



Sustainability  
Solutions  
Group



# Sustainability Assessment



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## Illustrations by Aftab Erfan

An occasional associate member of SSG, Aftab Erfan does visual facilitation, graphic recording and custom drawings - among other things - when she is not working on her PhD in planning at the University of British Columbia. More information and examples of her drawings are available at [www.wholepicturethinking.com](http://www.wholepicturethinking.com)

# Executive Summary

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Sustainability Solutions Group (SSG) is a collective of Canada's leading sustainability professionals. We are an innovative worker's cooperative that collaborates with clients to develop meaningful, creative strategies to integrate ecological, economic and social sustainability in their projects, organisations and communities. We pride ourselves in working closely with our clients to achieve real, on the ground social and ecological change through projects of unusual integrity.

As a team, we demonstrate that the whole is much more than the sum of its parts - we build on each other's experiences, enthusiasm, skills and innovation. SSG's approach is unique because it embodies the following principles:

- Action-focused
- Based on solid theory
- Considers the whole picture
- Participatory in design and implementation
- Fosters social change
- Takes care of the commons

As SSG members, we believe that a transparent, comprehensive, integrated and far-sighted approach to planning and decision making is the best way to achieve our goals. Our sustainability assessments, which are undertaken on an annual basis, allows us to reflect on our ecological, social and economical impacts. It also enables us to share both successes and challenges with the people we work with and the broader community. A few highlights of our 2010 Sustainability Assessment include:

- 1 new worker member joined the SSG team;
- SSG initiated a total record of 7 projects;
- All full-time members benefit from a comprehensive health care package through the Co-operators Insurance Services; and,
- SSG members developed a new website that was launched at the beginning of 2011.



# Methodology

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As SSG members, we are dedicated to continuously improving our own sustainability. Conducting and publishing annual sustainability assessments is a way for us to be transparent about our operations and accountable towards our members, associate members, clients, partners and the public. We also hope it will engage and inspire other organisations to track and report the social, ecological and economic impacts of their operations and focus on the overall happiness of their staff. The annual sustainability assessments inform our annual and five year plans. By helping us analyze our operations and set specific targets that are meant to ultimately improve our overall performance, the assessment report is a resource for internal decision-making.

## About this report

This report covers the period from the 1st of January to the 31st of December 2010. The 2010 report is an abridged version of the assessment. This is because SSG allocates more resources to this process every other year while maintaining annual data collection and reporting. As in 2008, the result for 2010 is a shorter, less intensive version of the assessment, which ultimately allows SSG members to dedicate more time and resources to consulting projects.

## Who's included

During the reporting period the SSG team had 6 worker members: Rebecca Foon, Jeremy Murphy, Yuill Herbert, Lindsay Cole, Geneva Guerin and Melissa Garcia-Lamarca. Melissa and Geneva are both worker members but did not work part-time or full-time in 2010: for this reason they are not included in this assessment. The term worker member in this report therefore refers to Yuill Herbert, Jeremy Murphy, Rebecca Foon and Lindsay Cole. However, Lindsay Cole went on leave in April, which means that SSG had 3 full-time worker members for the majority of 2010.

## Assessment framework and indicators

SSG's assessment framework was slightly modified in 2010. After reviewing all indicators, we decided that financial indicators (27, 28, 29 and 30) would no longer be reported as part of the assessment. This decision was made both out of a desire to streamline the assessment and to focus on indicators considered to be more suited

for the targeted audience. Because this report is an abridged version of the annual assessment, indicators 16 and 17 of "Section three: Toward diversity, equity and justice" were excluded, as well as indicators 7 and 8 of "Section 1: Toward cooperation, collaboration and community. Consequently, we did not need to circulate an associate member survey nor a client and partner survey.

## Data

Quantitative data for this report was obtained by reviewing internal records. Qualitative data was obtained by circulating an online survey to worker members.

## Sources of error

SSG continues to fine-tune its management tracking system, helping to increase efficiency and record keeping accuracy. A key source of error is a lack of consistency in hour tracking by both worker members and associate members.

# Organisational Profile

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## Vision

Our vision is a world of just, sustainable and healthy communities everywhere.

## Mission

Our co-operative of experts in energy, policy and design inspire sustainable buildings, communities and organisations.

## Sustainability

We understand sustainability as a dynamic process rather than a static outcome. Our projects create the means to allow an organisation or community to continuously improve on addressing major societal challenges such as climate change, economic and social inequities, human health, ecosystem decline, and sustainable community development. We work to produce sustainability outcomes of unusual integrity.

## We specialize in working with the following sectors:

- Municipalities
- Health care
- Higher education
- Provincial governments
- Co-operatives
- Development
- Organizations

## Incorporation classification

SSG is federally incorporated as a worker's co-operative.

## Membership:

- Canadian Workers Co-operative Federation (CWCF);
- British Columbia Co-operative Association (BCCA);
- Canada Green Building Council;
- Climate Action Network (Can-net); and,
- Vancity.

## Organisation and decision-making

SSG has a flat, horizontal structure, meaning that all worker members earn the same salary for the hours that they work, and share the responsibility of running the co-op. Consensus based decision-making is used for governance and operations.

## SSG member values:

- We want to make a difference;
- We believe that society needs better ways to do business;
- We want meaningful lives and work;
- We believe in fairness and respect to those present today and to future generations;
- We want to increase the sustainability of communities, to make the world more sustainable and equitable;
- We believe that we have a responsibility to do our very best, and,
- We want to have a positive impact, to address the root causes of societal problems.

**20** Active associate members  
**6,205** Hours worked by all SSG members  
**3,048** Hours worked by SSG associate members  
**33%** of hours worked by associate members

Chart 1 illustrates SSG's members and projects. The figures specific to 2010 are discussed below.

## Members

SSG strives to provide meaningful work to its members. All members of SSG share the same pay rate. The co-op is rooted in a high level of trust among members, helping to create a strong foundation for exploration and creative thinking. One of the on-going goals of the co-op is to cultivate a working environment where members are encouraged to explore their ideas and develop projects they are passionate about as opposed to focusing on profit making. SSG provides its members with flexible hours, therefore not all of its worker member work full time. This facilitates worker members being able to take the time they need to engage in advocacy or other non-work related pursuits.

SSG began 2010 with four full-time worker members. However, an unexpected shift in capacity occurred as one

member went on leave at the beginning of the summer. Full-time equivalents (FTE's) increased from 4.16 in 2009 to 4.82 in 2010.

