



# 2022 **ANNUAL REPORT**

Save Our Seine River Environment Inc.

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Save Our Seine Environment Inc. is located on original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. We honour and respect the Seine River and its surrounding land that we provide stewardship for at this time.

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF SOS

As President of SOS, I am once again humbled and honoured to have this position of leadership in caring for this incredible river and greenway. I am also humbled and amazed by all the people who love and care for this important urban natural gem. Reflecting back on 2022, I recognize a year that was very productive and also one that flew by! We were still cautious of COVID and therefore all of our meetings, including our AGM, were still virtual. This did not seem to deter our members as we had nearly 70 people attend our 2022 AGM!

I want to begin by honouring the passing of our dear colleague, Ron Mazur. Ron co-chaired OURS-Winnipeg for many years. OURS-Winnipeg has been a long-time partner of SOS on advocacy of greenspace. Winnipeg was very fortunate to have Ron working on greenspace issues all of these years and we will truly miss him.

From April to December, we were pleased to contract the services of Jennifer Sande who provided services as an Interim Executive Director. We are very appreciative of Jenn's contribution to SOS.

We were very pleased to receive a Building Sustainable Communities grant from the Province of Manitoba so that we could work on our Urban Restoration and Enhancement (URE) pilot Initiative. This funding and the pilot initiative helped us in many ways as it brought together our previous "landcare" and "eyes on the river" initiatives to assist with taking us to the next level with scientific methods to care for the land (focus on buckthorn removal to start), setting up effective systems for volunteer management, donor management, and data collection on the issues along the Seine River corridor and the achievements of SOS. With this grant, we were also able to hire an applied ecologist Chris Penner and a Project-Administrative-Coordinator, Kristin Kebalo, who assisted with the project. This important pilot has set us up for our next phase of this initiative.

Our Summer Team Program was once again very active with clean-ups as well as assisting with the buckthorn removal of the URE pilot project. The program this year also partnered with the Manitoba Métis Federation's summer team and with our partner, the Niakwa Golf and Country Club. We appreciate the club allowing us to park our truck on their property and enjoyed working with them on clean-up and buckthorn removal. We really appreciated our Summer Team Coordinator, Barbara Farpelha, and the team.

Winnipeg was busy this year with the election of a new Mayor, and we were actively involved with other environmental groups who hosted a Mayoral Candidate Environment Forum in September. SOS was proud to have our booth at the University of Manitoba for the evening.

This has also been a very active year for SOS with our Seine River corridor development initiatives, including work by Denis DePape and our partner Pam Lucenkiw (OURS-Winnipeg) for their ongoing work with the City of Winnipeg and their consultants on the implementation planning for the [OurWinnipeg 2045 and Complete Communities initiatives](#). During 2021, SOS and OURS-Winnipeg were instrumental in influencing what was eventually adopted. Council gave third reading of OurWinnipeg 2045 and Complete Communities Direction Strategy 2.0 and [adopted the by-laws on May 26, 2022](#).

In December 2022, we hired our new Managing Director, Ryan Palmquist. We are very excited by the energy that Ryan is bringing to SOS already and look forward to 2023.

Finally, all of our good work would not happen without a great team of Board Directors, Committee Members, volunteers, contractors, summer staff as well as our supporters, donors, funders, and partners.

On behalf of Save Our Seine, I am thankful to this incredible team. I would also like to thank all of the SOS members, donors, grantors, and the wider community who are engaged with this organization and who provide stewardship for this wonderful river corridor and greenway.



**Laurie Ringaert**  
President, SOS

# STRATEGIC FOCUS

## Vision

*A sustainable and protected Seine River Greenway that provides a healthy habitat for vegetation and wildlife and contributes to the quality of life of all residents and visitors.*

## Goals

Preserve and protect the Seine River greenway

Restore, repair, and enhance the Seine River greenway

Raise public education & awareness of the Seine River greenway

Improve public access to the Seine River greenway

Work in partnership with governmental, business and other non-profit organizations for stewardship planning of the Seine River greenway



# SIGNATURE PROJECT: URBAN RESTORATION & ENHANCEMENT PILOT INITIATIVE

The goal of the one-year pilot initiative was to promote, foster, protect, and restore the ecology and promote the biodiversity of the Urban Seine River Greenway through piloting and learnings from a) evidence-based ecological practices b) improved environmental data collection and human systems management c) expanded partnerships and d) exploration of sustainable funding to determine best steps forward for Save Our Seine with the Initiative after the pilot period.

