

SPEC ANNUAL REPORT 2014





Society
Promoting
Environmental
Conservation

spec.bc.ca

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WHAT WE DO

Through partnerships and collaboration SPEC engages and builds capacity within local communities to enable lasting behaviour change towards urban sustainability. SPEC promotes policies that lead to more resilient communities and protect our environment for present and future generations.

SPEC develops **practical solutions** through education, outreach, advocacy and research in the following areas:



FOOD

building a more sustainable and resilient local food system



ENERGY

promoting energy conservation and the use of renewable energy



TRANSPORTATION

advocating for sustainable transportation



WASTE

promoting practices that lead to waste reduction



LAND AND WATER

helping to protect our green and blue spaces





LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



2014 has been another successful year of providing practical solutions for urban sustainability. Thousands of young students and hundreds of adults learned about growing their own food through our public school programs and urban farming classes. We helped facilitate a successful community farmer's market, worked with restaurants to reduce waste and supported beach cleanups. This year also marked the return of our popular solar energy tours and the launch of a new Zero Fossil Fuel campaign.

This coming spring we will be celebrating 45 years of ecological education and

advocacy in British Columbia. As the oldest environmental organization in this province we have seen many changes during those years. With the help of our partners, member and donors we look forward to continuing leadership in creating solutions to the ecological problems our communities face.

Come, join us, and be part of the solution.

» Rob Baxter
2014 President
Society Promoting Environmental Conservation

SPEC CELEBRATES 45 YEARS



On Money Perspective

Vol. 3, No. 4

S.P.E.



GIRL PONDERs a twentieth century choice at the Stop the Tanker demon

SPEC: A History



1969

SPEC is
founded.



1970

First advocates
for rapid transit

In December of 1968, William A.C. Bennett's Social Credit party approved strip mining in the Kootenays. Strip mining is devastating to the local terrain. Removing the "overburden" (what we call vegetation) by bull-dozing and blasting results in landslides, erosion, sedimentation, flooding, and stream/river contamination. Gwen Mallard, a Coquitlam woman, is particularly outraged by this decision and this mining practice. That same month, she and husband Derrick gathered friends in their living room. That gathering blossomed into SPEC.

Within a year the organization has a name, an address, and a constituency of 4,000 members. Pollution, in all its multiple forms, is the overarching concern. SPEC will grow to 8,000 members in the second year and over the next 4.5 decades will undertake multiple campaigns resulting in:

- ▶ protection of the local **watershed** and **Agricultural Land Reserve** (ALR)
- ▶ a **moratorium** on **off-shore oil** drilling and oil tanker traffic
- ▶ the start and growth of the **local recycling movement** and bottle deposit legislation
- ▶ legislative and court decisions protecting **water and air quality**
- ▶ the **overturning** of plans to build unnecessary **hydro dams**
- ▶ opposition to highway and bridge expansion in favour of **public transit**
- ▶ **freedom of information** and public intervener **financial support**
- ▶ calling the Federal government to **legal account** for abridging **environmental review legislation**
- ▶ **overturning** a decision in WA state to start a highly polluting **coal-fired power plant** (Sumas 2) with severe air quality issues for our regional air-shed

**1972**

Oil spill clean-up
at Crescent Beach

**1973**

Moratorium on
offshore oil exploration

Sometimes SPEC acted alone, often in coalitions, and many campaigns resulted in victories that have withstood the test of 4.5 decades. Others have gone back and forth in the win/lose columns, underscoring that we cannot rest in our efforts to keep the minds of citizens and legislators on public good and the integrity of the natural world.

Public education programs have always been a feature of SPEC's work, starting in 1970 with a 10 week, 2,700 mile Ecology Caravan criss-crossing the Province. Over the decades SPEC has provided public education on: urban sprawl, transportation options, water quality and habitat protection, reduce/recycle/reuse, air quality, land use, energy conservation, alternatives to pesticides/herbicides, hazards of nuclear power/weapons, climate change, and films and speakers on a range of topics. As well, we have provided direct hands-on learning for children in school gardens and adults in a variety of sustainable behaviours, including organic food production, fossil fuel reduction, residential energy conservation, and zero waste.

Over the decades, SPEC has incubated dozens of other environmental organizations. Where we once stood nearly alone, there are now many sturdy, impactful organizations, some with a broad environmental agenda, others focused on specific aspects of the work.



**1973**

Helps draft
Agricultural Land
Reserve legislation

**1974**

First SPEC recycling
depots lead to Recycling
Council of BC

**1980**

Launch of award
winning Clean
Air Campaign

**1981**

Energy demonstration
building opens

**1983**

Defeats proposed
Site C mega dam
construction

**1985**

Protests the dumping
of raw sewage into
Burrard Inlet

**1990**

Starts first
Car Free Day

SPEC has survived several internal and external conflicts, economic hard times and other losses that have severely challenged our institutional metal, not the least was the devastating loss of our beloved building at 6th and Maple in 2011, a loss compounded this past week with the destruction by CP Rail of community gardens along the Arbutus Corridor, including one started by a SPEC staffer in 1981. Despite the losses, SPEC has shifted and morphed according to the needs and available resources of the time. Along the way, SPEC's image changed from "radicals upstarts" to interveners/researcher/activists and eventually to an organization invited to the table as various levels of government began to take up the challenge of environmental pollution and degradation. SPEC has worked effectively to offer constructive advice/research

but also to bring considerable pressure to bear on political decisions that eventually turned towards environmental protection and public well-being. However, this has not been a uniformly smooth transition. Over time, governments have devised increasingly sophisticated strategies for resisting and stifling the impact of environmental educators and activists. Many fear the Harper Government's new anti-terror legislation is another iteration of this strategy that will become a tool to muzzle environmentalists as threatening to national security. It bears an eerily disquieting relationship to the October '98 APEC Inquiry which revealed that military intelligence spied on SPEC meetings (Sept '97) and secretly listed SPEC and 69 "anti-APEC groups, including BC Federation of Labour, BCEN, Greenpeace and First Nations as "threats."