## Associate members

In 2010, 20 associate members collaborated with SSG, with 11 of them submitting billable hours. SSG associate members conducted 33% of the total 2010 hours worked. The number of associate members we worked with increased from 12 in 2009 to 20 in 2010.

## SSG clients and projects

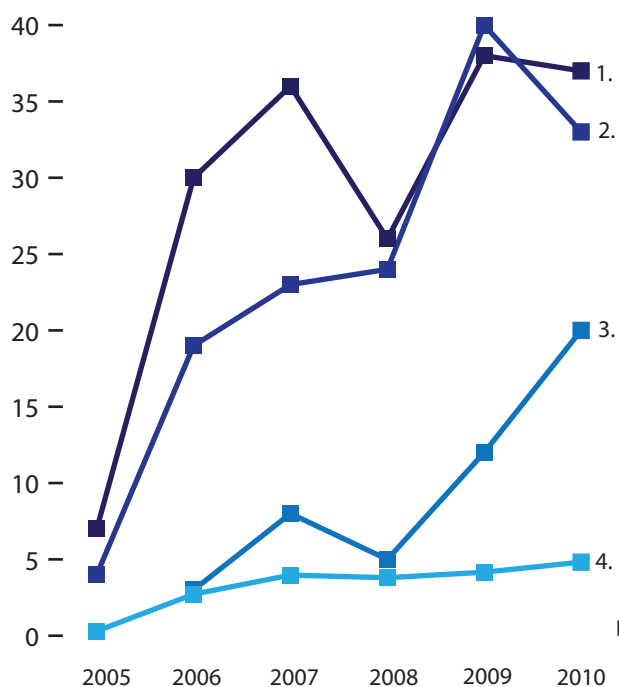
The number of projects (billable contracts) slightly decreased from 38 in 2009 to 37 in 2010. The number of clients also decreased from 40 in 2009 to 33 in 2010.

### Credit Union Central of Nova Scotia, by Yuill Herbert

The Board of the Credit Union Central of Nova Scotia (now Credit Union Atlantic) wanted to establish a carbon baseline including emissions from staff travel, buildings and waste. SSG was hired by a staff committee to take on the task of developing a GHG baseline and a climate change strategy. After scoping out the project, SSG realized that while there were possibilities in corporate operations for GHG emissions reductions, the real opportunity was in the services that Credit Union Central of Nova Scotia (CUCNS) offered to its members, credit unions in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. SSG worked with staff at CUCNS to identify key climate change risks and strategies to mitigate these risks. Additionally, SSG helped CUCNS identify opportunities to engage its members and their customers in mitigating climate change.

**Chart 1: Members and Projects**

1. Total number of projects
2. Number of clients
3. Number of active Associate Members
4. Total full-time equivalents (FTEs)



**Chart 2: Projects and Contracts (initiated or carried through in 2010)**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Client</b>
Agency for Coop Housing	Agency for Coop Housing
BC Government Green Building	Accommodation for Real Estate Services
Official Community Plan	Town of View Royal
Carbon Account Assessment	Canada Food Grains Bank
Carbon Neutral Course	Vancity
CCA Environmental Sustainability Toolkit	Canadian Cooperative Association
Carbon Account Program Development	Canadian Cooperative Association
CMHC Course Offering in Mexico	Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Community Vitality	Canada Research Chair on Sustainable Community Development
Comox Official Community Plan Review	Arlington Group
Cooperators GHG Inventory of Buildings	Cooperators
Capital Regional District, GHG Modelling	Capital Regional District
CURA Research and analysis	Canada Research Chair on Sustainable Community Development
Dharma Centre Sustainability Consulting	Dharma Ocean Foundation
Dorje Denma Ling Sustainability Consulting	Dorje Denma Lina
Edmonton, Integrated Design Process	Canadian Green Building Council
Credit Union of Central Nova Scotia Sustainability Consulting	Credit Union of Central Nova Scotia
Green Building Consulting	GRC Architects
NRCAN Urban Archetypes	Natural Resources Canada
RAIC IDP Course	Royal Architectural Institute of Canada
RDN IDP Course	Regional District of Nanaimo
SOAS, Review of a Multi-Criteria Tool for Sustainability	SAOS.ca
Green Economy Paper	Building Opportunities with Businesses
HRM Bike Lanes Study	Halifax Regional Municipality
Islands Trust GHGProof Workshop	Islands Trust
Fidelity Investment, LEED CI consulting	Fidelity Investment
Village of Slocan Sustainability and Transition Study	Village of Slocan
Sustainable Strategy Evaluation	Soder
Evaluation of the Quartier Verts Pilot Project in Montreal	Urban Ecology Centre
Sustainable Cities Policy Research Project	City of Calgary, Capital Regional District, Canada Research Chair of Sustainable Development
UNSM Survey	Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities
View Royal OCP Review	CitySpaces Consulting
Sustainability Strategy Evaluation	Soder
View Royal OCP Review	Town of View Royal
Sustainable Cities Policy Research Project	Capital Regional District
BC Housing, LEED Consulting	Kinetic Construction
CCO Live Green Toronto	City of Toronto
Le Vistal I and II, LEED Consulting	Proment Development



## Section One: Toward co-operation, collaboration & community

<b>Chart 3: Section One Indicators</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
1. Percent & dollar amount of revenue to community support fund	10%	10%	11%, \$28,335	5%, \$11,100	1.4%, \$3,828	% in n/a, \$1,400
2. Number of projects engaging more than one worker-member (measured by percent in 06-07)	0	74%	69%	15	17	30%
3. Percent of collaborative projects with other individuals/firms	13%	12%	31%	12%	45%	16%
4. Number of projects initiated	-	1	1	0	6	7
5. Number of SSG presentations per full-time equivalent	0.20	2.60	3.00	3.95	1.92	3.53
6. Percent of clients/partners responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference	70%	100%	100%	Not surveyed	Clients: 80% Partners: 100%	100%
7. Percent of worker members responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference	100%	100%	88%	Not surveyed	100%	Not surveyed
8. Average rate of client and partner satisfaction (2007-09, out of 10)	-	82%	7.4	Not surveyed	Clients: 7.05 Partners: 7.95	Not surveyed
9. Percent of clients that rehired or engaged SSG on another project	-	-	22%	23% (6 projects)	18% (7 projects)	18% (6 projects)

Co-operation, collaboration and community are key to SSG's operations. In order to promote positive change, SSG continues to seek opportunities to work with, support or inspire other like-minded individuals and organisations. The figures specific to section one are discussed below.

