



Highlights for the fiscal year August 1, 2016 to July 31, 2017

Since the Organic Land Care Standard was first introduced by SOUL in 2003 to address the need for a tool to support a successful transition toward sustainable land care practices by individuals, community, industry and government, we've continued to spread our reach. It's been a productive year with the 7th Edition Standard Draft still in place, membership slowly rising, educational reach expanding. We continue to collaborate with old and new partner organizations. Financially, it's been a stable year too. Looking ahead, we plan to continue cultivating knowledge of organic land care and supporting its practice, especially for industry and government. 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.

Here is the year in review.

Education

Continuing Education Credits (CECs) for the SOUL Accredited Practitioner education has been updated – info is available on the Gaia College website.

Canadian Organic Growers (COG) continues offering the Organic Master Gardener course in various locations across Canada, preparing people to write the SOUL Accreditation Exam. In partnership with Gaia College and Landscape Ontario, COG will also be offering the Organic Land Care and Sustainable Turf Management course in Ontario.

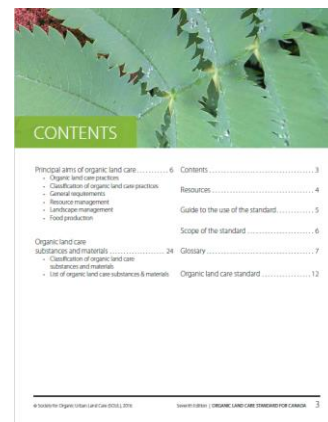
Industry

Preparation is currently underway for a proposal to Employment and Social Development Canada and Statistics Canada, for adding a separate National Occupational Classification (NOC). This will result in official national recognition of a specialty occupation for Organic Horticulturist – an entry level Gardener classification. The SOUL Accredited Practitioner credential will aid in this recognition and help employers find qualified people.

Standard

The 7th Edition SOUL Standard review, headed up by Rochelle Eisen was completed along with feedback from industry and the public on the first draft. This was in order to align itself with changes to the Canadian Organic Standard released in 2015. However, there are further amendments coming for agriculture (32.310 and 311). They are supposed to be published in February and R. Eisen doesn't see that these will have a major impact on the SOUL standard.

A NEW colour look for 7th Edition Standard is proposed we hope to have it available soon. It should also be for use as a printable and digital document (2 versions). Outside funding for this may be available?



SOUL's Reach

Events Attended

- MH: BCLNA - CanWest - Sept 27, 28
- MH: Cobble Hill Homesteading Fair June 3, 4
- MH: COABC Conference 2017
- AM: Bath Horticultural Society Sept 19, 2016
- AM Kingston Horticultural Society Dec 9
- AM: Tweed Horticultural Society March 7
- AM Kingston H&G Show March 24 & 25
- AM: Gananoque Horticultural Society April 12

Digital and Print Reach

Quarterly newsletter has been going out. Always looking for content. Such as, member's business profiles or recent project (a perk for members). News/research regarding organic land care and also request articles that people would like to submit, photos, etc. Also, articles on the bigger picture - how needs of urban areas how

they plan future development and how the standard can help – therefore articles that would attract their attention and attract new members

More activity on FB and Twitter has begun.

Any ideas for reciprocal memberships with associations, please forward to Julia Dupuis, SOUL administrator.

Promotional Materials



SOUL Postcard (left) and SOUL Accreditation/Certification brochure (right), are available to members for relevant events to spread awareness of SOUL. Contact the office at least 2 weeks in advance to have these shipped to you.



The office has SOUL T-shirts which may be useful as a door prize at speaking engagements.