



SWCS BC CHAPTER

February 2005

President's Address

By Ione Smith, SWCS-BC President

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to all SWCS-BC members. I am a relatively new resident of B.C. (since 2002), but have been involved with SWCS since 2000. I first became involved with SWCS-Ontario as the Chapter Secretary while living in Guelph. When I moved to Vancouver I immediately looked up the SWCS-BC Chapter and became involved as Student Representative. I was delighted when Past-President Peter Friz approached me to become the next President in 2003. Due to the fact that I've been involved with another Chapter of SWCS I hope to bring a bit of a unique perspective to this position and hopefully some fresh ideas to reinvigorate the executive and membership during my term over the next two years.

I would like to see SWCS-BC achieve the following

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SWCS-BC Explores Gas Utilization at the Vancouver Landfill

By Julia Brydon

SWCS-BC President -Elect

This past November, SWCS-BC hosted a field tour of the Vancouver Landfill in Delta, near Burns Bog. Over 25 people attended the event, which included a tour of the facilities and an explanation of site management. Our knowledgeable and enthusiastic tour guide from the City of Vancouver, Doreann Hastie, also introduced us to an exciting project, the Vancouver LFG Utilization Project. This project uses landfill gas (LFG) to provide energy to the landfill's administration building and, more recently, to generate electricity for sale to BC Hydro.

The Vancouver Landfill site is owned and operated by the City of Vancouver and serves a population of over 900,000. It has been in operation since 1966 and is expected to be used until 2043.

Since 1991, the City has implemented LFG collection and flaring at the site, originally to control odours. LFG is produced by the biological decomposition of waste and is composed primarily of carbon dioxide and methane, although trace constituents such as volatile organic compounds are often present as well. LFG therefore presents concerns for odours, air quality, explosion hazards and acts as a greenhouse gas when released untreated. However, when LFG is collected, the methane component contains energy that can be used to generate electricity, heat buildings or run vehicles.

In 2002, the City decided to expand the LFG collection system to take further advantage of the resource recovery opportunity. Maxim Power was selected to build, own and operate the system,

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three goals over the next 2 years:

- Form strong relationships and collaborative efforts with other like-minded organizations such as the Pacific Regional Society of Soil Scientists (PRSSS), the B.C. Institute of Agrologists, the Abbotsford Soil Conservation Association, and Smart Growth B.C.;
- Increase the number of members, especially young members, through an enhancement of the visibility of the organization at Universities, Colleges, and professional events across the Province;
- Create a Conservation Award to recognize outstanding conservation leaders in B.C.

As a start, SWCS-BC is teaming up with PRSSS this spring to host a workshop on contemporary soil science issues (see sidebar) as well as continuing our work with the Agricultural Land Reserve Protection and Enhancement Strategy Committee (see ALR update). Furthermore, we are planning a fundraising event in May that will hopefully increase student's awareness about SWCS-BC and attract some new members.

SWCS-BC, in collaboration with PRSSS, is in the process of looking into the feasibility of creating an award to recognize conservation efforts by SWCS-BC and PRSSS members both in and out of the classroom. We will keep you posted!

I look forward to meeting as many SWCS-BC members as possible over the next two years, either face to face or over the Internet. I am open to ideas and suggestions as to how you feel SWCS-BC can best leave its mark in B.C.

I hope to see you out at the Spring Workshop! ☺

Mark Your Calendars! 2005 Spring Workshop (Joint with PRSSS)

"Fields of Convergence: the Diversity of Contemporary Soil Science."

The workshop will be held from 8:30am to 3:30pm on Saturday March 19, 2005, in room 1221, Forest Sciences Centre, University of British Columbia, Vancouver. Coffee and light lunch will be served.

The agenda includes:

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Ann Naeth, President of the Canadian Society of Soil Science and Associate Dean, Department of Food and Nutritional Sciences, University of Alberta – Soil Science: Some New Directions and it's Role in Reclamation and Disturbance Ecology

Theresa Duynstee, GVRD – The Nutrifor Program and Biosolids Recycling at the GVRD

David Gaumont-Guay, UBC PhD Candidate – The role of soil respiration processes in the carbon balance of boreal forest ecosystems

Bill Chapman, BC Ministry of Forests – Progress in the Soil's Effectiveness Re-evaluation

Kim Sutherland, BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries – GIS mapping of agricultural land in Langley

The day will also include...

A Soil Conservation Act for British Columbia: An open discussion towards the development of a comprehensive provincial policy.

A tour of the Belowground Ecology Group in the Department of Forestry, UBC.

Registration Fees:

Students (members): \$20

Students (non-members): \$25

Members: \$35

Non-members: \$45

Please RSVP to Lesley Dampier at ldampier@sylvis.com or 604-224-8075 by March 10th

Vancouver Landfill *continued from page 1*

which has been generating electricity from LFG and selling it to BC Hydro. The energy requirements for approximately 4000 homes are provided by the LFG system each year. Maxim Power also recovers excess heat from the engines for use in nearby vegetable greenhouses. The agreement will last for at least 20 years under BC Hydro's Green Energy Projects program.