### 1. Community Support Fund

In 2010 SSG donated \$1,400 to the BC Co-operative Association youth program, the YES leadership camp. This summer camp provides week-long leadership retreats for youth from all over BC. Skills training is offered for 14-17 year-olds in the areas of self-awareness, co-operation,

communication, global awareness, environmental sustainability and leadership. SSG's existing donation strategy is a commitment to reinvest 10% of before tax revenues into grassroots, community based organisations. This target was not met in 2010 but SSG is committed to meet this target in 2011.

### 2. Projects engaging more than 1 worker member

In 2010, 30% of projects involved more than 1 worker member, which is less than the 53% recorded in 2009.

### 3. Collaborative work

Collaboration with other organisations or companies decreased from 46% in 2009 to 16% in 2010.

**18** Projects engaged more than 1 worker member

**6** Projects involved collaboration with other partners

**17** Presentations were given by worker members

**6** Clients rehired or engaged SSG on another project



#### 4. Initiated projects

SSG initiated 7 projects in 2010, a slight increase from the 6 projects that were initiated in 2009.

#### 5. SSG presentations

SSG delivered 17 presentations in 2010 (3.53 per FTE), a significant increase from 8 presentations in 2009. The following is a list of the host organisations and a brief description of 2010 presentation content.

- Ecology Action Centre: Land use model, potential for Halifax.
- Canadian Sustainability Network Conference: GHG model, carbon account, campus sustainability work.
- Capital Regional District: GHG model
- Canadian Sustainability Indicators Network (conference participants): Walking the Talk: Learning from SSG sustainability assessments
- UBC Sauder School of Business: Vancouver Greenest City
- Ecology Action Centre: Land Use and Climate Change
- Canadian Green Building Council: Land Use and Climate Change
- Sustainable Cities, Capital Regional District: Sustainable Cities Strategic Review
- Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education: Algonquin College
- Sauder School of Business : Panel participation
- Vancouver LEED Users Group: Vancouver Convention Centre
- Carbon Neutral Course: Course delivery
- Canadian Cooperative Association: AGM workshop
- BC Co-operative Association: AGM workshop
- Canada Green Building Council: Workshop at their annual conference
- Fraser Valley Regional District: Introduction to SSG's GHGProof greenhouse gas land use planning model to Municipal representatives in the Fraser Valley Regional District.
- Fraser Health: Initial meeting between Fraser Valley Health, The Province of BC and the Heart and Stroke Foundation to explore the creation of a health land use planning model.

#### 6. Making a positive difference

In 2010, 100% of worker members responded that SSG's work is making a positive difference.

#### 9. Percentage of clients in assessment year that have rehired or engaged SSG on another project

The number of clients that rehired SSG in 2010 slightly decreased from 7 clients in 2009 to 6 clients in 2010. However, the percentage of clients that rehired SSG was

18% for 2009 and 2010.

The following Section One indicators were not surveyed in 2010: 7. Percent of clients/allies responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference 8. Average rate of client and partner satisfaction.

#### Discussion and analysis

As part of SSG's overall project management process, SSG plans to refine its evaluation process with clients, partners and contractors. SSG is currently improving an evaluation form that clients will be asked to fill in upon the completion of a contract.

SSG aims to continue to improve overall client satisfaction by integrating better management practices and improving overall communications.

#### Community Vitality, by Yuill Herbert

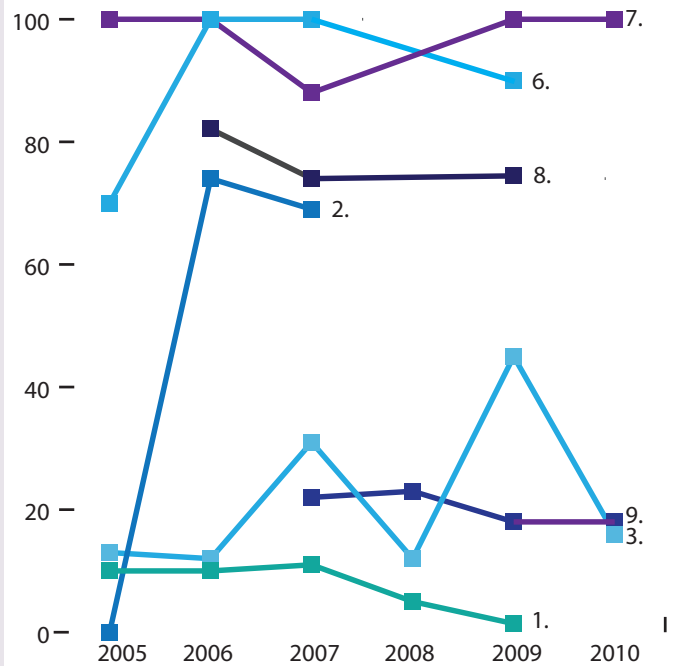
SSG has launched an ambitious research project to develop a mechanism for evaluating community vitality with Professor Ann Dale, the Canada Research Chair in Sustainable Community Development at Royal Roads University. The project involved the completion of twelve background papers which will be published in the journal Local Environment. A multi-criteria analysis tool is currently in development which will allow the evaluation of communities across Canada and users to adjust the evaluation according to their own experience. The Vitality tool will be launched in 2011.

## Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) and the GHGProof model, by Corey Newcomb-Planning Technician with the FVRD

Since early 2010, the Fraser Valley Regional District has been using GHGProof to model current and future greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, set targets and understand where the most effective actions lie in reducing GHG emissions for both itself and its member municipalities. GHGProof began as a partnership between Sustainability Solutions Group and the FVRD with seed funding from the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the FVRD. The intent was to develop a common approach across the regional district to meet the Province of BC's Bill 27 legislation, which requires GHG reduction targets, policies and actions in regional growth strategies and official community plans.

GHGProof was originally developed and piloted in the FVRD communities of Abbotsford and Kent in order to test the tool on a range of community sizes. Once GHGProof was finalized through the piloting process, the FVRD and SSG hosted a workshop to help staff from member municipalities build capacity to use the tool for themselves. FVRD staff have continued to customize GHGProof to suit the unique challenges faced by a region whose communities range from small rural towns to the fifth largest city in BC. GHGProof provides a tool which allows the region to not only understand the assumptions behind the targets, but also adjust them going forward to account for new directions in public policy and technology.