Environmentalists have always stood up for sustainable/resilient ecosystems just as much as we have been against the practices that threaten them. Louise Arbour, (former Canadian Supreme Court Justice and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights,) wisely reminds us that the belief that, 'if we have nothing to hide, we have nothing to fear' from authoritarian power, is specious and undercuts democratic power in favour of sweeping legislation that has the potential to one day impact each one of us. She recalls the quote by Martin Neimoller:



1991–1999

Stops logging in North Shore watersheds



2003–2009

Opposes Highway 1 expansion and twinning of Port Mann



2005

Adds photovoltaic solar collectors to SPEC building



2008

School Gardens Program launch



2011

First Westside Community Food Market



2013

Green 2 Go launch – reducing take-out food container waste



2015

Launches Sustainable Communities Field School

“First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.”

As we face the perils of the growing climate crisis, we need to re-think: what are the real threats? Is it those who plead for caution and respect for nature, for more

moderation in consumption and more actual conservation? Is it the 99.9% of the planet’s scientists who insist that the problem is already here, that we’re already running a century of carbon debt that must be repaid in higher temperatures and more severe weather events? Or is it the elevation of personal interests and ideology ahead of common concerns while denying all signals that we’ve run amuck? I admire the truth-telling of Alberta Premier Jim Prentice for his statement that we only need to look in the mirror to place blame for our dilemma.

As has been said at previous anniversary celebrations, SPEC has withstood the test of time. Join us in celebrating our past and looking ahead to our future.



SPEC IN THE CITY

In 2014, SPEC cultivated 13 community food markets, 9 school gardens, 3 beach clean ups, 1 communal food garden, and 1 solar power installation. We delivered dozens of workshops, classes and tours on topics related to food, energy, waste and water, engaging children, youth and adults in sustainability.



2014 AT A GLANCE

In the Community

Over **2000 young people** engaged in food education and growing through SPEC's School Gardens Program

Launched the **Zero Fossil Fuels Campaign** to educate the public on GHG reduction possibilities for Vancouver

Launched the **Go Solar tours** in partnership with Bullfrog Power and Mountain Equipment Co-op

Over **200 adults** participated in SPEC's Urban Farmer Field School classes and Go Solar tours

Waste and water education classes delivered at schools and community organizations

Online

42,000 page views of SPEC's website, from **11,000** different users in 2014

Over **3,000** people reached with SPECtrum, our monthly newsletter

Over **2,500 volunteer hours** donated to SPEC by the community

Participated in **3 beach clean ups** in partnership with Surfrider Foundation, at Kits Beach and Jericho Beach

13 weekly food markets co-hosted with Kitsilano Neighbourhood House, connecting local food growers and food makers to local consumers, contributing over **\$20,000** to Vancouver's green economy

Finalized the **Green 2 Go** Pilot Program engaging restaurants and members of the public through interviews and surveys about take-out container waste

Over **1,000** followers on Facebook and **600** on Twitter

Over **13,000** total visits to our SPEC Demonstration Gardens blog – specgardens.blogspot.ca

Over **4,000** total visits to our SPEC School Gardens blog – specschoolgardensproject.blogspot.ca

THE SPEC FAMILY

SPEC 2014 COMMUNITY STARS



"All great progress requires a laboratory and we like to think of SPEC as one of BC's most authentic organizations for visionary thinkers and doers to create, validate, and scale vehicles for environmental and social stewardship. Often what's being piloted and tested at SPEC becomes a valuable resource in the service of a later project or a catalyst to support a community of organizations within a movement. Implementing their work at a grassroots level, SPEC deploys their greatest resource: their fun, expert, and passionate people."

The Millard Family – Donors, supporters, and friends



“The lululemon hometown giving program is about elevating the local community. That’s why it just felt right to start with our neighbour - the Henry Hudson Elementary School - located beside our Store Support Centre in Kitsilano. SPEC enabled us to pilot a unique school-business partnership model for developing and maintaining school gardens. Beyond lululemon’s financial contribution, our people gave their time and sweaty efforts to maintain the garden while the kids enjoyed their summer holidays.”

*Lisa Gledhill and Lisa Nguyen,
lululemon athletica*



We would also like to acknowledge and thank the invaluable support provided by Rick Pollay and Carole Christopher. With their time, energy, ideas, hard work and financial support (monthly donations and matching gift) SPEC and its family continues to thrive.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (DECEMBER 5, 2014):

Rob Baxter	President
Carole Christopher	Vice President
Shawn Weber	Treasurer
Kiersten Enemark	Secretary
Tara Moreau	Director
Tova Plashkes	Director
Kate Menzies	Director
Dominic Maggiolo	Director
Dan Rogers	Director
Art Bomke	Director
Jessica Frank	Director
Ivan Cheung	Director



We are excited to welcome our new 2014 board members: Art Bomke, Ivan Cheung, Kiersten Enemark, Jessica Frank, Dominic Maggiolo, Kate Menzies, Dan Rogers (back on the team after taking a break!), and Shawn Weber.

