



Information Handbook & Visitors Guide

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O.U.R Vision and Mission

VISION: Sustainable well-being for the land, ourselves, and our worldwide village.

MISSION: To educate, inspire and transform by co-creating a thriving learning community and permaculture demonstration site.

Intercultural, Intergenerational, Interfaith and Interdependent

O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE is a sustainable learning centre and demonstration site which focuses on ecological ways of living involving permaculture* design. We are dedicated to researching and modeling ways that are rooted in social, cultural, spiritual, economic and ecological well-being. As well, we actively create partnerships with groups and organizations that are interested in living in community and living lightly on the earth.

O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE is a sacred space where permanent residents and short-term visitors co-create sustainable community. We offer a protected green space in a healthy, supportive environment and contribute locally and globally ---in return we live, love laugh and learn together as an intentional learning community, we are interdependent, viable and prosperous through our deep connection to ourselves, each other and the earth.

**"Permaculture is the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive systems which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems. It is the harmonious integration of the landscape with people providing their food, energy, shelter and other material and non-material needs in a sustainable way." Graham Bell, The Permaculture Way.*



Working Together

O.U.R Guiding Principles

One of our residents writes: “Truly it is auspicious to find this place and time together to create what we need most in our lives. To go the full mile together in this space (and beyond) requires a personal commitment to awareness.”

To support this commitment and to help us to realize our needs over the long term we have identified a number of guidelines that serve as points of reflection and reference from which to model our communication and actions.

- **Responsibility** – In all situations we intend to take responsibility for our own feelings. Ultimately, no one can make us feel. If we feel badly we take credit for that. If we feel good, we take credit for that too. Our words and actions may trigger and impact others, however, we take responsibility for using them in a way that doesn’t manipulate or hurt others.
- **Openness** – Besides death and taxes, there are few absolutes in this world. Various ways exist to interpret and work with a situation. When we actively let go of our fixed beliefs about ourselves, others or the world, we are more open to the “truth” as communicated through our experience and the experience of others in the group. From this place anything is possible. We strive to remain open to negotiate, communicate and dance in all situations.
- **Respect** – Respect is a two-way street. When we act with respect, we strengthen each other. This means we are conscious about not charging into people’s mental or physical space without permission. Respect also means leaving the physical environment (land and dwellings) in the same or better condition than you found it, so all may enjoy.
- **Mutuality** – It’s give and take, baby! The more we give, the more we are open to receiving. It’s as simple as that.
- **Honesty** – Just be real. If you are happy, be happy, if you are sad, be sad. Through honesty we develop a deep trust in ourselves, which we can use to help others be honest.
- **Fun** – Fun and humour keep things light and flexible so we can go beyond negativity. In fun environments we can relax, appreciate our lives together and learn from our experience. No matter what, we make time for fun in our lives.



O.U.R Covenant for the Earth

O.U.R Statement of Sustainability

1. **Ecology of Living**

Integrate labour, community contribution, personal maintenance and creative endeavours.

2. **Community Living**

Live in a supportive, cooperative setting with people of like intent. Work toward a common path and live a deep commitment to self, others and the earth.

3. **Voluntary Simplicity**

Enhance quality of life by consuming less and living simply. Encourage ourselves to receive daily nourishment from renewable, preferably organic, green plants.

4. **Right Livelihood**

Know the social and environmental impact of our work. Work or volunteer in only those efforts that enhance the quality of all life.

5. **Environmental Action**

Practise nonviolent action in defence of the Earth. Know the facts and implications of an action and 'stay the path'.

6. **Spiritual Practices**

Perform a daily practice that encourages attunement with those encompassing powers that nourish the Earth and intuitively guide all human endeavours.

7. **Scientific Understanding**

Know the basic universal laws of ecology and apply them to a specific bioregion and be able to extend such understanding to others.

8. **Cultural Diversity**

Study past and present cultures who live in harmony with the Earth. Know the psychological, sociological and cultural roots of one's own tradition.

9. **Education of the Citizenry**

Use every action, insight and interaction to share environmental understandings. Be a model world citizen. Spend time with children, elders and people of all ages.

10. **Personal Growth**

"Know thyself" with and through the universe. Search, find and accept a path of insight and action that will assure peace, love and truth for all life.



What is an Ecovillage?

"Ecovillages are full featured settlements in which human activities are harmlessly integrated into the natural world in a way that is supportive of healthy human development and can be successfully continued into the indefinite future." (Gilman, 1991,p.37).

The motivation for ecovillages is the choice and commitment to reverse the disintegration of supportive social/cultural structures and the upsurge of destructive environmental practices on our planet.

For millennia, people have lived in communities close to nature, with supportive social structures. Many of these ancient communities exist to this day, but are struggling for survival. However, beginning in the 1960s, various intentional communities with spiritual, ecological, and social orientations were formed, allowing people to once more live in communities that are connected to the Earth in a way that helps enable the well-being of all life-forms into the indefinite future.

Depending on who's counting, there are between 500 and 15,000 Ecovillages and intentional communities within a loosely knit and globally affiliated network around the world. A number of these villages are in Canada, including O.U.R. (One United Resource) Ecovillage.



Climate Change Demonstration Building (Healing Sanctuary)

O.U.R History and Development

Located on an extraordinary 25 acres near Shawnigan Lake, British Columbia, O.U.R ECOVILLAGE began operations in 1999 with a vision to create a model demonstration sustainable village community rooted in social, ecological, and economic well being. O.U.R Ecovillage is the host site for O.U.R Community Association, a registered non-profit society dedicated to the promotion of sustainable community living. People from all walks of life and all ages are able to benefit from educational programs facilitated within O.U.R developing site.