Chart 4: Collaboration, Satisfaction and Community



1. % of revenue to community support fund
2. % of project hours worked engaging more than one worker-member
3. % of collaborative projects with other individuals/firms
6. % of clients/allies responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference
7. % of worker-members responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference
8. Average rate of client and partner satisfaction
9. % of clients that rehired or engaged SSG on another project



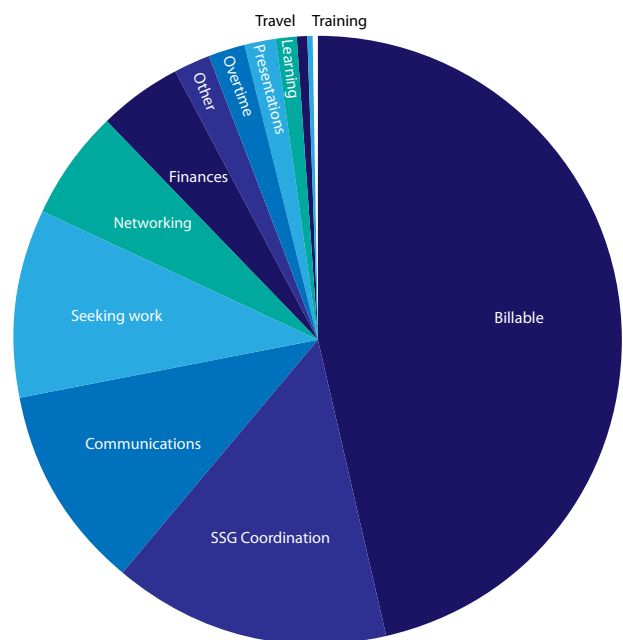
## Section Two: Toward healthy workplace, healthy lives

Providing meaningful and stable employment is key to members of a workers' co-operative. As such, SSG's primary purpose is to not only meet the common needs of its members, but to actively contribute to their happiness and sense of balance in relation to their work. The figures specific to section two are discussed below.

### 10. Percentage of hours to training, learning, advocacy, overtime (defined as time over 40 hours in a week), and volunteering

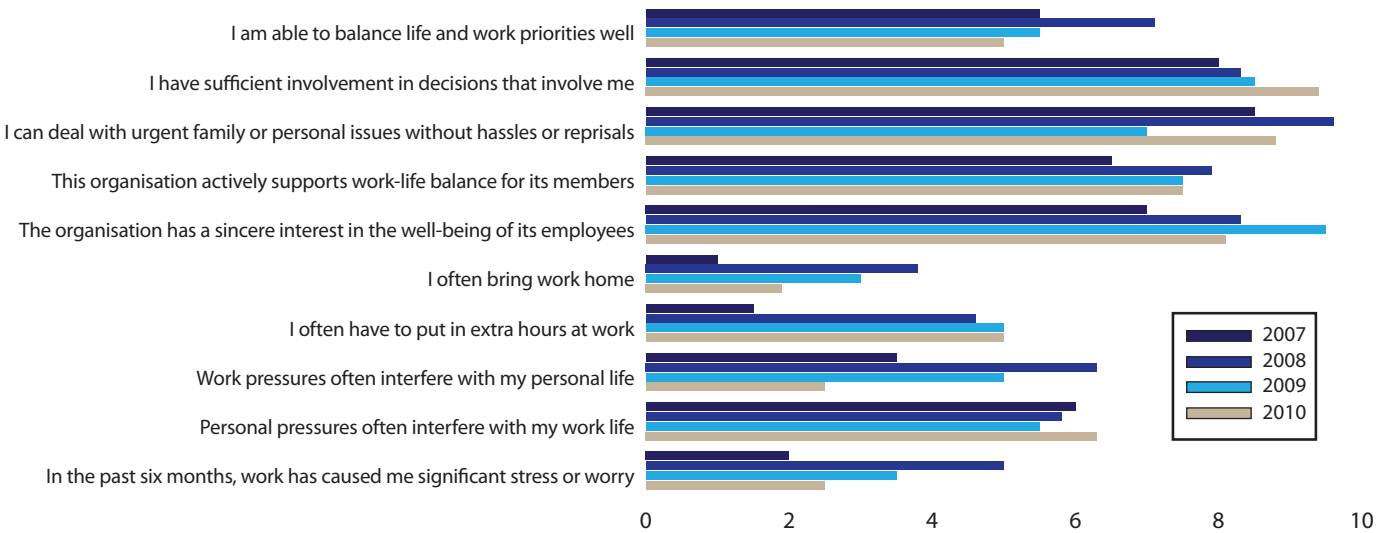
Chart 5 illustrates the distribution of hours worked by SSG worker members in 2010. 47% of hours worked in 2010 were billable hours, a significant increase from 28% in 2009. In 2010, 0.4% of hours was dedicated to training, 1.2% to learning, 0% to advocacy, and 1.3% to volunteering. When compared to 2009 results, we can observe a decrease for training, learning, and volunteering, while both advocacy and volunteering did not change. Overtime decreased from 4% in 2009 to 1.9% in 2010.

Chart 5: Distribution of Hours



**2,989** Non-billable worker member hours  
**24.5** Hours dedicated to training  
**73** Hours dedicated to learning  
**0** Hours dedicated to advocacy  
**118** Hours of overtime work  
**121** Hours dedicated to volunteering

Chart 6: Work-Personal Life Balance



11. Work-personal life balance

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being poor and 10 being perfect, work-personal life balance slightly decreased from 6 in 2009 to 5.7 in 2010. Chart 6 compares the 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 averages of all worker members responses to each question.

Sustainable Cities, by Rebecca Foon

Sustainability Solutions Group completed a sustainable cities strategic review, a joint partnership between SSG and Royal Roads University’s Canada Research Chair. This project was funded by the Capital Regional District and the City of Calgary. The purpose for the review was to identify key sustainability issues and barriers that Canadian municipalities are facing as well as international best practices helping to address these barriers, thereby building a supportive network of people who are working on sustainability in municipalities across Canada.

A series of e-Dialogues were conducted with planners and practitioners from across the country. An advisory team of staff and elected officials from twenty Canadian cities and districts came together to discuss key barriers as well as success stories related to sustainability taking place in Canada. The e-Dialogues were very engaging and served as a foundation to help guide the research to develop a reference guide for Canadian cities and towns, targeting best practices including key policy measures and international sustainability initiatives that are ideally suited for implementation in Canada. SSG is currently continuing to build this national and international network of city officials for future e-Dialogues around sustainable cities.