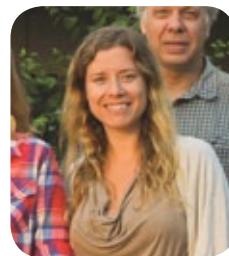
We would also like to thank Ross Moster for five years of dedication on the Board of SPEC, and Matthew Unger for leading the Land and Water Committee and sitting on the Board for the past two years. We wish them both many successes on their new adventures!

STAFF

We would also like to thank our dedicated staff in this very busy year for helping SPEC continue to serve our community and environment.

We would like to say thank you and wish all the best to Catriona Gordon who coordinated SPEC's School Gardens Program for 6 years and has now moved on to become a teacher. Thank you Catriona for so many years of hard work and commitment to thousands of children and the teachers you have supported in growing their gardens at school.

We would like to welcome Nikoo Boroumand to the team. Nikoo joins us as the new School Gardens Program Coordinator. Nikoo is a food and environmental educator. She has many years of experience growing food and medicine on organic farms and gardens, and has a love for teaching children and youth about food, nutrition, growing food, edible weeds, soil, composting, and all things related. She is a Registered Nutritional Practitioner (a graduate of the Institute of Holistic Nutrition in Vancouver) and



Chartered Herbalist, with an undergraduate degree in Environmental Sciences from the University of Guelph and a Masters in Public Administration from the University of Victoria. Nikoo is also a practicing community nutritional consultant and an instructor at the Institute of Holistic Nutrition for the course, Nutrition and the Environment. She is also an avid all-season cyclist.

Sara Blenkhorn continued to enthusiastically support SPEC in many projects this year. She led the Zero Fossil Fuel Program, focusing on coordination of the Go Solar tours and the development of the program toolkit and infographic. Sara also coordinated the waste committee work and supported the Urban Farmer Field School (UFFS).

In 2014 we were lucky to have three summer interns. Amy Ing did an amazing job help-

ing us maintain the School Gardens during the hot summer months while engaging with children and parents. She also kept the School Gardens blog active and fun! Cassie Loban excelled in coordinating different aspects of the Westside Community Food Market, including volunteer recruitment and management, as well as helping us promote the market and the Urban Farmer Field School classes. Marina de Pina-Jenkins did a wonderful job helping SPEC improve its outreach on the ground and through social media. She kept our Facebook and Twitter active and helped us develop an outreach strategy for SPEC.

Lastly, Oliver Lane continues to provide support and guidance to the organization as Program Manager and is thrilled to take on the lead of our new Sustainable Communities Field School Program in 2015.

VOLUNTEERS

Together, volunteers have recorded over **2,500 hours** donated to SPEC!



A big thank you to all our volunteers without whom none of all this would be possible.

WASTE COMMITTEE

Angie Nicolas, Daniel Rotman, Jacquie Rolston, Emily McGill, Eyal Label, Derek Leung, Ivan Cheung, Chris Karu, Antonin Bois, Robyn Kimber, Guy Matthews, Maya Tatuch, Selina Eschenbach, and Caroline Coudreau

ENERGY COMMITTEE

Maia Parizeau, Thomas Williams, Rob Baxter, Ivan Cheung, Elizabeth Mosier, Suzanne Goldberg, and Emily Chan

FOOD COMMITTEE

Carole Christopher, Tara Moreau, Lisa Gledhill, Lisa Nguyen, Gabrielle Vacheresse, Vicky Baker, Sonya Rokosh, Danielle Harris, Elisabeth Donnelly, and David Liou

ADMIN, FUND DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNICATIONS:

Margaret Miller, Marina de Pina-Jenkins, Lisa Rilkoﬀ, Carey Lee, Jeanie Lim, Derek Schlereth, Emelie Crumbaker, Jessica Frank, and Dan Rogers.

And thank you all the volunteers and community members that helped at our outreach events, Westside Community Food Market and beach clean ups.

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

SPEC is a collaborative organization, both internally and externally. Internally, we work within and across our theme committees, and externally we build partnerships that bring community resources together to pursue local sustainability. We celebrate our partnerships with the community and thank our partners and financial supporters for working with us. A SPECtacular thank-you to:

*Whole Foods Market
(Kitsilano and Robson stores)
West Coast Seeds
Village Vancouver
Vancouver Renewable Energy Coop
Vancouver Foundation
Vancouver Food Policy Council
Vancity
University of British Columbia
UBC Botanical Garden
Think & Eat Green @ Schools, UBC
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
Surfrider Foundation
Sitka Foundation*

*Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS)
Mountain Equipment Coop (MEC)
Metro Vancouver
Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
HSBC Canada
Hewer Home Hardware Store
Gaia Green Products Ltd.
Government of Canada
Government of British Columbia
City of Vancouver
Bullfrog Power
Banyen Books & Sound
Bentall Street Canadian Tire
Acme Delivery Company
lululemon athletica – the Metta Movement
Millard Family
BC Hydro
SPEC monthly donors, members,
and annual donors*





SPEC CAMPAIGNS

PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS IN
THE COMMUNITY, ACTION
ON THE GROUND



SPEC
ENERGY
PROJECTS
2014

The energy committee provides education and demonstration programs centered on renewable energy and energy conservation. Our goal is to help people reduce their dependence on fossil fuels and other non-renewable resources and shift towards energy conservation and the use of cleaner energy.

