

2012

ACER Annual Report



Our Approach

Use long-term monitoring protocols to evaluate changes in biodiversity and share the data.

Community involvement is crucial to address the issue of adaptation to our changing climate.

Everyone can learn about current issues and what ecological actions they may undertake.

President's Report

Alice Casselman, B.Ed., M.Sc.Ed.

After 25 years of dedication and hard work, ACER can celebrate its silver anniversary. ACER began as a way to develop and share Canadian educational resources that were not readily available for schools.

In 1996, ACER partnered with Environment Canada and the Smithsonian Institution to establish the first community-based, international one-hectare (1-ha) plots in the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve Studies project (NEBRS).

Since then ACER has created a range of programs that involve schools and communities with the mandate to monitor, assess and teach about current environmental issues and the effects of climate change on forests.

In 2011, the newest 1-ha plots were established at Paradise Grove Park at

Niagara-on-the-Lake, in collaboration with Climate Action Niagara and the Niagara Parks Commission.

Planting for Change (P4C) sites were first established in schoolyards in 2008. Six new sites were implemented in 2011, including one at Humber Arboretum. The Arboretum has been a partner since 2000 and is the home of ACER's four programs.

The P4C program is so successful that we have a waiting list of schools for 2013.

ACER is a volunteer organization. Our funding comes from different donors, such as TD FEF, Canadian Tree Fund, Maple Leaves Forever and Earth-Day Canada/Sobeys.

We thank these funders for their continued support as we grow the network of schools and forest plots in



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(Charitable Number 89064 2515 RR0001)

Ontario using international protocols and working with ACER trained volunteers in each community to collect and share data.



An Overview of Our Programs

A new approach to tackle climate change, biodiversity and monitoring issues through outdoor experiential activities.

PLANTING FOR CHANGE (P4C)

Our participatory Planting for Change (P4C) program allows teachers, students and schools to create a schoolyard planting site that acts as a mini-climate change outdoor classroom/laboratory. There are now 20 schools in ACER's P4C community.

We have developed more teaching resources and school activities to complement the curriculum related with P4C. By the end of 2012 we will have completed an analysis of the five-year accumulated data and will be ready to share the results.



You can check our website for photos and data for each school at www.acer-acre.ca.

MEASURING OUR RESOURCES

ACER started this project in 2004 to enable students, clubs, groups, or individuals to accurately collect data and to monitor trees in their schoolyards, parks, neighbourhoods, etc.

For teachers, this is a cross-curricular, hands-on multi-grade program where students can learn about climate change and its impacts on trees. ACER trains and supports teachers as they implement this program at their schools.



Measuring Our Resources enhances curriculum in mathematics, literacy, science and geography by involving core learning in grades 7-12. It builds interpersonal communication skills since the project requires extensive teamwork by the students.

*Educating
communities to
monitor and take
ecological action in
response to climate
change*

Board Members

2011-2012

Irene Katkov
Leah Casselman
Vanessa Alsop
Violet Bielski



Special Thanks

Special thanks to Karishma Indulkar, a 4th year University of Toronto, Mississauga campus (UTM) student of Biology and GIS, who has been active in supporting ACER's activities, research and programs throughout the year.

Special thanks to our Grade 11 intern Ryo Ly and Grade 9 intern Kristina Schaller from Cawthra Park S.S., who were an incredible support in our office, warehouse and in the field.

Special thanks to our volunteer, Christina Mwelu, a Guelph University grad of agriculture and economics, for her creativity and support.

Special thanks to Naila Amreen and Sarojni Persaud, both 4th year interns from UTM. Your time and support in the field, office, and warehouse were greatly appreciated!

AN OVERVIEW OF OUR PROGRAMS (cont.)



THE YOUTH STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

The Humber Youth Stewardship (HYS) project was a successful organizational partnership initiative created in 2008 to maintain and enhance natural areas in the Humber River Valley. The partners, led by ACER and the City of Toronto, engage local youth in the restoration and monitoring of natural areas.

Students were trained to remove invasive species in a selected area, to carry out a base line inventory tagging remaining native trees and to lead a community restoration planting on the Humber Arboretum site. The project provides university students supervisors who act as role models. There is an opportunity to discuss climate change and what individuals can do to adapt and possible environmental based careers. The site managers benefit as they choose the site to be restored and receive a report with the procedure and findings, photographs, data analysis and recommendations.

GO GLOBAL

Go Global is a network of one-hectare plots that enable communities to report environmental change through long-term forest biodiversity monitoring programs. ACER and its community partners, monitor and report changes in one-hectare forest plots representative of regional ecosystems with trained volunteers using Smithsonian/Environment Canada protocols. These activities help the community to understand the consequences of climate change and human impact on our ecosystems and enable comparison with global forests. See www.acer-acre.ca for the scientific posters.

TRACKING FOR SUCCESS

Tracking for Success helps organizations determine the success rate of tree species planted at community tree plantings. At massive tree plantings, a percentage of tree species is monitored in order to determine their success rate under the changing climate. This program started in 2012 and allows organizations to complement their tree planting initiatives. Volunteers are trained to record benchmark measurements and track the success of those trees planted over time.

Condensed Statements of Financial Position

	2012	2011
ASSETS		
Cash	\$46,645	\$85,563
Investments	35,496	185,374
Accounts receivable	457	3,423
HST receivable	22,305	13,619
Prepaid supplies and other assets	10,017	8,257
Capital Assets	2,200	3,082
Total assets	\$117,120	\$299,318
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$4,500	\$54,089
Deferred revenue	11,564	160,787
Due to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment	8,500	-
Total liabilities	24,564	214,876
Net assets	92,556	84,442
Total liabilities and net assets	\$117,120	\$299,318

Condensed Statement of Operations

	2012	2011
REVENUE		
Grants	\$205,413	\$333,702
Product sales and services	905	5,684
Donations	800	1,231
Other income	639	4,739
Interest income	574	1,195
Total revenue	208,331	346,551
EXPENSES		
Contract services	101,596	231,148
Salaries and benefits	41,083	35,078
Program costs	23,956	32,362
Rent	10,415	24,161
Travel	6,324	5,983
Office and general	5,455	8,484
Telephone and internet	3,508	6,317
Amortization	882	890
Insurance	833	829
Interest and bank charges	423	541
Total expenses	200,217	348,592
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	\$8,114	\$(2,041)

The condensed financial statements are extracted from the financial statements examined and prepared by our auditor Tinkham & Associates LLP, Chartered Accountant.

A complete set of the financials is available on request to the President of ACER at Unit 44, 3665 Flamewood Drive, Mississauga, ON, L4Y 3P5.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to all the volunteers, associates, students, teachers, and site partners who have donated time and energy to our programs in schoolyards, and forest biodiversity plots. ACER wishes to acknowledge the generous corporate, community and government supporters that continue to provide funding and resources:



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