## SOS Objectives Addressed

To preserve and protect the Seine River Greenway

To restore, repair, and enhance the Seine River Greenway

## Implementation

### Ecological Restoration

- Continued our Landcare program that actively engages local people in the practical preservation and restoration of the natural ecological habitat along the urban Seine River.
- Over 40 volunteers invested approximately 200 hours in maintaining and improving the overall ecological health of the Seine River Greenway.
- Thirty-four Landcare events were carried out, with a focus on the removal of European buckthorn and other invasive plants, garbage clean-up, and seeding/planting native species.

- The SOS Summer Team contributed to the overall ecological restoration efforts including invasive plant removal, garbage removal (see details in following section)

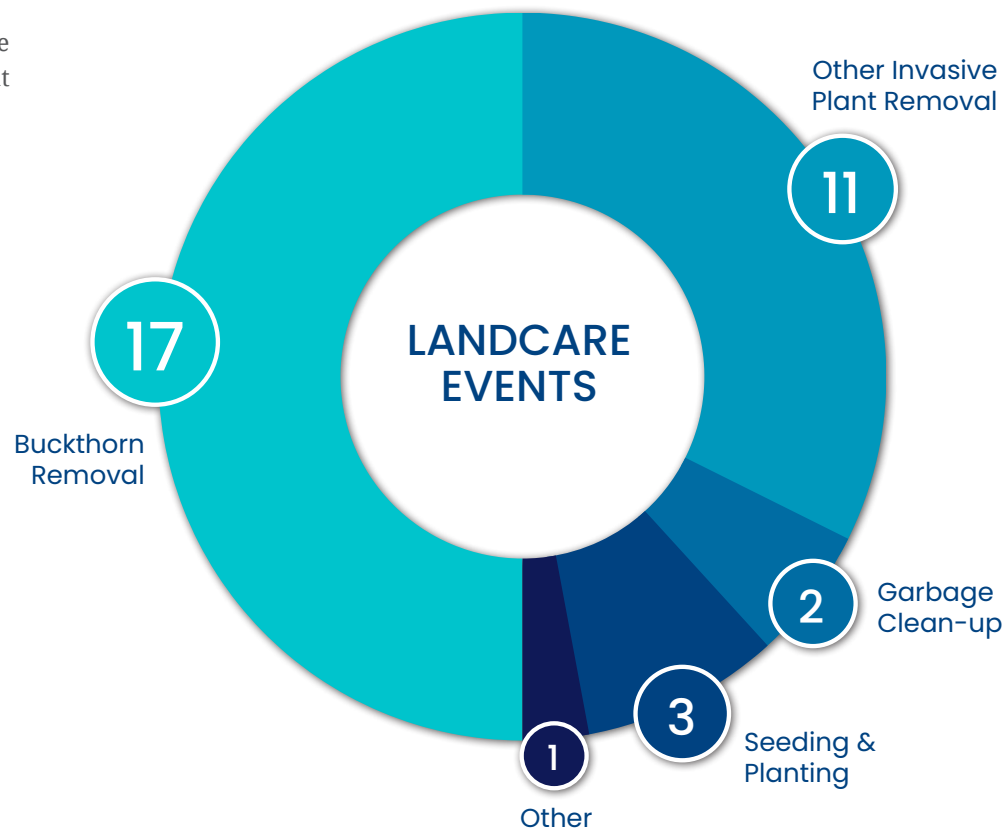
### European Buckthorn Control

- Began to work towards the removal of European buckthorn from the greenway, which is a highly invasive shrub that puts forest biodiversity at risk.
- An applied ecologist (Chris Penner) was hired to provide guidance and training on buckthorn removal methods, as well as to help coordinate control measures and to evaluate the outcomes. Chris provided various capacity building events during the hands on work as well as a webinar that attracted over 40 participants.

- Removal efforts have been focused on the most infested areas, primarily located between Clonard and Fifth avenues, as well as at Kavanagh Park.
- Over 1.5 acres of forest has been controlled for European buckthorn infestations.

- The outcomes of these efforts will be evaluated later in 2023, once desirable vegetation has had some time to regenerate in areas where buckthorn was removed.

*continued >*



# SIGNATURE PROJECT: URBAN RESTORATION & ENHANCEMENT PILOT INITIATIVE

*continued*

## Information Gathering

- Recorded and responded to over 100 reports and queries from the public, received via website and social media platforms. Some of the more common topics included requests for advice and concerns over feeding of wildlife and beaver activity.
- Engaged over 20 students in Environmental Sciences at the University of Manitoba to perform a tree survey, recording the location, species, size, and health of trees throughout the greenway.
- Created an iNaturalist project to automatically gather all nature observations reported by iNaturalist members that fall within the boundaries of the greenway. This allows us to passively collect a large amount of data on the location and density of species.