GO SOLAR TOURS



2014 action

1 GO SOLAR TOURS

Tours of SPEC's solar energy demonstration system returned this summer. In partnership with Bullfrog Power, the "Go Solar Tours" were hosted at the MEC store roof top on East Broadway Ave. SPEC President, Rob Baxter, and SPEC staff, Sara Blenkhorn, facilitated the guided tours of the solar photovoltaic panels with the goal of educating the public about solar and other renewable energy alternatives in Vancouver. More than 120 people participated in the 4 tours held this summer. Positive feedback was overwhelming. The tours brought together a community of like-minded individuals to learn from local



experts and from each other. Participants included people from the energy sector as well as people looking into incorporating solar energy into their own homes. People seemed to enjoy the friendly atmosphere of the tours, one participant saying it evoked “community awareness”.

Quotes from Go Solar Tours participants:

“All in all, a very interesting visit. I encourage you to sign up for one of the next Go Solar Tours.”
– James Rowley

“The tour has allowed me to learn more about the situation of renewable energy here in Vancouver.”
– Jarad Haghighi

“What I liked best about the tour was that it was economical and practical information.”
– Tilde Pirollog



2 ZERO FOSSIL FUELS CAMPAIGN The objective of this campaign is to educate the public about technologically and economically viable solutions for communities and individuals to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels. A Zero Fossil Fuels Toolkit was created to provide individuals with information and resources on ways to reduce their fossil fuel consumption. On October 27th, the Committee launched the ZERO Fossil Fuels campaign at UBC Robson Square in front of an audience of approximately 75 people. After presentations by SPEC President, Rob Baxter, and Ben West from Forest Ethics, a lively discussion ensued that extended beyond the allotted time; a strong indication of the audience's interest in the subject.

Energy cont.

3 PLANS FOR 2015

The Energy Committee is currently working on strategies to take the Zero Fossil Fuels campaign to the next level. Two main streams of work are currently being developed: 1) A video series highlighting stories of individuals and communities that have taken steps to become fossil fuel free; 2) An education program for high schools to engage students in climate change education with a strong practical solutions perspective. Solar tours for the general public will continue in 2015 with the possibility of catering special tours to schools and businesses.

THE TEAM

This year's Energy team was powered by: Maia Parizeau, Thomas Williams, Rob Baxter, Sara Blenkhorn, Ivan Cheung, Elizabeth Mosier, Suzanne Goldberg, and Emily Chan

THE SUPPORT

A big thank you to Bullfrog Power, Mountain Equipment Coop (MEC), BC Hydro, and TD Friends of the Environment Foundation for funding and supporting the Zero Fossil Fuels Campaign and the Go Solar Tours.



SPEC FOOD PROJECTS 2014



"Good ingredients give the best results."

SPEC's food committee is committed to building a just, resilient and low carbon food system. Co-Chaired by Dr. Carole Christopher and Dr. Tara Moreau, the SPEC-Foodies have collaborated with many groups around Vancouver towards improving the sustainability of food systems through the experiential education and demonstration of growing food.

The committee is actively involved with 4 food programs: SPEC School Gardens Program, Westside Community Food Market, Urban Farmer Field School, and Cambie Square Communal Garden

THE TEAM

Carole Christopher, Tara Moreau, Nikoo Boroumand, Catriona Gordon, Lisa Gledhill, Lisa Nguyen, Gabrielle Vacheresse, Danielle Harris, Sonya Rokosh, and Elisabeth Donnelly

THE SUPPORT

We would like to thank the funders that supported SPEC's food projects in 2014: Vancouver Foundation, BC Gaming, Think and Eat Green @ Schools, UBC, Whole Foods Market (Kitsilano store), TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS), West Coast Seeds, Gaia Green Products Ltd., lululemon athletica, BC Hydro, Bentall St. Canadian Tire, UBC Botanical Garden, the Millard family, the schools we work with, parents and students.



1 SPEC SCHOOL GARDENS PROGRAM

Now in its seventh year, the SPEC School Gardens Program works with nine partnering schools across Vancouver to bring gardening and good food education to schools. Our goals are to connect children to their food, to each other, to nature, and to their community. We do this because we believe that school gardens inspire and empower the next generation to contribute to healthier and more sustainable communities. SPEC continues to help build, expand, and maintain edible school gardens and compost systems, as well as integrate gardening and good food education into regular classroom curriculum. This past year, we delivered over 300 lessons to partnering school classrooms.

A major highlight of the program this year was the creation of a garden curriculum package called *Green Thumbs at School: SPEC Food Garden Lesson Book*, accessible to the public through the SPEC website. The Lesson Book is comprised of 9 lesson plans and activity sheets and is accompanied by 12 colourful posters. This curriculum package was made possible by Catriona Gordon, who developed the content, and Lisa Rilkoff, who developed the graphics and design, and was funded by the Vancouver Foundation. We hope that these lesson plans will allow more teachers and educators everywhere in the world to bring garden-related lessons into their classrooms and engage their students in environmental education.

In addition to the ongoing support and lessons we provide for these schools, the program also helped school gardens remain vibrant and growing through the summer months and through the duration of the job action period. It was an active summer, with students from several school daycares engaging in the maintenance of the gardens and taking pleasure in the bounty of the harvest. This would not have been possible without the work of our School Gardens Program Coordinator Nikoo Boroumand and our summer intern Amy Ing. In the coming year, we are concentrating on efforts to increase our programming in our most vulnerable schools.

SPEC is fortunate to work alongside an amazing community of school garden champions, including: The University of British Columbia's Think and Eat Green @ Schools Program; The Vancouver School Food Network (VSFN); Vancouver School Board; and daycares, community centres, churches, and many more.



School Gardens Cont.