The idea of O.U.R. Ecovillage had its genesis in the late 1990s when a number of people lived in a cooperative household in Victoria. During this time the O.U.R acronym (One United Resource) was created. Subsequent events can be described in seven different phases.

Phase I (March 1999) involved the private purchase of 25 acres of land near Shawnigan Lake in order to secure it from future development. The former owner was eventually convinced that the proposed development of a vibrant, environmentally friendly community would be a very positive use of the land, and ended up donating a third of the original asking price. A group of approximately 14 people came together as the Creation Team, taking responsibility for the ongoing design and development process of the community project.

Phase II (2000-2002) saw the establishment of O.U.R. Community Association, a registered not-for-profit (541542). An overriding principle was established: that the project would be created “by the community, for the community and through the community” so that none of the overall project would be established for anyone’s primary personal gain --- all people would be here as stewards. During this time the Cowichan Community Land Trust and the Land Conservancy of British Columbia worked to create a flora and fauna species mapping of the overall site in order to determine the most vulnerable ecological areas. Next, O.U.R. Community Association embarked on a far-reaching visioning process involving hundreds of communitarians from nearby neighborhoods, various levels of government, people from corporate and educational backgrounds, and international visitors. This enabled O.U.R. Community Vision to be a broad representation of what folks wanted to see happen at O.U.R. Ecovillage.

Phase III (2002-2004) focused on creating a precedent-setting rezoning for O.U.R. Ecovillage. The “Sustainable Land Management Design” evolved concurrent with several years of permaculture design. The 25 acres were to stay intact and become a multi-activity integrated land use zone with:

- a) A conservation area consisting of one third of the property under a protective covenant
- b) Allowance for educational activities
- c) An organic production farm, and
- d) An off-grid eco-home cluster of 9 homes (in addition to the existing home currently used as a residence and Bed and Breakfast)

This work with regulatory authorities brought in major support and funding from government. Eventually O.U.R Team began working with engineering and regulatory teams in earthen construction (natural building) using alternative wastewater treatment and other innovative technologies and doing so within approved building codes.

Phase IV (2002-present) - O.U.R. Community Association develops “TOPIA: The Sustainable Learning Community Institute.” TOPIA offers a wide array of on-site sustainable living programs (e.g. natural building, organic food production, bio-fuels, community building, etc.).

Phase V (2003-present) involved the creation and development of the FOG (Finance, Ownership and Governance) research project as an attempt to pull together a new hybrid ownership model for land projects which would accommodate the sharing of common financing, ownership and governance between multiple stakeholders.

Phase VI (2006-present) saw the incorporation of “The Sustainable Community Development Cooperative.” The SCDC brings together a team of consultants who specialize in ecovillage design at O.U.R. Ecovillage and similar projects.

Phase VII (July 2007 - present) begins with the creation of a new ownership entity (developed with the assistance of the FOG project). In July 2007, we established O.U.R. Ecovillage Cooperative. The co-operative was created for the purpose of providing a legal model for the collective ownership of the land and to provide a governance structure that will bring together all the earlier established organizations at O.U.R. and all interested parties. The cooperative has begun to implement this plan through the creation of a business plan in order to secure financing for the purchase and further development of the property.