**Chart 7: Overall Worker Satisfaction**



## 12. Overall worker happiness

On a scale of 1 to 10, the overall worker happiness was rated at 8.2 for the second year in a row. Chart 7 illustrates the 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 averages of all worker members responses to each question.

## 13. Health care benefits

At the beginning of 2010, SOG created a comprehensive health care package through the Co-operators Insurance Services for all SOG full-time members. Four worker members were receiving SOG's health care plan for most of the duration of 2010 (one member went on leave in the summer of 2010 therefore reducing this number to three worker members).

## Discussion and analysis

SOG is continuing to improve the administrative aspects of its internal operations. In 2011, SOG plans to hire an administrator to improve and streamline administrative aspects of its internal operations to help reduce the overall work loads of worker members.

SOG worker members continue to be happy and fulfilled with the work they are doing, although there is a struggle with attaining a healthy work-life balance. SOG members will continue to discuss this theme at the SOG retreats in 2011 and explore strategies and solutions to improve work-life balance for its members.

## Section Three: Toward diversity, equity and justice

Chart 8: Section Three Indicators	2005	2006	2007	2009	2010
14. Ratio of female to male to other active worker members	3:2:0	2:2:0	3:2:0	3:2:0	2:2:0
15. Percent of worker members self-identifying as a minority	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
16. Ratio of female to male to other active associate members	0	1:2:0	2:4:0	5:4:0	Not Surve- yed
17. Percent of active associate members self-identifying as a minority	0%	0%	0%	0%	Not Sur- veyed

Diversity and equality are key principles in a holistic sustainability approach. In SSG's work and in SSG's workplace the representation, diversity and equity of gender and minority groups is an important and ongoing consideration. The data specific to this section are discussed below.

### 14. & 15. Active worker members

In 2010, there were 2 female and 2 male active worker members. No active worker members self-identified as being part of a minority group.

The following Section Three indicators were not surveyed in 2010: 16. Ratio of female to male to other active associate

members. 17. Percent of active associate members self-identifying as a minority.

### Discussion and analysis

Currently no SSG members self-identify as belonging to a minority group. Increasing diversity within the co-op is a desirable and important goal for SSG that will continue to be explored in 2011.



## Section Four: Toward ecological sustainability

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SSG seeks to be aware of and work towards reducing its ecological footprint. The figures specific to section four are discussed below.

### **18. Total square metres of new LEED and green/sustainable building consulting projects**

The total square metres of new Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and other green/sustainable buildings projects initiated in 2010 is 5,471. This is decrease from 2009 (11,100 square metres).

#### **The town of Comox, by Jeremy Murphy**

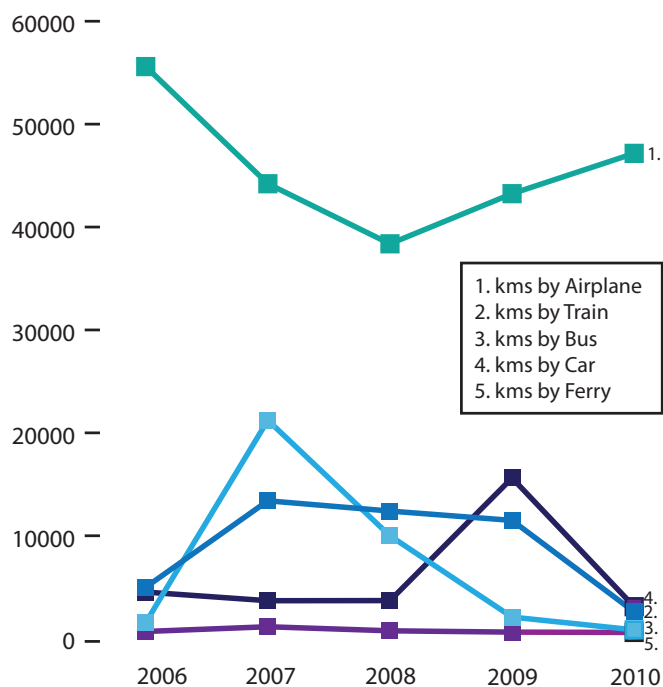
The Town of Comox recently changed its municipal boundaries and has been experiencing a changing demographic profile. A sought-after retirement area, the percentage of seniors has been increasing while school enrolment has declined. Changing service, recreation, commercial and housing needs require the Town to plan in new directions. SSG partnered with Arlington Planning Group to help address these issues as well as broader sustainability issues through the Town's OCP review.

SSG's OCP review roles were many, including providing sustainability background analysis and sustainability planning rationale; eliciting community input for sustainability goals, principles and community vision; developing sustainability indicators; initiating strategies to meet Bill 27 Climate Charter requirements; and performing land use GHG modelling. By removing legislative, regulatory and policy barriers, and implementing programs, policies, infrastructure and incentives Comox will be able to encourage economic, social and environmentally responsible development and lifestyles.

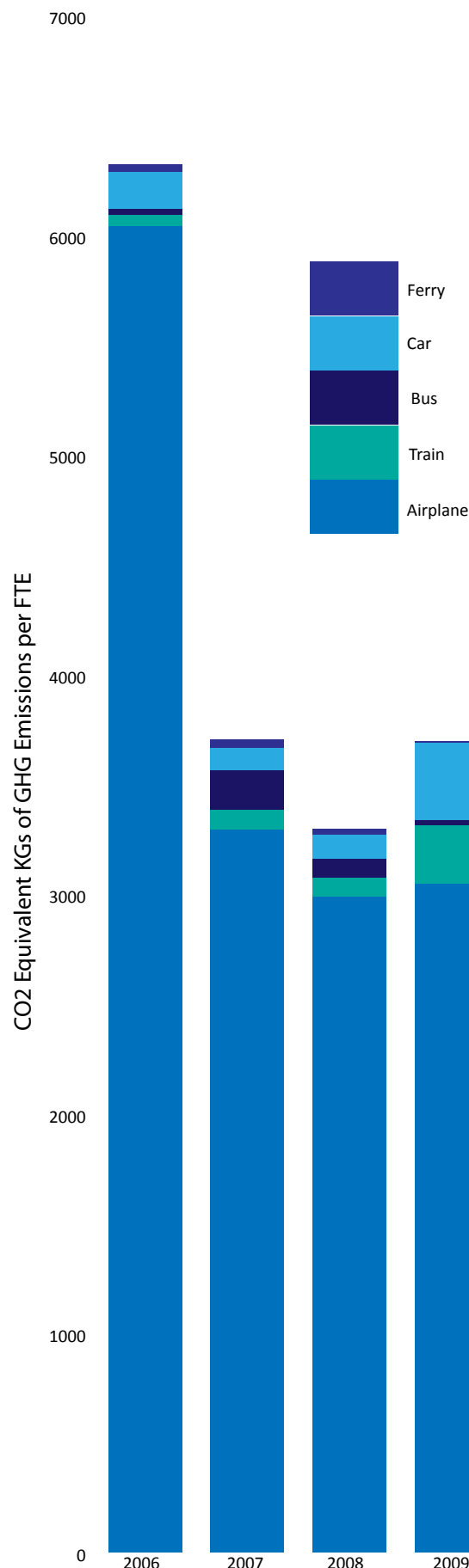
By integrating extensive community consultation with greenhouse gas land use modelling and effective practices from other municipalities, SSG is helping the Town of Comox realize its short and long-term goals through a triple bottom line approach to sustainability. This will allow the Town to maintain its small town feel while fostering a sustainable, resilient future.