## Operational Enhancement and Sustainability

- Researched options for donor and volunteer management systems
- Adopted CanadaHelps™ DM for donor management, and Better Impact for volunteer management
- These tools will enable us to more effectively and efficiently record, track and communicate with donors and volunteers into the future.
- Several grants were applied for to continue this Initiative in 2023 and beyond.

## Project Partners & Funders

- A grant from the Manitoba Building Sustainable Communities Program allowed us to hire an applied ecologist, and a project/administrative coordinator, and to implement general operational improvements such as a volunteer management system and donor management system.
- A grant from One Tree Planted allowed us to purchase several Extractigator tools to help with pulling out smaller buckthorn specimens.

- We appreciate the support from the St. Boniface Golf Club in allowing us to access buckthorn-infested areas on or adjacent to their property.
- Thank you to our partner the Niakwa Golf and Country Club for their contribution to this effort.



**Buckthorn Removal**

# SUMMER TEAM PROGRAM

This is a long standing program of SOS, making a significant contribution to the stewardship of the Seine River Corridor.

## SOS Objectives Addressed

Restore, repair, and enhance the Seine River Greenway

Improve public access to the Seine River Greenway

## Implementation

- SOS hired a team of 5 youths to help care for the greenway: SOS partnered with the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF)'s summer team program. We provided training and provided guidance on areas of focus for a concerted effort along the Seine River corridor
- The Team removed waste from the Seine River, the surrounding trails and riverbanks including 12 chairs, 8 shopping carts, 7 wooden pallets, 2 bikes and 81 bags of various garbage, leading to a total of 113 lbs.
- With above-average spring flooding, the team removed excessive amounts of woody debris in the river. They successfully cleared 12 major log jams to allow safe passage for river craft.
- The team maintained 4 sites (Morantz Park, Marlene Street Park, Gabrielle Roy Trail, and Morier Park. Included were the Windsor Park Golf Course, St. Boniface Golf Course and the Niakwa Country Club Golf Course. These sites required frequent visits due to rapid garbage accumulation, particularly of larger items and dense buckthorn growth.
- Significant progress of buckthorn removal was made on buckthorn removal at two sites (St. Boniface Golf Club and Morier Park) along with other notable invasive species of Canada thistle, burdock and leafy spurge. The forest understory in these areas has already experienced a notable recovery as the growing conditions for native plant species was improved following widespread removal of invasive species.
- Trails along the greenway (specifically behind The Legend condos) were maintained and repaired through the teams' efforts of removing garbage, pulling encroaching weeds, and trimming low-hanging branches. The team took pride knowing their work helps keep the greenway accessible for people of all abilities.

## Project Partners & Funders

- This program was funded by the Province of Manitoba (Urban Green Team Program) and the Government of Canada (Canada Summer Jobs).
- Thank you to Norwood Motor Sales and Service for servicing the SOS truck.
- Thank you to the Niakwa Golf and Country Club for partnering with us including allowing the team to meet at the Club and park the truck there.
- Thank you to the Manitoba Métis Federation for their cooperative effort for stewardship of the Seine River Greenway.



# PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

## SOS Objectives Addressed

Raise public education & awareness of the Seine River Greenway

## Implementation

### Tours

- In May of 2022, the Public Awareness & Education Committee (PAEC) organized a guided tour of the Creekbend section of the Seine River Greenway Trail. The walk was well-attended, leaving the Royalwood bridge and continuing to the Big Hand sculpture at the perimeter. Our expert guides provided facts, history, local stories and shared both their concerns for the area as well the important work that is being done to preserve this area.
- During the summer, a group of inner city youth requested a tour of Bois-Des-Esprit. It was a pleasure to walk with the youth through the forest seeing their enthusiasm and answering their questions. The committee plans to reach out to summer youth camps in 2023 to plan more guided tours.

### Display Tables

- The first week of June, the committee worked with Green Kids Inc. to set up a SOS display table at Bikes and Circuses. Bikes and Circuses is a family-friendly, outdoor event that celebrates active transportation and our connection to the environment through circus arts, dance, theater and music. Our display table at Lagimodière-Gaboury Park was visited by children and families participating in the event and SOS distributed pamphlets and information about the importance of clean waterways and biodiversity.
- October was municipal elections month. A Winnipeg mayoral candidates forum on the environment was held at the University Of Manitoba, where SOS had a display table. The forum was well-attended, with lots of good conversations and information.