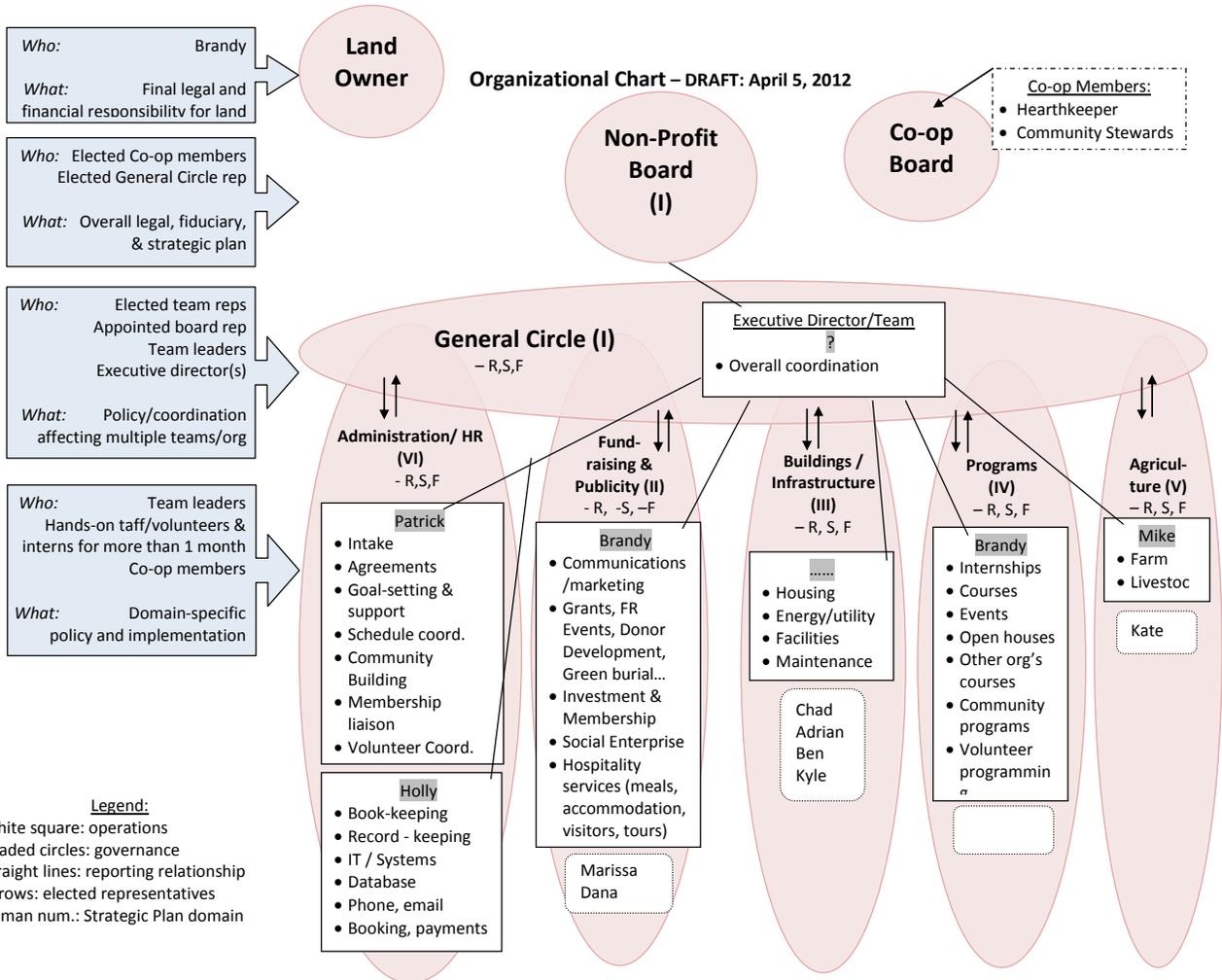
Phase VIII (fall 2008 to present) has seen O.U.R. Community facing an annual challenge as we seek to create a truly viable community ownership and financing model. The “Protect O.U.R. Ecovillage” Campaign has become the rallying cry for a broad group of people and organizations who have stepped up to support O.U.R. into this next phase of its development. The campaign includes the Ethical investment Mortgage and the O.U.R. Sustainers. It also saw the creation of Canada’s first Conservation Scattering Grounds in partnership with The Land Conservancy of BC.

O.U.R. Organization and Governance

O.U.R. Ecovillage has been working within a Dynamic Governance model to create a fluid and efficient integration of the many roles and contributions that create O.U.R. that is also inline with the core the values of equality and respect for diversity. (for more about Dynamic Governance, see “We the People” by John Buck and Sharon Villines)

People participate in O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE in a number of ways and everyone is part of a team that is connected to the central decision making hub, the General Circle. Roles are assigned and chosen with respect for each person’s vision and talent while seeking to balance responsibility and accountability for the long-term outcomes of the decisions made.

The following chart represents an example of the teams and how they relate - keep in mind that this is a snapshot of an evolving structure.



Some of O.U.R. staff during the 2012 Staff Training

OUR Community Association (Non-Profit Society) -

is a BC registered non-profit society that leases part of OUR ECOVILLAGE. It consists of a Board of Directors whose members are responsible for all non-profit programming in the community, including fund raising and strategic planning. Both residents and supporters are represented on the Board.

Mission Statement:

“To assist in the research and implementation of volunteer and community development that promotes ‘Green Micro-Enterprise’, ethically based/sustainable practices and youth entrepreneurship.”

Its purposes are:

1. To research and study models of alternative, sustainable patterns of living together in community that are:
 - ecologically sound
 - economically self-supporting
 - respectful of other cultures
 - based on universal spiritual and moral principles
 - intergenerational
 - focused on providing opportunities for youth to actively participate in various leadership and service oriented experiences.
2. To provide training and disseminate information on sustainable patterns of community living. Educational programs will emphasize developing youth’s capacity to lead projects and train others in such areas as the following:
 - general environmental practices
 - sustainable land use
 - organic agriculture
 - permaculture planning, and
 - cooperative co-existence.
3. To develop a demonstration site that is a living laboratory of cooperative co-existence implementing best practices in permaculture management, ecologically respectful economy and sustainable land use.
4. To serve and interact with local communities and the greater public at large by organizing activities and projects that provide a forum for the mutual sharing of skills and knowledge related to the areas listed above and aimed at enhancing the well-being of all concerned.

O.U.R Ecovillage Co-operative -

was incorporated in June 2007. The design principles of O.U.R Co-operative follow the Canadian Co-operatives Association's guidelines and include:

- open, voluntary membership
- transparent administration
- democratic participation – one member, one vote
- ethically based practices (in livelihood and lifestyle)

Its **purpose** is to acquire and manage lands and properties in a creative and sustainable manner. We aspire to create products and services that will be a positive contribution to, and will build upon our goal of creating, promoting and demonstrating sustainable community. As this co-operative assumes title of the property it will become the primary decision-making body for O.U.R. Ecovillage and both individual members and member organizations will participate in the governance of the cooperative.

Hearthkeepers -

are permanent, long-term residents of O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE. They are people who feel called to live by the Hearthkeeper Vision and steward the land and activities of O.U.R. Ecovillage.

“Hearthkeeper” is the name of the resident membership class of O.U.R. Ecovillage Cooperative.

Hearthkeeper vision:

The Hearthkeepers of O.U.R. Ecovillage are dream-keepers and fire-keepers. We consciously hold the heart-space at the core of our selves, our Community and sacred sense of place. We show up open hearted and present, offering our ongoing learning in the service of deep relationship. We commit to stepping through the flames of fear into the fire of love.