**Chart 9: Travel by Distance (kms)**



**Chart 10: Travel GHG Emissions (kgs of CO2 Equivalency)**



#### 19. Total kilometres travelled by mode of transportation

A total of 53,795 km (work-related transportation) were traveled in 2010, a decrease from 73,077 km in 2009. We can also observe a decrease in train travel (from 11,490 km in 2009 to 2,608 km in 2010), an increase in airplane travel (from 43,242 km in 2009 to 47,160 km in 2010), a decrease in car travel (from 15,615 in 2009 to 3,108 in 2010), and a decrease in bus travel (from 2,096 km in 2009 to 855 km in 2010).

#### 20. Greenhouse gas emissions by mode of transportation

A total of 10.4 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents were emitted in 2010, a decrease from 15.1 in 2009. The carbon dioxide equivalents emitted in 2010 per FTE is 2.16 tonnes.

#### 21. Percentage of GHG emissions that have been carbon taxed

SSG has not taxed any carbon emissions in 2010.

### Taxing versus offsetting GHG emissions

The idea of 'self-taxing' emissions came from a considered rejection of the idea of offsetting, which SSG realised was not really the best way of improving its environmental performance. Instead, SSG will 'tax' GHG emissions, thus internalising the costs associated with GHG emissions into the cooperative's decision making, and then using the money generated by the tax on donations that are relevant to climate change, such as adaptation and mitigation initiatives.

## 22. Worker members' Ecological Footprints

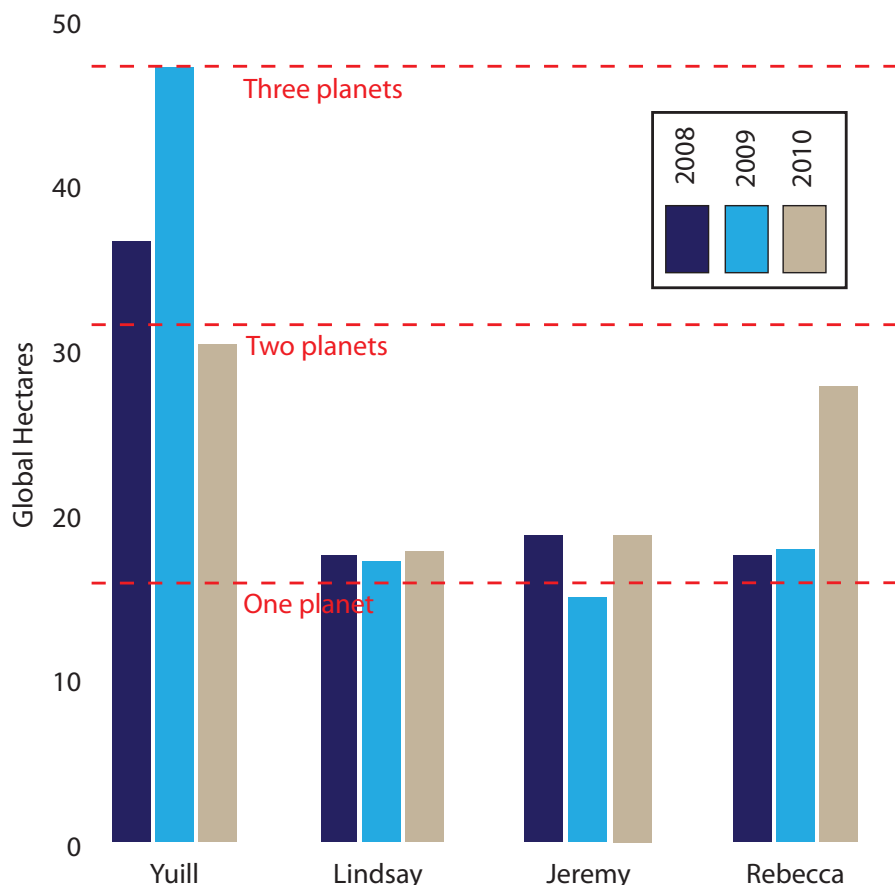
SSG worker members calculate their individual ecological footprint by using an on-line calculator available from Redefining Progress (<http://www.myfootprint.org/>). The calculator estimates the area of land and ocean required to support one's consumption of food, goods, services, housing, and energy as well as assimilate one's wastes. The ecological footprint is expressed in "global hectares" (gha)

which are standardized units that take into account the differences in biological productivity of various ecosystems impacted by one's consumption activities. Chart 11 shows the ecological footprints, in hectares, of worker members for 2008, 2009, and 2010. Overall, the ecological footprint of one member decreased, while that of three other members increased.

### Discussion and analysis

SSG is a growing organisation: its services are becoming more diverse and are gradually balancing out the overall hours dedicated to LEED and green building work. SSG members continue to try to employ less carbon intensive means of transportation as well as teleconferencing technologies to reduce the necessity to travel. This is reflected in the reduction of the total tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents that were emitted in 2010 compared to 2009.

Chart 11: Ecological Footprints (Hectares)



## Conclusion

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In our sixth year of operation, we dedicated our efforts to further developing SSG's marketing and communications strategy by developing a new website, updating the firm profile, as well as circulating brochures describing innovative assessment and management tools elaborated by SSG. We initiated several ground-breaking projects in 2010 and continue to demonstrate leadership in uncharted territory. We have also undertaken a thorough strategic planning process in terms of our service offerings and achieved our target for 100% of active members to be covered by a comprehensive healthcare plan.