### Other Activities

- Mid-summer saw the committee busy applying for a grant to create a Healing Forest at the former Woody-Mitik site in Bois-Des-Esprit. Although our grant application was not successful, SOS continues to work on this initiative and has formed a strong partnership with the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF). The planning to create this Healing Forest has been steadily moving forward. There have been meetings and a site visit with MMF. This work has been integrated into other areas of SOS and grant applications.

- The PAEC took on the publishing of the SOS E-News in December. With the help of the SOS executive, the winter E-News was posted early January 2023.
- The PAEC also worked to recruit some new members to the committee. We were successful in recruiting three new volunteers who have added new ideas and enthusiasm to our knowledgeable, hardworking team.





# SEINE RIVER CORRIDOR POLICY & DEVELOPMENT

## SOS Objectives Addressed

Work in partnership with all levels of government, businesses and non-profit organizations for stewardship planning of the Seine River Greenway

## Implementation

- In 2021, in response to a multi-faceted lobbying campaign by OURS-Winnipeg and Save Our Seine, Winnipeg City Council approved amendments to the Our Winnipeg 2045 and Complete Cities 2 that called for creation of:
  - 1) A Greenspace and Natural Corridors Plan By-law for Winnipeg
  - 2) A Biodiversity Policy for Winnipeg
- In addition, a separate amendment was passed to add 1000 additional acres of parkland in Winnipeg.

- Subsequently, the City allocated \$700,000 to undertake this work and assigned two members of its planning staff along with the City Naturalist to spearhead creation of the Plan and Policies.
- Beginning in the spring of 2022, these staff created a preliminary work plan to develop the Greenspace and Corridor Plan bylaw (Plan) and the Biodiversity Policy (Policy) in two phases over a two and a half year time frame. We are coming to the end of Phase 1. Phase 2 will involve having a consultant prepare draft versions of the Plan and Policy as well as consultation with stakeholders and interested Winnipeg residents.
- OURS/SOS became part of an eleven-person Core Working Group responsible for guiding the creation of the Plan and Policy throughout the project. In addition to OURS/SOS representatives, this working group is composed of Winnipeg-based experts in landscape ecology, biodiversity, sustainability, prairie climate mapping and Indigenous knowledge as well as the three City staff referred to above.

- During the winter of 2022/23, the Core Working Group, with assistance from a consultant, have been developing the draft vision, principles, goals and objectives that will shape Plan and Policy.. As well, work is underway on:
  - 1) examining what other Canadian cities have done to create Greenspace and Biodiversity policies, plans and strategies,
  - 2) reviewing existing City of Winnipeg and senior government policies and strategies that could apply to our work including the recent Parks Strategy and Forestry Strategy, producing a history of greenspace development in Winnipeg, and creating a GIS map of existing greenspaces.

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## To date, participation of OURS/SOS has contributed to the following notable contributions:

- Inclusion of the addition of 1000 acres of greenspace to the scope of the project, in accordance with the OurWinnipeg 2045 policy. Its inclusion was of great importance to OURS/SOS as this would be the most tangible medium-term outcome of the planning and policy process.
- Recognizing golf courses as greenspace and nature preserves.
- Recommending that “restoration” be emphasized in the scope of activities covered by the Plan and Policy. Restoration highlights the importance of restoring as well as preserving and protecting urban ecosystems.
- Providing recommended draft wording from the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration in the work plan and scope of the project.
- Recognizing that biodiversity plays a central role in the scope of this initiative, and is not of lesser importance than other aspects of the work.
- Recommending the inclusion of a background study on the history of public greenspace creation in Winnipeg to understand the factors and barriers to the local creation of greenspace.

# VOLUNTEERS

## SOS Objectives Addressed

Preserve and protect the Seine River Greenway

Restore, repair, and enhance the Seine River Greenway

Raise public education & awareness of the Seine River Greenway

Improve public access to the Seine River Greenway

Work in partnership with governmental, business and other non-profit organizations for stewardship planning of the Seine River Greenway

## Implementation

- Volunteers recorded over 1,350 hours of supporting SOS activities during 2022. This is valued at an estimated \$27,000 in equivalent paid staff.
- All board Directors volunteered their time to attend board meetings and many served on various committees as well as volunteering for various programs. Volunteers served on 11 different

governance and program delivery committees: Executive, Governance, Nominations, Finance, E-Comms, Summer Team Advisory, Public Education & Awareness, Urban Restoration and Enhancement Advisory, Seine River Corridor Policy & Development, AGM-Annual Report, and Grant Writing Team.