Sustainable Community Development Cooperative -

brings together a team of consultants focusing on ecovillage design at O.U.R. Ecovillage and other projects. A major function of this group is organizing and supporting the residential sector (village) as it is developed, and taking part in other endeavors to enhance sustainable community, including sustainability consultation.

O.U.R. Rezoning Overview - ‘Un-paving’ the Way

In 2004, OUR Ecovillage completed the rezoning process that created a “Rural Residential Comprehensive Development Zone”. Using permaculture design principles, we surveyed and mapped the property for topography, ecological aspects and biological aspects. We held a number of visioning workshops involving planners, agrologists, permaculture designers, educators, a lawyer, and health professionals from both the public and private sectors. With these advisors, along with local and provincial representatives from the Cowichan Valley Regional District, and the B.C. Ministries of Health, Agriculture, and Highways, we developed a re-zoning application for an entirely new kind of zoning designation.

The entire property is being developed as an environmental "classroom," with four sectors. The Woodlands/Wetlands Conservation sector includes sensitive ecosystems, woodlot management areas, and nature trails. The Agricultural sector combines organic agriculture and animal husbandry. The Ecological Education and Infrastructure sector provides a central gathering area for community educational activities. The Residential sector will have clustered housing.



Programs, Projects and Activities

Daily life in the village encompasses such community-building activities as building group process and communication skills, working within a Dynamic Governance decision-making model, practicing conflict resolution, developing understanding around well-being and self-care, enacting a permaculture development paradigm and establishing outreach/educational programs. Below is a sample of happenings at O.U.R Ecovillage:

- **Natural Building**

Modeling alternative “green” home construction, through hosting educators or builders working with “green” and “renewable energy” and teaching natural building practices. The summer school “TOPIA” provides an educational forum for natural building, and has resulted in the construction of various buildings incorporating building techniques from cob, straw bale and clay-slip to timber frame and earth bag: the “Healing Sanctuary” (Climate Change Demonstration Building), the “Art Studio” and “Freya’s House”. Other completed projects include a cob oven & bench, a children’s garden/playhouse, and partially enclosed study/relaxation space (the “Chillage”).

- **Educational Workshops & Summer Programs**

Full summer internship programs are offered annually, including Sustainable Food Production Skillbuilder, and Natural Building Skillbuilder, as well as permaculture design certificate courses and advanced teacher training.

O.U.R. also hosts a wide range of ongoing workshops to provide education on everything from living in “intentional community”, youth empowerment, consensus decision making, conflict resolution, non-violent communication, alternative resource usage, organic horticulture, permaculture, sacred ecology, forest gardening, and cob/strawbale building, to divine song and dances for universal peace and health.

- **Research – Finance, Ownership and Governance (FOG)**

We are currently leading a major research project regarding the Finance, Ownership and Governance of ecovillages.

- **O.U.R. Garden**

We have developed a land plan that encompasses our vision of approximately seven acres of food crops from fruit/nut/berry orchards, greenhouses and raised-bed vegetable gardens. These crops will support the food security/food sustainability of O.U.R Ecovillage members and will also contribute to the wider community through “community-supported agriculture”.

- **O.U.R. Guesthouse**

Providing a ‘home away from home’ for Eco-minded guests.

- **Animal Husbandry**

Raising heritage breeds, organic meat and poultry production, use of animals as part of permaculture design as well as therapeutic programs.

Visiting O.U.R Ecovillage

O.U.R Ecovillage is situated 45 minutes north of Victoria, near Shawnigan Lake on Vancouver Island at 1565 Baldy Mountain Rd. We welcome visitors and ask that you please call ahead to arrange a time, or register on our website to join one of our regularly scheduled tours.

Meal and Accommodation facilities:

We offer Camping, an Eco-guesthouse with self-facilitated breakfast, and all meals – family rates may apply. The current prices and details are available on OUR website (ourecovillage.org) or by calling our office 250 743 3067.

Please ensure you are expected and reserve your place for meals and accommodation.

Work parties occur from time to time (we appreciate your volunteer help on projects). Please call or email ahead to confirm O.U.R schedule.

Children are a welcome part of O.U.R ECOVILLAGE but we ask that parents/guardians take full responsibility and supervision for their kids while on site. The building sites, woodworking shop, and gardens are potentially dangerous areas and children must have adult supervision at all times in these areas.

Please do not bring any **pets** onsite.

Living at O.U.R. Ecovillage

- Visiting family and friends of program participants are always welcome as long as it does not impact on maximum numbers already on site, the cooks, or the work projects. Participants are responsible to put information on the visitor board, introduce your guest at the community circle, provide guests with a tour of the ECOVILLAGE and show them O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE procedures for chores, dish washing, the community process, etc. (See more on how rates may be affected, etc under our Visitor Policy)
- Visitor participation in courses and building work needs to be cleared with the relevant Team lead first.
- Residents attend community meetings and weekly Council circles.
- Community Meetings are a way for visitors to introduce themselves, become part of the overall group process and gain understanding of O.U.R. Community. We ask that recognition is given to the work and challenges which have already been experienced over the summer and that your participation in the community meeting is supportive of the folks who live/work onsite on an ongoing basis.
- Interns, residents, volunteers and all people living on site agree to abide by the site policies which are all listed on O.U.R. website under [under http://ourecovillage.org/about/organization/our-policies](http://ourecovillage.org/about/organization/our-policies). are coming to live onsite for any length of time, make sure you have read the policies.
- See the small print at the end of this document for more detail..!