Thank you for reading SSG's 2010 sustainability assessment. If you have any questions, comments or feedback to share, please email us at [info@sustainabilitysolutions.ca](mailto:info@sustainabilitysolutions.ca).



## Appendix I: Indicator Data Overview

Section One Indicators	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1. Percent & dollar amount of revenue to community support fund	10%	10%	11%, \$28,335	5%, \$11,100	1.4%, \$3,828	% is N/A, \$1,400
2. Number of projects engaging more than one worker-member (measured by percent in 06-07)	0	74%	69%	15	17 (out of 38)	Not Sur-veyed
3. Percent of collaborative projects with other individuals/firms	13%	12%	31%	12%	45%	16%
4. Number of projects initiated	-	1	1	0	6	Not sur-veyed
5. Number of SSG presentations per full-time equivalent	0.20	2.60	3.00	3.95	1.92	Not sur-veyed
6. Percent of worker members responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference	100%	100%	88%	Not sur-veyed	100%	100%
7. Percent of clients/partners responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference	70%	100%	100%	Not sur-veyed	Clients: 80% Partners: 100%	Not sur-veyed
8. Average rate of client and partner satisfaction (2007-09, out of 10)	-	82%	7.4	Not sur-veyed	Clients: 7.05 Partners: 7.95	Not sur-veyed
9. Percent of clients that rehired or engaged SSG on another project	-	-	22%	23% (6 projects)	18% (7 projects)	6 clients (18%)
Section Two Indicators	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
10. Percentage of hours to: training, learning, advocacy, overtime(over 40 hours per week), volunteering	- - - - -	1.4%; 7.4%; - - -	0.8%; 7.7%; 0.8%; 2.7%; 0%	3.5%; 5.2%; 0.3%; 2.4%; 0.2%	1.28%; 3.37%; 0%; 4.02%; 1.34%	0.4%; 1.2%; 0%; 1.9%; 1.95%
11. Work-personal life balance, on a scale of 1(poor) to 10(excellent)	55%	73.3%	5	6.7	6	5.7
12. Overall worker happiness, on a scale of 1(poor) to 10(excellent)	-	79.2%	6.5	7.9	8.2	8.2
13. Percent of workers with extended health benefits	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Section Three Indicators	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
14. Ratio of female to male to other active worker members	3:2:0	2:2:0	3:2:0	Not sur-veyed	3:2:0	2:2:0
15. Percent of worker members self-identifying as a minority	0%	0%	0%	Not sur-veyed	0%	0%
16. Ratio of female to male to other active associate members	0	1:2:0	2:4:0	Not sur-veyed	5:4:0	Not sur-veyed
17. Percent of active associate members self-identifying as a minority	0%	0%	0%	Not sur-veyed	0%	Not sur-veyed
Section Four Indicators	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
18. Total square metres of new LEED and green/sustainable building consulting projects in 2007	558,810 (total 05-06)		14,010	32,620	11,000	5,471

<i>continued...</i>	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
19. Total kilometres travelled, by mode				(missing Melissa)		
<i>Train</i>		5,001	13,398	12,400	11,490	2,608
<i>Airplane</i>		55,594	44,208	38,369	43,242	47,160
<i>Bus</i>		1,569	21,225	9,992	2,096	855
<i>Car</i>		4,526	3,687	3,699	15,615	3,108
<i>Ferry</i>		698	1,157	763	635	604
<i>TOTAL</i>	14,413	67,389	83,675	66,423	73,077	53,795
20. GHG travel emissions per FTE, in kilograms (kgs) of carbon equivalents (CO <sub>2</sub> e)				(missing Melissa)		
<i>Train</i>		53	91	88	265	46
<i>Airplane</i>		6,038	3,291	2,984	3,045	1,961
<i>Bus</i>		27	178	87	25	8.5
<i>Car</i>		168	105	110	352	139.41
<i>Ferry</i>		36	38	27	6	4.7
<i>TOTAL</i>	9,759	17,196	14,701	12,523	15,362	13,448
<i>TOTAL per FTE</i>	2,927	6,322	3,703	3,296	3,693	2160
21. Percentage of GHG emissions that have been carbon taxed	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
22. Individual worker member ecological footprint in global hectares (between 2007 and 2008, footprint calculators were changed)				Center for Sustainable Economy Calculator	Center for Sustainable Economy Calculator	Center for Sustainable Economy Calculator
<i>Number of hectares per person the earth can support</i>		-	1.8	15.7ha	15.7ha	15.7ha
<i>Melissa</i>		-	4.8	18.8	n/a	n/a
<i>Yuill</i>		-	3.5	36.5	47.1	30.2
<i>Geneva</i>		-	3.8	9.3	15.5	n/a
<i>Lindsay</i>		-	2.7	17.4	17.0	17.62
<i>Jeremy</i>		-	-	18.6	14.8	18.7
<i>Rebecca</i>		-	-	17.4	17.8	27
<b>Organisational Indicators</b>	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1. Total numbers of project	7	30	36	26	38	37
2. Number of clients	3	19	23	24	40	33
3. Number of active associate members	0	3	8	5	12	20
Total full-time equivalents (FTE's)	0.30	2.72	3.97	3.80	4.16	4.82

## Appendix II: Worker Member Profiles

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### **Geneva Guerin**

Geneva has worked in the field of sustainability for a decade. Her skills in the area include program coordination, process facilitation, assessing and reporting, research and communications. She has experience coordinating LEED green building projects, participating in and facilitation of integrated design processes and charettes, formation and coordination of multi-stakeholder groups, development and use of sustainability indicators, project coordination of multiple person teams across large geographic areas, public presentations and trainings on sustainability, and the use of multi-media (video and web) for producing resources and communicating messages. She has varied experience in course and training programme development, related to sustainability, including production of training materials. She is also a Continuing Education instructor in Montreal, where she is based.

### **Jeremy Murphy**

Jeremy is an urban planner and sustainability specialist who continues to generate cutting-edge community solutions. Creative public engagement and facilitation, Integrated Design Process delivery, LEED certification, sustainable community design and innovative policy creation are among Jeremy's greatest skills. His experience with community planning, sustainability expertise, facilitation and sustainable building design allow Jeremy to make useful contributions to any project. Jeremy combines big idea sustainability thinking with on the ground application, ensuring his projects are on target, enjoyable and effective.