SPEC currently works with nine schools across Vancouver:

- ▶ *Bayview Community Elementary*
- ▶ *General Brock Elementary*
- ▶ *Henry Hudson Elementary School*
- ▶ *L'École Bilingue*
- ▶ *Queen Elizabeth Elementary School*
- ▶ *Sir Wilfred Grenfell Elementary School*
- ▶ *Thunderbird Elementary*
- ▶ *John Norquay Elementary School*
- ▶ *Kitsilano Secondary School*

HIGHLIGHTS

The number of teachers and classrooms involved: **51**

The number of students involved: **1530**

The number of lesson topics offered: **14**

The number of lessons taught: **331**

The number of hours taught: **496**

The number of beds grown: **40**

In the coming year, we hope to empower all teachers at our current partnering schools to be able to deliver these lessons in their classrooms and school gardens by distributing hard copies of the curriculum package and provide professional orientation and guidance to teachers in undertaking these lessons with their students. Providing teachers with the tools to deliver garden lessons on their own will allow SPEC to use its resources to reach out to new classrooms and new schools in order to expand the number of students participating in school garden, food, and environmental education.

The link to this package is accessible on the SPEC website at <http://www.spec.bc.ca/school-gardens>. Check it out and try one of the lessons at home with your family.

.....
"My favourite time at schools is during lunch time when I sit in the school yard and watch students, ages 6 to 12, walk up to the school garden beds and pick a leaf of kale to munch on their own. They feel so comfortable around vegetables. They are fully comfortable and happy to pick raw vegetables and eat them with a huge smile. It has been integrated into their everyday being."

– Nikoo Boroumand, School Garden Program Coordinator

.....

"It was so wonderful to receive the local organic garden-fresh donation! The produce was made available to families that are participants of the Backpack Program (healthy weekend snack program) here at the community centre. This program serves local low-income families with children under the age of 18. The week that we received the donation, we were extremely low on produce so your contribution really made a big difference."

– Representative from a community centre that received the donated harvest from one of the school gardens during job action

.....



*Follow our SPEC School Gardens Blog and watch us grow:
<http://specschoolgardensproject.blogspot.ca/>*



2 KNH | SPEC WESTSIDE COMMUNITY FOOD MARKET

For the 4th year in a row, Kitsilano Neighbourhood House and SPEC collaborated in running the market with the goals to increase community access to local food, local growers and local food makers. Once again, every Thursday from 3 to 7 PM, the corner of 8th Ave and Vine in Kitsilano was alive with music, local produce, baked goods, jelly, granola, raw vegan cookies, roasted almonds, home-made salad dressings, coffee and more. With approximately 150 - 200 customers every week, 13 vendors that participated during the season, a number of community organizations, and the weekly local "nexpert" (your next door expert), the summer market was a colourful spot for community connections, food tasting and learning.

The Community Market is a smaller-scale public farmers' market that brings local food growers, producers, artists and buyers together to support the local community's economy. The 2014 markets generated over \$20,000 in revenues for vendors. Also, as in previous years, we offered coupons (\$630 in 2014) to support access to local food for lower income families.

Thank you to Vancity and the City of Vancouver for funding the market and to Whole Foods Market - Kitsilano Store - for the donated coffee and tea for market visitors, vendors and volunteers every week.

A big thank you goes to this season's team:

VOLUNTEERS: Amanda Rawlins, Sarah Chu, Jiling Wang, Xerxes Au, Audrey Sch-

alhoub, MK Yeung, Susi Siebert, Belinda Yang, Kevin Yu, Jeremy Cowie, Wanda-Mae Anderson, Charlie Zheng, Margaret Miller, Marina de Pina-Jenkins, and of course DG Adams for his lively music every week.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS: Village Vancouver, Kits Plastic Recycling, the Fruit and Veggie Deal.

STAFF: Sarah Lone, Cassie Lobban and Oliver Lane

HIGHLIGHTS

13 weekly markets
\$20,000 in total sales
\$70,000 in total sales between 2011-2014
 close to **200** visitors every week
\$630 in coupons for lower income members of the community

A final and huge thank you to all our vendors who worked hard to offer their best products to the community and to Kitsilano Neighbourhood House for partnering with us to run this great program.

2014 VENDORS	PRODUCTS
Barefoot Farms	Produce
Cherry Lane Farms	Produce
Frisch Community Urban Farms	Produce
Sea Tilth	Produce
Cherry on a Bike	Baked goods
Judith Jelly	Black currant jelly
The Good Loaf	Bread
Edible Treasurz	Roasted almonds and salad dressings
Larke Miller	Raw vegan goods
Nut Hut	Nuts
Moji	Bread
Trishaw Foods	Curry
Matthew Kohut	Healthy breakfast food





3 SPEC URBAN FARMER FIELD SCHOOL

In it's 3rd season, the Urban Farmer Field School offered more food growing and food making classes to the public. In the three seasons since its creation, it has delivered over 50 classes to over 350 people. 2014 classes included: Water and irrigation, Bioremediation, Urban foraging, Growing food in small spaces, Garden pest management, Beekeeping, Fruit tree pruning, Solar greenhouses, Garden planning and design, Canning, and Soils.

NEWS FOR 2015

SPEC and Kitsilano Neighbourhood House are partnering in 2015 to launch the new season. The program will be focusing on the most popular classes of the past seasons and Kits House will be hosting close to 50% of the 2015 classes at the newly renovated Kits House building on Vine St. and 7th Ave.



FACILITATORS

For 2014, SPEC enlisted fourteen local instructors: Rob Baxter, Scott Bell, Dr. Art Bomke, Dr. Jose Celedon, Dr. Carole Christopher, Emi Do, Leila Darwish, Caitlin Dorward, Alisha Hackinen, Sonja Hebert, Norm Kaethler, Dr. Saber Miresmailli, Dr. Tara Moreau, and Dr. Kent Mullinix.