Facility Rental

Facilities available for events include the **Community Classroom** (approx 2,000 sq ft), **O.U.R. Community Commons** dorm and **Zero-Mile Eatery**, use of a bright, 25-foot-diameter, heated **Yurt** (a Mongolian canvas dome structure), **Healing Sanctuary** (ideal for health practitioners or small-medium groups), open field, parking, camping space, fire pit, outdoor kitchen and privy.

The current rates and details are available on OUR website (ourecovillage.org) by calling our office 250 743 3067.

How you can Contribute

There are many ways to contribute to the vision of O.U.R. Ecovillage, from a few hours of volunteering to an ethical investment of hundreds of thousands of dollars and everything in-between. Here is a brief introduction to some of the ways you can become involved.

Ethical Investment Mortgage

The Ethical Investment Mortgage consolidates previous financing that has financed the infrastructure development into a jointly-held mortgage. It simplifies OUR finances, reducing interest payments, and constitutes a significant step toward the longstanding dream of full legal and financial community ownership of O.U.R. Ecovillage.

It will allow the land and infrastructure to no longer be dependent on banks/credit unions (which have so many barriers to being able to finance multi-stakeholder/multi-activity projects) - and to move the opportunity to 'community investing in community'.

Contact protect@oureconvillage.org to find out more.

O.U.R. Sustainers

The Sustainers are a growing group of individuals who have signed up to contribute small, monthly donations towards the operating budget of O.U.R. non-profit. O.U.R. Sustainers have access to significant reductions on courses and an annual harvest dinner. The goal is to create a group of 600 people each donating \$10 month. Contact protect@oureconvillage.org to find out more, or look on our website.

Volunteering

Thousands of people have put their hands to every aspect of O.U.R. Ecovillage. If you feel drawn to serving in the co-creation of this community project, contact volunteer@oureconvillage.org. All volunteers are responsible for their food and site costs and we will work with you to find the best balance of what is needed and what your unique contribution might be.

Donations

We appreciate donations of all kinds, including materials/supplies, your volunteer time, and/or financial support. You can find out how to make your tax-deductible donation on our website or contact O.U.R. office 250 743 3067.

Wish list

If you are thinking about 'simplifying' or just getting rid of stuff, please consider making a material donation to O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE. We would very much appreciate donations of items for our organic farm, four-legged friends and educational programs. Of particular interest are building materials and good salvage, as well as commercial kitchen equipment. See the complete list on our website.

The Commemorative Legacy Project.

This ground-breaking model combines land protection with a possible answer to a question faced by many as they approach the end of their lives - what am I going to be remembered for? O.U.R. Ecovillage can be a unique and special place to host the end of life celebration and then scatter the

ashes of the deceased in the Commemorative Conservation Scattering Grounds - land that is stewarded as sacred by O.U.R. Community and protected in perpetuity under a covenant with the Land Conservancy of BC. And rather than the typically expensive funeral services, all of this can be done with a tax-deductible donation towards to protection of O.U.R. Ecovillage for future generations.

Membership in O.U.R Ecovillage Cooperative:

Becoming a member allows you to build a role in the cooperative as a member and co-owner of O.U.R. Ecovillage.

O.U.R Investment Shares (available to both members and non-members of O.U.R Ecovillage Cooperative):

Buying investment shares contributes to the overall development of the 25 acre model ecovillage.

Membership in the Sustainable Community Development Cooperative:

Becoming a member allows you to contribute towards the work of this cooperative and to share in consulting services. Membership shares cost \$250.



Other Sources of information about O.U.R. Ecovillage:

There are many links on <http://ourecovillage.org/contact/links/>

[VIDEO: Peakmoment: Awakening the Village Heart and Mind](#)
[VIDEO: Peakmoment: Creating the Impossible – OUR Ecovillage](#)

More information on O.U.R. community, activities and organization available on O.U.R. website ... and by searching the web.

Other References:

Ecovillage Network of the Americas (ENA): ena.ecovillage.org
Global Ecovillage Network (GEN): www.ecovillage.org
Fellowship for Intentional Communities (FIC): www.ic.org

Some of O.U.R Supporters and Affiliations (by no means a comprehensive list):

Community Futures/Future Corp.
Providence Farm
Cowichan Tribes
BC Alternative Energy Association
University of Victoria – Environmental Studies Program
Camosun College – Environmental Technology Program
Royal Roads University
Fielding University
Ecovillage Network (Canada, Americas and Global)
Fellowship for Intentional Community
Natural Builders' Network
EcoNews
Victoria Compost Education Centre
The Land Conservancy of British Columbia
Living Routes
Vancity Savings and Credit Union
Island Savings Credit Union
Real Estate Foundation
Renewal Partners
Barcapel Foundation
Sierra Foundation
Canada Mortgage and Housing
Canadian Home Builders Association
Federation of Canadian Municipalities

Policies and Context Pieces

Cultural Context for the work-life experience at O.U.R. Ecovillage - “This is not a job!”

If you are joining O.U.R. Ecovillage community in any capacity, you will need to be aware of the following.

“Ask not what the community can do for you, but what you can do for the community.”

Work and time at O.U.R. Ecovillage are offered in the spirit of service. Whether you are here as a student, intern, volunteer, on a paid position or partial work-trade, the value of your being here is what you give it and how you recognize it as an opportunity to serve.

In practice, this could mean that you could find yourself working beside a more qualified person who is doing the same work voluntarily while you are being paid, or vice-versa.

