



# Society Promoting Environmental Conservation

**Annual Report 2004  
with 2005 updates**

**SPEC's** programme developed its focus on urban sustainability in 2004, with a number of projects of direct relevance to lower mainland BC. We continued, at the same time, to keep an eye on the big picture issues, such as air pollution and our Kyoto commitments, by joining in the BC Utilities Commission hearings into Duke Point Power and continuing our public awareness work around SEII. Following are some of the highlights.

## ***Energy***

- Intervened in Sumas Energy II, supporting a decision by the National Energy Board disallowing a proposed gas-fired plant, which would have pumped close to 3 tonnes of air pollution into the Fraser Valley airshed every day (hearing pending)
- Appeared successfully before the BC Utilities Commission to oppose plans to build a gas-fired power plant at Nanaimo (see [www.spec.bc.ca](http://www.spec.bc.ca) for details of our victory against Duke Point Power and the BCUC)
- Participated in the City of Vancouver's Cool Vancouver Task Force, helping the City design its greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategy
- Successfully upgraded SPEC's solar energy capacity with a new demonstration project that is 'tied in' to the BC Hydro power grid. SPEC's solar cells generate power to sell to Hydro during its peak demand periods, early morning and the supper hour, when our building's energy demands are at their lowest
- Continued SPEC's 30+-year battle against oil and gas exploration on the West Coast, as a member of the Oil Free Coast Alliance
- Opposed the Georgia Strait Crossing gas pipeline proposal

## ***Climate Change***

- Critically reviewed BC's climate change plan, entitled, "Weather, Climate and the Future"
- Created an extensive new web resource for climate change, which was launched in February, 2005 to coincide with the coming into force of the Kyoto convention. See: <http://www.spec.bc.ca/web/Introduction.htm>

## ***Urban Sustainability***

- Obtained first round of funding to transform the SPEC Building into the ***Vancouver Sustainability Demonstration Centre***
- Successfully opposed the construction of 'big box' stores within Vancouver, working with Building Better Neighbourhoods
- Worked to protect the Agricultural Land Reserve in sensitive areas such as Barnston Island, and throughout the Fraser Valley
- Advocated for a riverfront park for Marpole on the Eburne lands
- Launched "All Aboard the Arbutus Corridor", a design contest. The contest followed on a decision by the B.C. Court of Appeal upholding the City's right to designate the Corridor for transportation uses. Owner CP Rail wants to build condos and commercial buildings along the Corridor, and is taking the case to the Supreme Court of Canada this fall. <http://www.spec.bc.ca/ArbutusCorridor/>
- Made submissions to the BC Environmental Assessment Office on the Ashcroft Landfill project.
- Joined the Livable Region Coalition to advocate for a suite of cost-effective transportation alternatives to the expansion of Highway 1, including public transit upgrades and traffic management schemes
- Worked on sustainability models and standards for SE False Creek development

## ***Pesticides***

- Launched a new web resources and programme, titled "Real Environmental Alternatives to Pesticides" (REAP)
- Developed a volunteer outreach team to make public presentations to both school children and community groups
- Worked with councils of local governments to assist in raising public awareness of the need for pesticide restriction and to help develop bylaws
- Conducted polling indicating that 81.1% of Vancouver residents favour the restriction of cosmetic use of pesticides, and worked with the City to encourage council to adopt a bylaw (Vancouver's bylaw will be in place by January, 2006)

## ***Transportation***

- Won a decade-long battle with the City of Vancouver to dedicate two lanes of the Burrard Bridge to cyclists, ending the dangerous pedestrian/cyclist interface on the Bridge's narrow sidewalks
- Formed the Livable Region Coalition, composed of organizations and individuals supporting the GVRD's Livable Region Strategic Plan, and concerned with highway development plans recently announced by the Province, to conduct public outreach and education about alternatives to highway development
- Made submissions to ensure proper environmental assessment of RAV