In 2003, the LFG project won the FCM-CH2M Hill Sustainable Communities Award. The project continues to grow, serving as a successful example of public-private partnerships and effective renewable resource management. The field tour was informative and fun, thanks to the welcoming hosts, including the hawks who are on patrol! To find out more, visit <http://vancouver.ca/engsvcs/solidwaste/landfill/env.htm>

Sources:

Environment Canada. (2004). Vancouver Landfill Gas to Energy Project. Pers. Comm. November 20, 2004. Doreann Hastie. ☐

SWCS 2005 Annual Conference Rochester, New York

Theme: Environmental Management
Date: July 30 - August 4, 2005

Key Topics:

Managing Landscapes for Environmental Quality

Assessing and Communicating the Effectiveness of Conservation and Environmental Programs

The Growing Debate Around Water Use

Consumer Demand and Policy Effects on Agricultural Resources

Further information is available at:

http://www.swcs.org/en/conferences/2005_annual_conference/

Update on SWCS-BC Involvement in ALR

By Ione Smith, SWCS-BC President

SWCS-BC executive members continue to be involved in bringing ALR issues to the forefront in B.C. We are a member of the ALR Protection and Enhancement Strategy Committee (ALR-PESC), which strives to increase public awareness of the scarcity and importance of agricultural lands in BC and aims to reduce the number of agricultural land exclusion proposals being sent by communities to the Agricultural Land Commission.

Recent SWCS-BC ALR activities include:

- producing an information brochure (available on our website)
- developing the SWCS-BC Position Statement on the ALR (available on our website)
- attending and speaking out at a public meeting held in November 2004 by the Land Commission on input regarding a proposal by the City of Abbotsford to exclude over 900 acres of agricultural land for industrial development,
- writing a letter to the Land Commission outlining SWCS-BC's concerns regarding the Abbotsford exclusion proposal
- attending monthly ALR-PESC meetings
- beginning groundwork for the proposal of a comprehensive Soil Conservation Act for B.C.
- lending our support to letters written by ALR-PESC outlining concerns over recent exclusion applications from Barnston Island and the City of Chilliwack.

We will continue to keep you informed of the involvement of SWCS-BC in ALR issues. For more information or to become involved, contact Ione Smith. ☐

Meet Your Executive!

Learn more about your 2004-2005 Executive Members...

President

Ione Smith graduated in Environmental Sciences from the University of Guelph and worked at the Soil and Nutrient Laboratory before moving to Vancouver in 2002. She recently completed a MSc degree in Resource Management and Environmental Studies at UBC. Her thesis examined the impacts of agricultural intensification on water quality in the Abbotsford, B.C., region. She is currently working as the Assistant Coordinator for the Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Research Network (C-CIARN BC). She has been involved with SWCS since 2000, first in Ontario and then as student representative for the BC Chapter. She became the president of SWCS-BC in November 2004. In her spare time she likes to volunteer for environmental NGOs (surprise surprise) and get her hands dirty in the garden.

Email: ione@interchange.ubc.ca

Treasurer

David Clements is a weed scientist who works as an associate professor at Trinity Western University in Biology and Environmental Studies. He has been a member of the Soil and Water Conservation Society in the BC Chapter since 1995 and has been on the BC executive for most of that time. He is also on the awards committee for SWCS as the Canadian representative, which he finds is a great way to be inspired by what people are doing to for soil and water conservation across North America.

Email: clements@twu.ca

Past-President and Acting Membership Chair

Peter Friz is an engineering geologist with Acres International Limited, an engineering firm specializing in providing professional services for water resources sector, with an emphasis on dams and hydroelectric projects. He has B.Sc. in geology from UBC and a B.Sc. in geography from the University of Calgary, and a Graduate Diploma in Environmental Science from Capilano College. Peter has been an SWCS member since 1996 and was the British Columbia Chapter president from 1999 to 2004. His interests include chasing after his very active three year old son, Owen, and helping raise the newest addition to his family, daughter Miranda, born January 15, 2005.

Email: peter.friz@shaw.ca

Newsletter Editor and President-Elect

Julia Brydon is a research assistant at the Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability at UBC working on projects related to water quality and land use. She completed her M.Sc. at UBC in Resource Management and Environmental Studies in 2004, where she focused on trace metals in urban stormwater and the effectiveness of stormwater ponds in water quality improvement. She has been the newsletter editor for SWCS-BC since 2003 and the President-Elect since 2004. Her hobbies include swimming, cycling and exploring the local mountains on snowshoes.

Email: jbrydon@interchange.ubc.ca

Councillors

George Derksen is in the Pollution Prevention and Assessment Division of Environment Canada. In the past, he has worked as a project biologist on water quality issues related to the pulp & paper sector, mining sector and municipal wastewater sector. More recently he has worked as a Pollution Abatement Coordinator on regional Ecosystem Initiatives and has focused on the agriculture sector. He has been a member of SWCS-BC since 2001 and has served as a councillor on the executive since 2003. His personal interests include hiking, cycling, squash and a bit of photography.