Work at O.U.R. is an invitation to examine the possibility of a source of deep satisfaction in what you do that nourishes the sense of purpose in your life.

As with all of our documentation, this is not supposed to eliminate conversation, but support us to create deeper, more sustainable relationships with each other and the earth. Bring questions and thoughts to Council or the HR team so that we can all support and share in the learning.

Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Policy

O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE is a high visibility demonstration space; we also support folks to be fully present to themselves and to all other relationships. We therefore do not allow illegal drugs or their use on O.U.R. Property.

Tobacco use is allowed in designated areas, which will be shown to you during a tour of the property. If you are unsure, please ask.

Alcohol use is permitted on site only after work hours on a ‘use not abuse’ basis. It is not permitted during working hours and can be grounds for dismissal.

Resolving Challenges

If at any time you might be experiencing an issue or challenge with another person or situation at O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE it is especially important that each of us attempts to work through these challenges with the other person directly...as a first step. If this is truly not a workable plan we ask that you bring the issue to your Site Supervisor or Program Co-ordinator. If requested someone may be assigned to sit as a mediator within a situation. Ultimately any unresolved issues will be dealt with by the Project Administrators or by O.U.R. Board.

In the spirit of community building - resolving challenges does not mean:

- Talking about someone to another person (the first step is to bring it to where you have the challenge).
- Talking about others you encounter at O.U.R. ECOVILLAGE in derogatory or negative manner on or off-site.
- Gossiping in any way.
- Blaming or judging others.

In the spirit of community building – resolving challenges can often mean:

- Even if you have a challenge with someone that you are able to “hold them in positive regard’ and look at your behaviour/choices in a situation to see how it is contributing to the challenge.
- Receive support from others in the learning community about how you might move through your challenge.

Conflict Resolution Policy

Should conflict arise between Interns, Intern(s) and an instructor, or Intern(s) and a resident(s), the following guidelines apply:

- A) First, it is important that an attempt be made to resolve the conflict directly with the person involved. We ask that you do not discuss the situation with all others in the community until you have addressed it directly with the person(s) related.
- B) If this is not successful, you can contact the HR Coordinator or your Team Leader. They can simply act as a support person, or can directly mediate between the parties.
- C) In the event that a conflict cannot be resolved even with the help of your Team Leader, the Programs Coordinator will be advised. If necessary the Programs Coordinator will request written submissions from all parties, and will provide a written decision. If the Programs Coordinator cannot satisfactorily provide a resolution, or if the complaint involves the Coordinator, the issue is to be presented in writing to the OCA Board for resolution.

Community Contribution Hours

O.U.R. Community Hours contribution is intended to resonate with the practice of karma yoga, which translates as “union through action”. As part of a permaculture demonstration site, the translation of “karma” fits perfectly: both “action and the effects of that action” ..!

The Community Contribution is our playground for practicing and creating a culture of service in line with O.U.R. vision of sustainable global well-being. It is an opportunity to build shared vision and to practice living and working together.

We recognize that this can be a challenge. We encourage each other to open communication as an important part of all our learning. If you start to feel like this is an imposition, or that it is

only another 10hrs on your workweek, speak to a Hearthkeeper or the Human Relationships (HR) team lead (Patrick).

How many hours does it take? We have found that at least 10hrs per person per week beyond the formal workweek is required to create O.U.R. Ecovillage.

Intention of the Community Contribution

- Get stuff done! (To support the quality of life we all benefit from here.)
- Support a democratic and fair culture of participation for all, including children.
- To create an opportunity to bring people into the dynamics of team and community work and the how of making it work.
- To practice and demonstrate how we work through conflict and live with diversity.
- Recognize and learn from our own and others' work styles.
- Support connection outside the roles associated with jobs.
- Understand and support the culture of hospitality at O.U.R. Ecovillage. No single person is the face of O.U.R. - we can all offer relationship.
-

Definition - Community Contribution:

1. Directly supports the well being of the whole community.
2. Happens outside work hours
3. Is a suggested average of 10 hrs/week.
4. Supports inter-connection between roles, teams and individuals.

Who does 10hrs Community Contribution?

1. Residents
2. Paid Continuing Interns
3. Resident Volunteers

Who does not do the Community contribution.

1. People paying for curriculum (interns, course participants, workshops).
2. Non-resident Staff.
3. Children under the age of 18 are encouraged to participate but not required to participate in this agreement.

What activities are eligible for Community Contribution? (Requires agreement and coordination with the team lead of the area affected.)

1. Supporting other teams - requires agreement and coordination with the team lead. (garden, farm, office, site, events, hospitality, infrastructure).
2. Projects/proposals that have been approved by the Programming Team.
3. Preparing proposals that serve the community.
4. Representing O.U.R. at planned off-site community events.
5. Supporting on site events - (parking, set-up, tours, clean-up, programming, teaching, kitchen support, hospitality services, etc).
6. Driving for site and event needs (gas money by prior arrangement).

What is not eligible for Community Contribution?

1. Care schedule

2. Care for personal space (not including improvements to infrastructure - check with infrastructure team lead)
3. Personal care (showering, massage, medical, etc)
4. Council and most training programs.
5. Childcare

Tracking

As part of the role of this community in researching and developing broader frameworks for a sustainable society, we are tracking every hour of contribution that supports the creation of O.U.R. Ecovillage. While also needed for real cost budgeting of projects for funders, and supporting our research partners to document and explain the shift from a purely financial to a full-spectrum definition of value, it supports us individually to choose how we define value in our lives.

