers Festival events. While this approach has it's benefits in bringing greater focus on the central task of the clean-up and allowed us to expand our reach, there is still debate over which approach will result in a more fulsome outcome for the river system. Equally, we are in discussion about modes of decentralizing the clean-up which could result in changes in the years ahead.

***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 2017.

In this 6th 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 will never stop using this picture.*)



# Finances

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

Assets	Year 2016/2017	Year 2015/2016
Total Current Assets	193,910	\$150,264
Capital Assets	4,657	\$6,199
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>198,567</b>	<b>\$156,463</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
Account Payable and Liabilities	\$30,461	\$16,144
Income and other tax payable	0	\$0
Deferred Revenue	\$5,067	\$5067
Net Assets	\$168,106	\$140,319
Total Liabilities and net assets	\$198,567	\$156,463
Revenue	Year 2016/2017	Year 2015/2016
Donation and fundraising	\$4,410	\$515
Grant for program	\$24,162	\$8,606
Membership fee University of Guelph's Student Others	\$303,374	\$291,191
	\$1,494	\$785
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$333,474</b>	<b>\$301,097</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Wages and benefits	\$196,860	\$179,536
Office administration	\$30743	\$32971
Programs	\$76,542	\$59,567
Amortization	\$1542	\$2,090
Total expense	\$305687	\$274,164
Total Capital loss this year	0	0
<b>Total net income (loss) for the year</b>	<b>\$27,787</b>	<b>\$26,933</b>

**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.**





# Funding Grant Summary

#	Recipient	Event / Project
1	Ballet Folklorico Puro Mexico	Newcomer Health Fair
2	Chalmers Community Services Centre	Educational Programming for Volunteers
3	Chippewas of the Thames First Nation	Legal Fees for their fight against Enbridge's Line 9
4	McMaster Indigenous Student Community Alliance (MISCA)	Attendance at U of G Aboriginal Student Assoc. event
5	Submedia	"Indigenous Resistance in Five Minutes" video series
6	Environmental Sciences Symposium Organizing Committee	2017 Symposium: "Capturing the Environment"
7	Bonnie Durnall	Labouring All Our Lives Website
8	Sustainability Fund	Sustainability Week 2017
9	Guelph Students for the Ethical Treatment of Animals	"Why Veg?" panel discussion
10	College of Arts	Footnotes - U of G's undergraduate feminist journal
11	Emelina Ramos (End Immigration Detention Network)	Trips to Federal Court
12	Guelph Young Communist League	Members' participation in YCL-Canada convention
13	Hannah Batten	Public Forum on Pipelines at Six Nations
14	Guelph Community Food Forest	Food Forest Fundraisers and Events
15	Greater Guelph Nepalese Community	Multicultural Festival cultural programming
16	Vanessa Gray (Aamjiwnaang and Sarnia Against Pipelines)	Contribution to costs of a vehicle for ASAP work
17	Rebecca Redden (Hard Femme Productions)	Documentary Production: "The Legend of Sing Hey"

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

## Major Funding Sources of OPIRG Guelph — 2016/17

Name of Funding Source	Amount
Total University of Guelph Undergraduate Student Levies	\$258,957.02
Total University of Guelph Graduate Student Levies	\$44,491.98
Total Community Membership Levies	\$60.00
Great Lake Community Guardian Fund / Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (for Speed River Project)	\$16,178.00
Workstudy Program — University of Guelph	\$5,590.00
Other Donations and Fundraising	\$5,904.00
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$333,474.00</b>



## 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)