URBAN AGRICULTURE COURSES 2014

MARCH



GROWING FOOD IN SMALL SPACES



FOOD GARDEN DESIGN, PLANNING, AND RECORD KEEPING



SEEDING 101

APRIL



SOILS, COMPOST AND CONTAINERS



VANCOUVER'S BACKYARD BIODIVERSITY



SOLAR GREENHOUSES

MAY



MARKET SAFE



BIO REMEDIATION



PLANT PROTECTION AND GARDEN PESTS



WATER MANAGEMENT



URBAN FORAGING

FOR COURSE DESCRIPTIONS, REGISTRATION, AND TUITION INFORMATION:
spec.bc.ca/uffs



URBAN AGRICULTURE COURSES 2014

JUNE



WINTER HARVESTS FROM SMALL SPACES



CANNING



SELL WHAT YOU SOW

JULY



YOUR GARDEN AND CLIMATE CHANGE



BEEKEEPING (BEGINNERS)



URBAN FORAGING

SEPTEMBER



GROWING FOOD IN SMALL SPACES



CANNING



CANNING ADVANCED

OCTOBER



FRUIT TREE PRUNING



SOLAR GREENHOUSES

FOR COURSE DESCRIPTIONS, REGISTRATION, AND TUITION INFORMATION:
spec.bc.ca/uffs

The Urban Farmer Field School is a project of:

with support from:





4 CAMBIE SQUARE COMMUNAL GARDEN

The Cambie Square Communal Garden over the last year was run by 2 coordinators. We've had up to 15 volunteers helping out in the garden this season, logging about 500 hours in total. The volunteer team received a neighbourhood small grant of \$400 this year to create better signage for the garden, purchase and install rain barrels, replace our compost bins, and purchase new gardening tools, some lumber, and soil.

We hope to increase our number of volunteers next year through more recruiting and partner up with other groups like the Banfield Pavilion Rooftop Garden, who may be interested in visiting our garden as part of their outings.

You can learn more about the garden through our blog at specgardens.blogspot.ca.



A big thank you to all the volunteers at the garden!



SPEC WASTE REDUCTION PROJECTS 2014



This year the Waste Committee focused on building relationships with a variety of community groups and government agencies interested in lowering our collective waste footprint at both a residential and a commercial scale. We participated in beach cleanups, multifamily building and green-youth events and we hosted our first environmental documentary screening. We also participated in numerous Zero Waste Events in Vancouver such as MetroVancouver's 2014 Zero Waste Conference, GLOBE Conference and SFU Circular Economy Dialogues.

GREEN 2 GO

a restaurant waste reduction project



GOALS

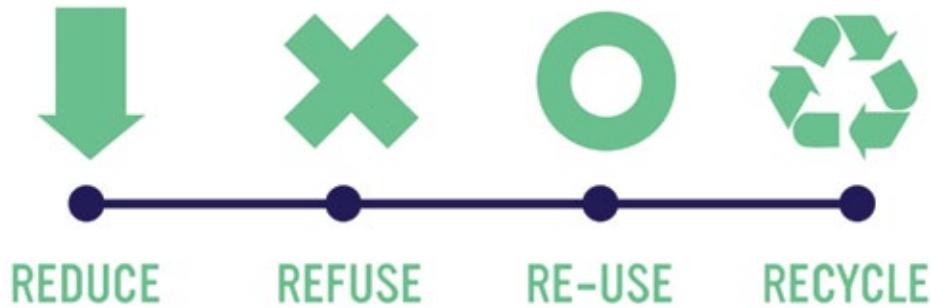
Towards the end of the year, the committee started an internal review and re-organization process that aims to formalize our mission, vision and goals as a SPEC committee and especially to increase efficiency in the way we coordinate volunteer work. We are also undertaking an asset mapping initiative to gear up for future projects.

THE TEAM

Sara Blenkhorn (staff), Angie Nicolas, Daniel Rotman, Jacquie Rolston, Emily McGill, Eyal Label, Derek Leung, Ivan Cheung, Chris Karu, Antonin Bois, Robyn Kimber, Guy Matthews, Maya Tatuch, Selina Eschenbach, and Caroline Coudreau.

1 OUTREACH Green 2 Go

The collaborative Green 2 Go Project, funded by Vancity, aims to assist Vancouver in its goal of reducing landfill-bound solid waste by working with city restaurants and the public in dialogue and support in reducing take-out container waste. In January and February 2014 the Team (Chris Karu, Antonin Bois, Eyal Lebel, Sara Blenkhorn, Robyn Kimber and Angie Nicolás) executed the Green 2 Go outreach phase. We visited 35 restaurants around Vancouver, bringing the results of our social media survey and our research report on take out containers. With the help of info-graphics we explained upcoming legislation changes to restaurant managers, answered questions and encour-



aged them to implement a recycling and food scrap collection system in their kitchens. You can see our infographics at www.spec.bc.ca/waste

S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

The Waste committee was invited by the social service agency S.U.C.C.E.S.S. to share their insights and feedback on the Green 2 Go project with Success' Green Squad (SGS). S.U.C.C.E.S.S. was interested in reaching out to 10 Chinese restaurants locally, explore with them sustainable practices and aid them in making changes. After research, SGS discovered SPEC's Waste Committee's Green 2 Go report and summarized their findings for their ongoing project. Antonin Bois and Chris Karu from the Waste Committee visited the group,

provided a presentation that due to fervent interest from the group extended into an engaging conversation about general waste reduction.