## AWARDS & RECOGNITION

In December of 2022, Save Our Seine president Laurie Ringaert was one of 10 individuals awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee medal for her dedication and devotion to make a difference in the St. Vital community.

This award recognizes the hard work of Laurie guiding SOS in the organization's outstanding commitment to the environment, conservation and enhancement of greenspaces within the community.



# THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR SUPPORTERS!

Our work wouldn't be possible without your generous support!

## Operating Grants



Sisters of Our Lady of  
the Missions/Religieuses  
Notre Dame des Missions  
- Canada

## Corporate Donations



## Employment Programs



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Urban Restoration & Enhancement  
Pilot Project



Building Sustainable Communities Program

# BOARD, STAFF AND COMMITTEES

Thanks to all the people who contributed their time and talents to SOS during 2022.

## Board of Directors

April 2022-April 2023

President : Laurie Ringaert

Vice-Presidents : Victoria Grima (resigned from Board in August) and Denis DePape (appointed in August)

Secretary : Anita Moyses

Treasurers : Paul Vienneau (resigned from Board in October) & Ryan McIntosh (appointed in December)

Isabelle Bertazzo

Chloe Burgess (resigned in October)

Marlene Gregory

David Moore (resigned in October)

Scott Robinson (appointed in November)

Eric St-Onge

Peter Ward

## Staff

Interim Executive Director:  
Jennifer Sande (April-December 2022)

Managing Director : Ryan Palmquist (December 2022-Present)

Administrative Coordinator:  
Martine Balcaen (December 2021-February 2022)

Project-Administrative Coordinator : Kristin Kebalo (June 2022-Jan 2023)

Administrative Coordinator:  
Lindsay Kane (December 2022-Present)

Summer Team Staff : 2022 Coordinator (Barbara Farpelha), Lead Hand (Sandra Dvoyrin), and three River Clean-up Technicians (Brittany Guarino, Rishitia Rajib, and Abby Rodrigue).

## Operational Consultants

Stacy Stanley Young : Stanley Young Business Strategies: Bookkeeping

Mike McLenehan : McLenehan and Associates Chartered Professional Accountants

## Committees

April 2022 – March 2023

### Executive

Chair : Laurie Ringaert

Members : Paul Vienneau, Victoria Grima, Denis DePape, Ryan McIntosh, Anita Moyses

Staff : Jennifer Sande, Ryan Palmquist

### Governance

Chair : Scott Robinson, (Peter Ward & Victoria Grima-Former)

Members : Isabelle Bertazzo, Denis DePape, Paul Vienneau, John Borody

### Finance

Chair : Ryan McIntosh (Paul Vienneau-Former)

Members : Laurie Ringaert, Staff : Jennifer Sande, Ryan Palmquist, Stacy Stanley Young

### Nominations

Chair : Laurie Ringaert  
Members : Anita Moyses, Denis Gautron, Ray Temmerman, Ed Labossiere (2022 Nominations Team)

### Grant Writing Team

Chair : Laurie Ringaert  
Members : Vicki McLennan, Scott Robinson, Chris Penner, Eric St-Onge  
Staff : Ryan Palmquist, Jennifer Sande

### AGM/Annual Report Committee

Chair : Laurie Ringaert

Members : Eric St-Onge, Anita Moyses, Victoria Grima  
Staff: Lindsay Kane

### E-Comms

Chair : Eric St-Onge  
Members : Andrea Danelak, Anita Moyses, Chris Wilkinson, Denis DePape, Temi Williams, Vicki McLennan

### Public Awareness & Education

Chair : Marlene Gregory  
Members : Vicki McLennan, Alanna Forsman, Cheridan Wazny, Jodh Ghuman, Mhoalene Palevino

### URE Advisory Committee

Chair : Eric St-Onge (formerly Victoria Grima)

Members : Anita Moyses, Fenella Temmerman, Isabelle Bertazzo, Lia Abolit, Robyn Palmer

Staff : Kristin Kebalo, Ryan Palmquist

### Summer Team Advisory Committee

Chair : Anita Moyses, (David Moore-Former)

Members : Robyn Palmer, Eric St-Onge, Victoria Grima,  
Staff : Ryan Palmquist, Jennifer Sande, Denis Gautron, Kristin Kebalo

### Committee : Seine River Corridor Policy & Development

Chair : Denis DePape

Members : David Watson, Pam Lucenkiw, Dave Danyluk, Laurie Ringaert,

Staff : Ryan Palmquist

2022  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

Save Our Seine River Environment Inc.