Email: george.derksen@ec.gc.ca

Olga Schwartzkopf is the chair of the Water Caucus of the BC Environmental Network, and represents SWCS-BC on many initiatives. She is an Advisory Board member of Burns Bog Conservation Society and a Member of GVRD Regional Water Advisory Committee. She has been a member of SWCS-BC since 1989.

Email: olgams@shaw.ca

Yona Sipos is currently finishing up her M.Sc. in the Centre for Applied Conservation Research at UBC, focusing on agroforestry systems and sustainability learning. She joined SWCS-BC in 2002 as the newsletter editor and became a councillor in 2004. She is interested in science extension, community outreach, and questioning assumptions.

Email: yona@interchange.ubc.ca

Secretary

Adam Levine is currently finishing his M.Sc. in Resource Management and Environmental Studies (RMES) at UBC. His research interests include energy technologies, management and policy waste mitigation, industrial ecology / integrated systems analysis, economic development and public private partnerships. He is active in the RMES Graduate Student Society and a founding member of the UBC Sustainable Business and Sustainable Energy Groups. He joined SWCS-BC as Secretary in November 2004.

Email: alevine@sdri.ubc.ca

Student Representative

Ting Pan obtained her bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, China, where she was the president of the Environment and Development Student Association. In 2002, she started her master's degree in Resource Management and Environmental Studies at UBC. Her academic interests include sustainable community development and methods to bridge rifts of culture and communication between mainstream society and minority communities. She joined SWCS-BC in November 2004 as the student representative.

Email: tingpan@interchange.ubc.ca ✉

Contact us if you have any questions, concerns, ideas or want to get more involved!

Website Update

<http://www3.telus.net/swcs-bc/intro.html>

The SWCS-BC website is up and running! We have had approximately 600 hits since launching it last fall, so it is obviously a much needed communication tool. It is currently being updated about once a month, or as necessary.

The bulk of the website contains information on upcoming and past SWCS-BC events. Other pertinent information such as meeting minutes, newsletters, the ALR brochure, and SWCS-BC position statements are available for downloading. You can download new membership applications or link directly to the online membership renewal site.

The current slate of officers and their contact information is posted, as is a list of other SWCS websites B.C. environmental websites. Bookmark the site and make sure you check back regularly for updates!

We hope to have volunteer time in the near future to include a history of the chapter, list past-presidents, and provide a comprehensive list of issues that SWCS-BC is currently involved in and has contributed to in the past. Ideas for improvements are most welcome. Please contact Ione Smith (ione@interchange.ubc.ca) with suggestions. ☺

Do you have an issue or event that you would like to write about in an upcoming issue?

Comments or suggestions for the newsletter?

Contact Julia Brydon
(jbrydon@interchange.ubc.ca)

Become a Member!

The SWCS was founded in 1945 with the following mission statement:

"The Soil and Water Conservation Society fosters the science and the art of soil, water and related natural resource management to achieve sustainability. We promote and practice an ethic recognizing the interdependence of people and the environment."

Membership in the SWCS includes:

- ◆ receiving the Journal of Soil and Water Conservation and the Conservogram, the society's on-line newsletter;
- ◆ being networked among the thousands of members across Canada and the US

Membership rates:

Members - \$110 CDN or \$75 US

Student Members - \$25 US

To join the society, you can locate membership forms on the SWCS website at <http://www.swcs.org/> or contact Peter Friz for further information.

Calendar of Events

Smart Growth Workshop: Farmland Forever? Perspectives on the ALR - Smart Growth BC, the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona and the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries present an engaging workshop to encourage a critical understanding of our Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
March 18, 9:30 – 3:30, Comox Valley Curling Club, Courtenay, B.C.; Cost: \$40
Enquiries: 1-800-331-6007 or planning@rdcs.bc.ca

Joint SWCS-BC/PRSSS Spring Workshop “Fields of Convergence: the Diversity of Contemporary Soil Science”

March 19, 8:30 – 3:30, Room 1221, Forest Sciences Center, UBC, Vancouver
<http://www3.telus.net/swcs-bc/intro.html>

Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Conference: Science for the Salish Sea: a sense of place, a sense of change

March 29-31, Seattle Washington
<http://www.engr.washington.edu/epp/psgb/index.html>

BC Water and Waste Association 33rd Annual Conference and Exhibition

April 16-20, Penticton, B.C.
<http://www.bcwwa.org/newsdocs/mailer/BCWWA-AGM-Exhibition-Brochure-v1.4.pdf>

Implications of Climate Change In BC’s Southern Interior Forests

April 26-27, Revelstoke, B.C.
<http://www.cmiae.org/>

SWCS-BC Membership Drive and Fundraiser - A beer garden event to showcase opportunities for new and potential SWCS-BC members

May 6th, 2005, 5:00pm, Vancouver; Cost: \$20 or free with a new membership
Contact Ione Smith for more information or watch the SWCS-BC website for more details!
<http://www3.telus.net/swcs-bc/intro.html>

SWCS Annual Conference - Theme: Environmental Management

July 30 – August 4, Rochester, New York
http://www.swcs.org/en/conferences/2005_annual_conference/

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

- **Margaret Mead** (1901-1978) quoted in John M. Richardson, ed. *Making it Happen*, 1982