2 MULTIFAMILY BUILDINGS IN THE WEST END

At the request of a diligent building resident concerned about recycling in her building, two volunteers from the Waste Committee attended a community event in the West End's Beach Towers and engaged neighbours in interactive activities to promote better waste sorting and increased recycling. Jacquie Rolston and Angie Nicolás from the Waste Committee engaged in conversation with Murray Mollard, from Trash Talk, the expert on the topic. The team answered questions from the public and

participation was good. The resident who sparked this initiative, Selina Eschenbach, has now joined the Waste Committee. She will be leading, together with Antonin Bois and Guy Matthews, an initiative to enhance multiunit recycling and composting.

3 SCREENINGS

The Waste Committee screened "From The Waste Up. Life without Plastic" from Vancouver activist Taina Uitto. Waste committee team (Angie Nicolás and Oliver Lane) partnered with CEP (Connecting Environmental Professionals) to host this Vancouver premiere at The Hive in downtown Vancouver. Sixty-three people attended the screening and engaged in a lively discussion about reducing single-use disposable items in our daily lives.

Waste cont.

4 PLANS FOR 2015 Green 2 Go

A subcommittee (Emily McGill, Derek Leung, Maya Tatuch, Jacquie Rolston and Angie Nicolás) is reviewing SPEC's Green 2 Go project report and infographics finalized in early 2014 and designing future steps for a new and expanded outreach campaign.

Zero Waste School

Inspired by its success in other North American cities, a waste subcommittee (Emily McGill, Daniel Rotman, Eyal Lebel, Angie Nicolás) has been developing a local Master Recycler program which will provide waste reduction training for adults to help our city advance towards its Greenest City Zero Waste Goals. The team obtained a \$10,000 grant from Vancity towards the end of 2014 to fund the first pilot of this program in Vancouver.

Screenings and Events

After the success of the Screening of "From the Waste. Life without Plastic" the Committee is eager to schedule more screenings and engagement activities.

SPEC SURVEY RESULTS

Via social media, SPEC asked 500 Greater Vancouver Area residents a list of questions about their relationships with takeout containers.



**DID VANCOUVERITES
BRING THEIR OWN
TAKEOUT CONTAINERS?**



**COULD NAME A RESTAURANT WITH
ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE
TAKE-OUT PACKAGING**

**SUPPORT RESTAURANTS WITH
SUSTAINABLE TAKEOUT
PACKAGING OVER THOSE THAT DON'T**

HOW MUCH WOULD THEY PAY?



Roughly the price difference between a Styrofoam container and a compostable alternative

Support for this project does not necessarily imply endorsement of the findings or content of this report.

Vancity

GREEN 2 GO

Society of Environmental Consultants

SPEC LAND & WATER PROJECTS 2014



In 2014 the committee participated in three beach clean ups in Kitsilano and Jericho Beaches in Vancouver. The purpose of these events was to raise awareness about pollution in the oceans, especially from plastic materials.



The beach clean ups were part of Earth Month (April), World Oceans Day (June) and International Beach Cleanup Day (September). Beaches in Vancouver are at first glance quite clean but it is actually quite amazing what volunteers and community members come up with after a few hours of cleaning up. Cigarette butts and plastic materials are very common, but we've even found an old rusty grill and a shoe.

SPEC's beach clean ups are proving to be an effective way to have SPEC volunteers from different committees share some time together. It is also a great way to increase our contact with the community while enjoying a day at the beach. We are always looking for volunteers, contact us if you are interested in joining the crew.



SPEC EVENTS AND OUTREACH

SPEC's staff and volunteers are permanently involved in communicating our message to the community and listening to the community's concerns. This year we managed to be present at a number of events while continuing to carry out workshops for our programs in food, waste, energy and land and water. These are some of the events and workshops we either organized or took part in:

EVENTS	MONTH
SPEC Volunteer Appreciation Potluck	March
Kits Beach Cleanup for Earth Day	April
Green Month at Science World – Vancity Member Day	May
Kits Beach Cleanup for World Oceans Day	June
Car Free Day on Main Street	June
Westside Community Food Market	July to September
Volunteer Appreciation Event – paddle boarding and kayaking at Kits Beach	August
Trout Lake Farmers Market – Tomato Fest	August
Jericho Beach Cleanup for International Beach Cleanup Day	September
Apple Fest at the UBC Botanical Garden	October
Screening of <i>From the Waste Up: Life Without Plastic</i>	November

WORKSHOPS AND TOURS	AMOUNT
Go Solar Tours	4 tours in July, August, September
Urban Farmer Field School classes	13 classes between March and October
School Gardens Program classes at 9 schools	over 50 classes during the school year

