

Canadian Society for Organic Urban Land Care Annual General Meeting October 22, 2019



Executive Director Annual Report for AGM

Over the last year The Canadian Society of Organic Urban Land Care has:

- Completed the winding down and dissolution of the BC society, with all memberships, assets and liabilities having been transferred to the new not-for-profit, federally registered Canadian corporation, the Canadian Society for Organic Urban Land Care.
- Signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Gaia College, in which Gaia College provides financial support to SOUL for the purposes of supporting SOUL's work. A copy of the memorandum has been included in the AGM information package.
- Thoroughly overhauled the website (organiclandcare.ca) to include online copies of the Organic Land Care Standard and the Organic Land Care in Your Community Guide, an updated and expanded resource library and an added membership level for Organic Land Care Advocates.
- Created a tri-fold pamphlet, with information on SOUL, the Standard and the Guide to provided to members for distribution to the public. (Please let us know if you would like some copies)
- Printed and distributed copies of the guide to members for distribution, including at CanWest and at the Eastern Ontario Municipal Conference.

Strategic Direction

The direction of SOUL was reviewed at the board level. The outcome of that review included the following conclusions:

The term 'Organic' can be somewhat controversial but for the moment SOUL can and should retain the term in our material and branding

Given the variety of agricultural and environmental groups working with land related issues, it is important to thoughtfully position SOUL within the larger conversation about regenerative solutions to comprehensive challenges around climate, ecosystem decline/collapse, human health and wellbeing etc.

Three primary areas of focus are:

- Inform the public about the importance and opportunities of organic land care within regenerative solutions.
- Encourage industry change where possible and provide resources and information to support change being led, or implemented by businesses and associations.
- Communicate to political / governmental representatives the potential and importance of organic and regenerative land care solutions.

Given SOUL's finite resources, engaging as much cross support among agricultural and environmental groups, and from individuals, as possible will be important.

We are currently exploring bringing an additional part-time member to the SOUL team to investigate and pursue strategic partnerships and potential grant and funding opportunities.

Staff:

Julia Dupuis has decided to leave her position as SOUL administrator for work/life balance reasons but has agreed to continue to administer the application and exam process for members as a board volunteer). Thank you, Julia!

Sundaura Alford-Purvis remains as Executive Director

Member Events and Presentations:

SOUL members have been actively promoting Organic Land Care over the past year. A few highlights include:

- A Presentation at Grey to Green Conference in Toronto by Chris Morrison, in partnership with Yafit Rokach of the City of Toronto.
- A public presentation on plants and soils as urban green infrastructure in Ottawa by Sundaura Alford-Purvis in partnership with Ecology Ottawa..
- Astrid Muschalla organized a Wildscaping series in Kingston, in partnership with Master Gardeners and Regeneration Canada
- Sundaura hosted a regeneration Meetup in Ottawa, in partnership with Regeneration Canada, Just Food, Ecology Ottawa, COG, Hidden Harvest.

An events page has been added to the website. If you are hosting something, or presenting on land care, please let us know about it!

Throughout all of our work, our goals remain the same:

- To foster and promote the practice of organic land care
- To provide opportunities for education in all aspects of organic land care
- To establish and promote guidelines, standards and specifications for all aspects of organic land care
- To establish procedures for certification of organic land care practitioners
- To establish and develop a means for the exchange of information and ideas between the public and the organic land care industry.

SOUL relies heavily of the support of our members and volunteers and we are grateful for all of your ongoing work and support in the promotion and application of organic land care practices.

Thank you,



Sundaura Alford-Purvis, CLD, BCIN

Executive Director

Canadian Society for Organic Urban Land Care (SOUL)