This requires data, which is why we track our volunteer hours on our timesheets in the parallel column to the paid hrs.

What happens if I don't do Community Hours?

Do you feel you are adequately supporting this community? Do you feel the people around you are pulling their weight? Not doing the Community Contribution puts O.U.R. sustainability at risk.

If there is a sense in the community that someone is benefitting in an unbalanced way from other's contribution, or willfully "consuming" the community resources without regard for our role as stewards of this land and community, it will be treated as any other challenge - see the Resolving Challenges Policy.

The success of this "policy" rests on each of us holding ourselves and each other accountable for our impact. You are invited to engage in the communication and deeper relationship that this will require.

Visitor policy

Introduction

This policy comes in the context of the recognition that O.U.R. Ecovillage is engaged in nothing less than culture shift on a personal and global level. This often means we are also engage in the development of new conceptual frameworks to discuss some of our policies and agreements.

Stimulating this learning is a core element of O.U.R. mission. The conversations arising out of these policies can be as important as the policies themselves.

Intention of this Visitor Policy

- To support the culture of co-creation at O.U.R. and beyond.
- Support the upkeep and stewardship of all common spaces, infrastructure and amenities of our community (used by everyone).

Policy

1. People may host family, close friends or intimate partners coming specifically to visit the resident and who wouldn't come otherwise in their personal living space, or camping, for the following lengths of time before they may be required to complete a Resident Agreement and Role Agreement.

Long-term Residents (living onsite for longer than 3 months):

- up to 7 consecutive days.
- maximum of 10 days/month
- on condition that the visitors' presence is supportive of O.U.R. vision and their own wellbeing.

Interns (in programs of 4 -12 weeks):

- up to 3 consecutive days
- maximum of 6 days/month,
- on condition that the visitors presence is supportive of O.U.R. vision, their own wellbeing and the interns' ability to participate in the program.

If the visitor is family, close friends or intimate partners coming specifically to visit the resident and who wouldn't come otherwise, they will pay the family/long-term resident rate (adults \$10/night, kids 7-12 \$5/night). All other visitors will cover their costs at the general rate. This does not include food.

2. Each resident has 1 free night per month to use as they wish for visitors. These cannot be banked or traded.

The person being visited is responsible to ensure:

- the visitor signs a waiver when arriving on site.
- the visitor behaves in an appropriate manner while at O.U.R. Ecovillage. This includes ensuring that children are supervised at all times, giving feedback to friends if required, ensuring the site policies mentioned in this document are respected, recycling is rinsed, etc.
- all fees are paid promptly
- any damage to property of any individual or organization at O.U.R. Ecovillage is ultimately the responsibility of the person being visited.
- the visitor is educated about and invited to participate in O.U.R. Ecovillage culture and activities. This includes introducing them to the Handbook referenced above, inviting them to Council (if appropriate) and helping them adapt to village life at O.U.R.

O.U.R. Eaters' Manifesto

O.U.R. Vision is to joyfully share food as medicine for O.U.R.selves, O.U.R. land and for O.U.R. broader world's socioeconomic, ecological and political systems. O.U.R. core approach works toward collaborative respect with all of O.U.R. living companions: animals, plants, micro-organisms and of course humans.

We try to keep O.U.R. food affordable, accessible and healthy. O.U.R. ideal is to eat organic and GMO-free. O.U.R. ability to do this is limited by the cost.

We strive towards eating a nourishing diet of natural, whole foods, prepared for maximal enjoyment and appropriate nutrition, inspired by traditional cooking wisdom. We aim to use carefully prepared whole grains over refined carbohydrates, and include unrefined fats and wholesome sweeteners in moderation.

We work to grow O.U.R. own organic foods in line with traditional and contemporary wisdom, towards regeneration of the land and wholesome nourishment of O.U.R.selves as Eaters. We do O.U.R. best to support small-scale, local and organic food systems when we are unable to provide for O.U.R. needs on this land.

We trust mixed farming (which includes raising plants and animals for food) to be a sound way of keeping O.U.R. land and O.U.R.selves both productive and vital, and continue to deepen O.U.R. skills and understanding of how to best do this.

We honour the role that plant-based eating plays within the multi-faceted spectrum of personal and planetary healing. We prepare and offer primarily plant-based food options to our guests. In line with O.U.R. guiding vision, we also give thanks for some compassionately-raised animal foods in O.U.R. meals.

We value collective eating as a community building practice, an antidote to many of O.U.R. world's ills.

We respect each Eater's choice in selecting what is appropriate for her-/himself from amidst O.U.R. food offerings.

While we aim to accommodate O.U.R. guests' needs, we are not yet able to cater to complex individual food requirements nor severe allergies. However, O.U.R. guests may store small quantities of food to meet their specific needs. Vegan and Raw Food Eaters, while respected and warmly welcomed, may not always be satisfied with O.U.R. food offerings. Please let us know in advance about your needs and preferences so that we might consider them.

Together, we are still learning how to do all of these things. We welcome constructive feedback, and appreciate your respect for O.U.R. ongoing process.

In line with the practice of holistic medicine, we welcome the experiences of personal and collective discomfort (often known as a 'healing response') that accompany the shifts away from unwholesome food relationships.