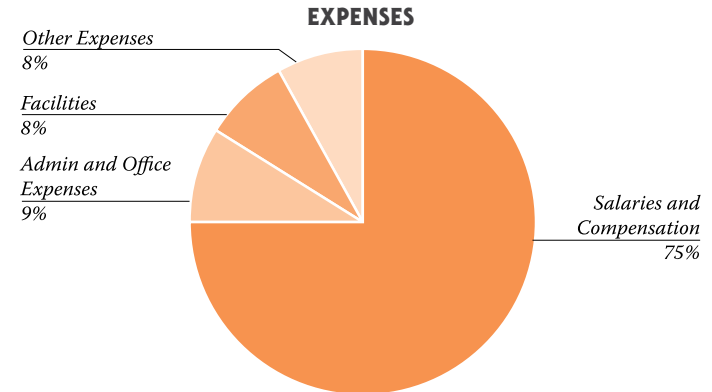
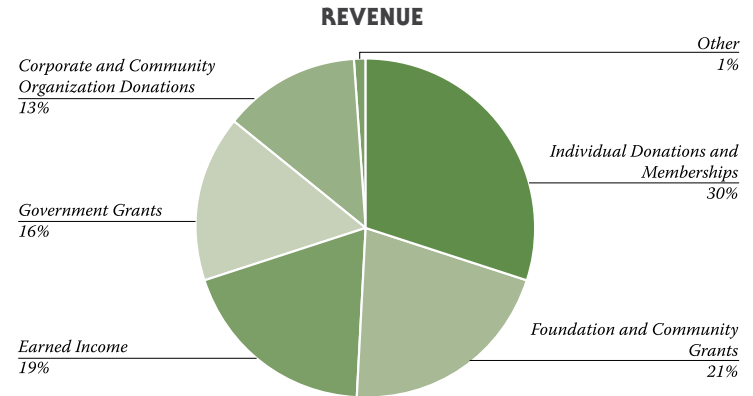
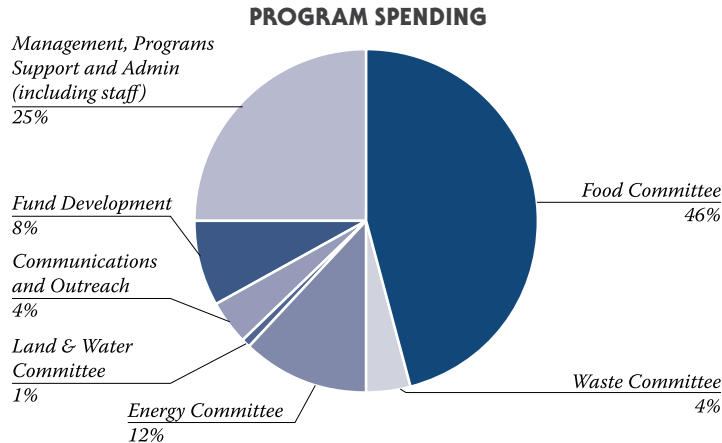
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

» FISCAL YEAR 2014

SPEC continues its effort to: 1) generate more revenue for programs, 2) diversify its funding streams, 3) grow the core funding it needs to sustain itself, and 4) reduce it's administrative costs. Improvements have been made in these four areas.

Total revenue for Fiscal Year 2014: \$134,000

Total expenses for Fiscal Year 2014: \$119,000



How to Support SPEC and Sustainable Cities

You've supported SPEC with your time, financially and with your friendship for 45 years. And we hope that you can continue to support SPEC and your community. Individual donations are a key funding component of most non-profit organizations. Research shows not only that organizations like SPEC obtain most of their funding from individual donors, but that this is the most sustainable way to fund non-profit activities, making organizations less vulnerable to the fluctuating availability of government and foundation grants.



TAKE SPEC OUT FOR LUNCH ONCE A MONTH

The most effective way to support our projects is to become a monthly donor. As a monthly donor you will provide an important ongoing support, and of course, are able to stop donating whenever you want. Monthly donations can be as big or small as you like – you decide. For example why not give the equivalent of a monthly lunch at a delicious healthy local restaurant (approx. \$25/month) to SPEC? Visit Canada Helps, a secure, online portal to set up your monthly gift with us or contact us for other options. We can provide a charitable tax receipt.

ANNUAL DONATION

Some people prefer to give once or twice per year. Give in whatever way that works best for you; online, over the phone or sending a cheque in the regular mail. All cheques should be made out to “Society Promoting Environmental Conservation” and mailed to 2305 West 7th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V6K 1Y4. Online donation and membership forms are available on our website.

BECOME A MEMBER

At only \$30 per year this is a great start to show your commitment to local sustainability and environmental protection in your city. You can also enjoy discounts for events and at local businesses.

LEAVE A LEGACY

Do you want to keep giving even after you are gone? Honor SPEC's work in your will. Past SPEC supporters have made significant contributions to SPEC this way, continuing to support their community.



NEW WAYS TO DONATE



BECOME A MATCHING DONOR

This model has recently been very successful for SPEC and its programs. Individual donors are more motivated to give when they see that their donation will be matched by someone else in the community. You can commit to donate up to a certain amount in our Annual Fall Donation drive to match what we raise from other individual donors. Contact us if you would like to learn more about this option.

DONATE SECURITIES/SHARES

Donating publicly listed securities might prove to be a better option for the donor than donating cash. This is related to the exemption on capital gains tax when donating securities to a charity. You can donate the securities to SPEC and SPEC will issue a tax receipt for the fair market value of the assets the day the assets were received and sold. Contact us for more information on this alternative.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Hands on urban food gardening, zero waste crew, beach clean-ups, teaching, researching issues, outreach, fundraising, helping with sustainability tours, communications, you name it! We have opportunities that might interest you and benefit your community.

ATTEND

Come to our workshops and participate in our activities, learn about sustainability, share your own knowledge and experience and meet new people.



If you need help with any of this or have questions please give us a call at **604-736-7732** or email us at admin@spec.bc.ca.

Note: You automatically become an honorary member when you give more than \$30/year and you get a charitable tax receipt and access to discounts with our sustainably minded partner businesses.



spec.bc.ca

CONTACT SPEC

Whether you have a question or a suggestion, we like to hear from our community. You can always reach us at the SPEC office:

Email: **admin@spec.bc.ca**

Phone: **604-736-7732**

Snail Mail:

SPEC

2305 West 7th Avenue

Vancouver, BC V6K 1Y4

This report was prepared by Oliver Lane and Tara Moreau with contributions from SPEC's committees and volunteers. Graphics and design by Lisa Rilkoﬀ.