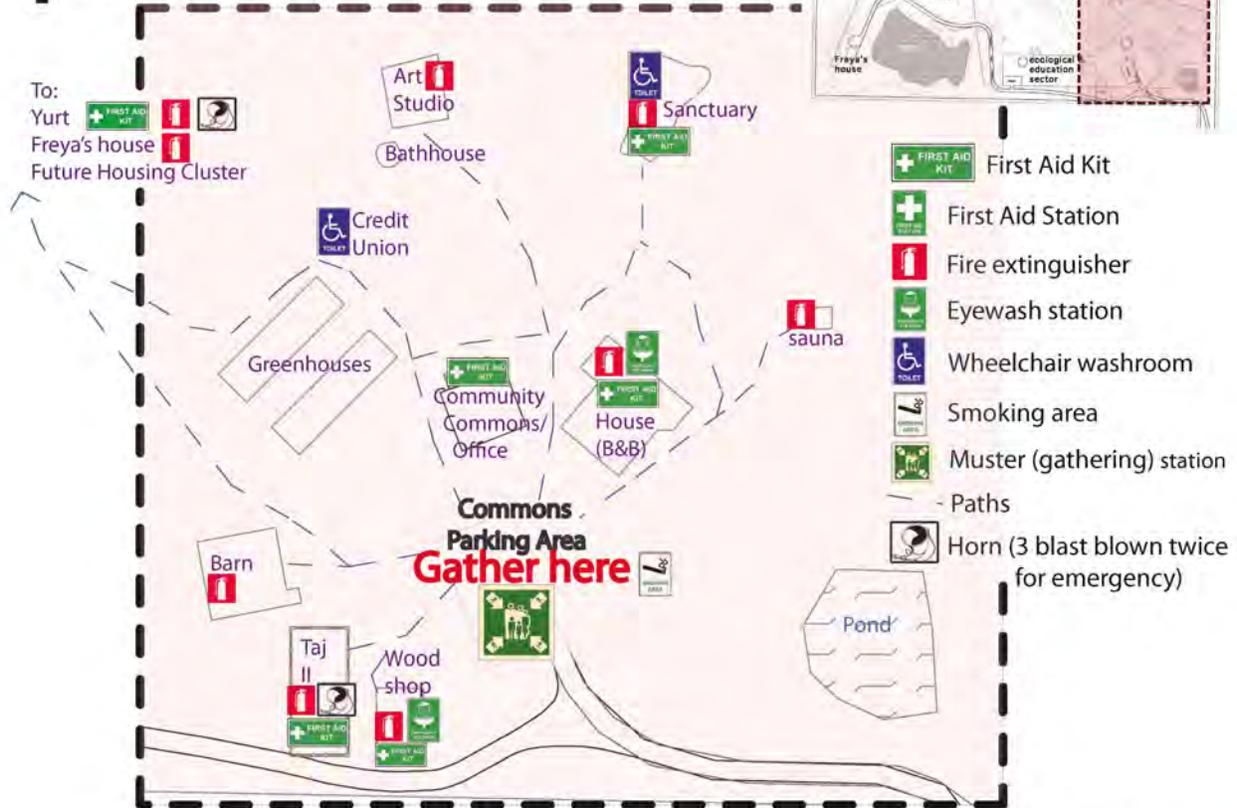
We are all Eaters, We are all Eaten. May we all be well.

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

SAFETY & EMERGENCY

Updated: March 17, 2011 by LORNA

procedures



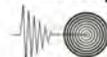
First aid & Medical:

- Know who the First Aid person is
- Find them & tell what's wrong
- Stand by to assist.
- Phone 911 if required

Fire:

- small: Find an extinguisher & use it
- BIG: call 911
- Report incidents to staff & residents
- Listen for a 3-blast horn blown twice, if heard:
- Gather at the Commons Parking Area

Earthquake:



If in a building:

- Stay in the building
- Beware of windows
- Move away from heavy stuff that can fall

If outdoors:

- Move to an open area
- Stay away from buildings & power poles

After the earthquake:

- Remain calm & prepare for more shaking
- Gather at the Commons Parking Area
- Check for injuries & assist



Please familiarize yourself with the above Safety and Emergencies Map.

First Aid / Medical Emergencies

- Make sure you know who on site is trained in First Aid (designated First Aid person(s)).
- If an emergency occurs, go directly and immediately to the First Aid personnel, and report the situation.
- Please standby to assist the First Aider as directed. You may be required to phone 911, for an ambulance.

Fire

- In the case of a small fire, go to the closest fire extinguisher, and extinguish the flame.
- If the fire is too large to be dealt with by the equipment at O. U. R. ECOVILLAGE, then call the fire department – dial 911.
- Immediately report any incident to O.U.R Ecovillage staff/residents.
- Gathering point is in front of O.U.R Office (see map).

Earthquake

- Stay away from windows. If you are in a building, remain there for the duration of the earthquake. Duck & cover: squat on the ground quickly (ideally under a table or desk for added protection).
- Move away from top-heavy furnishings, bookcases and other things that could fall on you.
- Move under a desk, table or other piece of heavy furniture and hold on to it. If it moves about, move with it.
- If your knees are on the ground & spread apart you are less likely to be knocked over by the movement of the ground. Bend at the waist.
- Place your eyes into the crook of your arm for added protection and use your other hand to protect the back of you neck and head as much as possible.
- If you are unable to get under a piece of furniture, flatten yourself against a wall in the interior of the building, and protect your head as best as you can.
- If you are outdoors, move to an open area, away from buildings, power poles, and brick or block walls that could collapse.

After An Earthquake:

- Try to remain calm, and be ready for more shaking. Aftershocks often follow the first tremor.
- Meet in the designated area (as outlined on the previous emergency procedures and safety map).
- Check with everyone on site for injuries, taking the necessary steps to give/get help to those who need it.