### **Lindsay Cole**

Lindsay is a veteran of sustainability work in Canada and beyond. She works with organizations, builders, municipalities and institutions to engrain sustainability frameworks into their projects and organizations. She is an expert at developing sustainability indicators and is an experienced facilitator of Integrated Design Processes. Lindsay developed the Campus Sustainability Assessment Framework currently being used to assess and report on sustainability issues for over 30 Canadian university and college campuses across Canada and the US. Lindsay has played a leading or support role on over 30 LEED projects, giving her expertise in many different project types, climates, and sites.

### **Melissa Garcia Lamarca**

Melissa brings to SSG her extensive experience working in different facets of sustainability in Canada and internationally with governments, universities, non-governmental and community organizations. Her greatest skills include creating and coordinating sustainability assessments, plans, programmes and projects; facilitating participatory, multi-stakeholder processes and conducting cross-disciplinary research. Melissa effectively combines a strong and critical understanding of sustainability with on-the-ground application, and is passionate about helping urban communities and organizations embrace and embody positive change.

### **Rebecca Foon**

Rebecca is a versatile urban planner who is dedicated to integrating a holistic understanding of sustainability in growing healthy communities. She is an accomplished organizer and facilitator, sustainability management systems creator, sustainability assessment leader, and green building consultant. Her projects are diverse: from evaluating neighbourhood quality-of-life monitoring systems to consulting for the Discovery Channel urban environment program Wa\$ted to performing municipal sustainability assessments. Rebecca's creative thinking and whole systems approach ensure genuine sustainability outcomes.

### **Yuill Herbert**

Yuill has pioneered diverse climate change, green building, lifecycle costing, greenhouse gas assessment, energy and water assessment, renewable energy, appropriate transportation, and agricultural policy projects, to name a few. Yuill helped introduce the LEED for Homes rating system in Canada and co-developed the Integrated Design Process course used throughout Canada and the US. His high calibre research publications and extensive policy contributions to all levels of government put him at the forefront of sustainability innovation. Yuill's determination to achieve real community sustainability plus his comprehensive knowledge of the subject matter ensure project innovation, integrity and success.

## Appendix III: Associate Member Profiles

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### **Aaron Foster**

Aaron is a LEED accredited professional with varied experience designing and drafting architectural projects, developing campus master plans, coordinating a wide range of professional marketing proposals and developing graphics for community and client meetings. He has conducted the LEED documentation for numerous projects. Aaron embraces a holistic view of sustainability, which he applies to all of his projects and explores with his clients.

### **Alex Fletcher**

Alex's academic training in Human Ecology is based in interdisciplinary studies, which influences his approach to addressing sustainability issues. Since graduating, Alex has divided his time between small scale organic vegetable farming and sustainability consulting. Alex has worked with SSG on the Algonquin College Sustainability Strategy project: delivering World Cafes, developing a sustainability assessment framework, and collecting data for the assessment report. Previously, Alex worked with Lester B. Pearson College to obtain funding and develop their broad based sustainability initiative, The Oikos Project, which involved developing a campus sustainability policy, establishing a greenhouse on campus to supply fresh vegetables to their cafeteria, and advancing other initiatives directed at energy and water conservation. Alex wants to combine his farming interest and sustainability work to address farmland access and affordability, food security, and community health.

### **André Fry**

André Fry (MEng.) has designed energy efficient, LEED accredited and renewable energy building mechanical and electrical systems for commercial, institutional and industrial projects. With a specialization in Renewable Energy, he has a detailed understanding of passive solar, solar air, solar water and geexchange heating technology in most designs. André has audited and analyzed retrofit and new building designs for energy efficiency under the Hydro Quebec building energy efficiency program and Natural Resources Canada ecoenergy program for project LEED accreditation and financial incentive applications. He is proficient in simulating building systems using EE4, PEP, Retscreen and eQuest, software tools. André recently

designed a winning mechanical system for a Net Zero home in Hudson, Quebec under the Canadian Mortgage and Home Corporation's EQUilibrium design competition using an innovative solar air heating system.

### **Ann Dale**

Ann is a professor with the School of Environment and Sustainability, Faculty of Social and Applied Sciences at Royal Roads University and holds a Canada Research Chair in Sustainable Community Development ([www.crcresearch.org](http://www.crcresearch.org)). She chairs the Canadian Consortium for Sustainable Development Research (CCSDR), a consortium of all the heads of research institutes across Canada, and is active in the Canadian environmental movement. Dr. Dale chairs an organisation she created, the National Environmental Treasure (the NET) and is the Executive Coordinator, Research and Public Policy for the Canadian Biodiversity Institute. From 1998-2000, she led an energy efficiency program on behalf of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges. Previously, she was an Executive with the Federal Government, and was one of the two public servants behind the creation of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE). Dr. Dale is a Trudeau Fellow ([www.trudeaufoundation.ca](http://www.trudeaufoundation.ca)), as well as a Fellow of the World Academy of Art and Sciences. She is also a Board member of the World Fisheries Trust, and the Advisory Committee to the Montreal Institute for the Environment. Dr. Dale holds degrees in psychology and public administration from Carleton University, and a doctorate in Natural Resources Sciences, McGill University. Current research areas include governance, social capital and sustainable community development, biodiversity policy, and deliberative electronic dialogues ([www.e-dialogues.ca](http://www.e-dialogues.ca)). She is a recipient of the 2001 Policy Research Initiative Award for Outstanding Contribution to Public Policy for her book, *At the edge: sustainable development in the 21st century*.

### **Christopher Sweetnam-Holmes**

Christopher Sweetnam-Holmes, B. Int'l Bus, B.E.D.S (Arch), LEED AP is an environmentalist, designer, real estate developer and businessman. Passionate about the environment, Christopher believes that social and environmental entrepreneurship can be a powerful



way to affect change. This belief has been translated in the development of his EcoCondo and EcoCité housing concepts. Vice-Chair of the board of directors of the Canadian Green Building Council, Chris also sits on the board of BioRegional North America, the organization responsible for OnePlanet Communities in North America and he is vice chair of the Commission on urban design and sustainable development for the City of Montreal's Plateau Borough.

Winner of the McGill University Management Award, (2005) and the Berkeley Prize for Architecture, from the University of California at Berkeley (2001), Christopher has been featured in numerous media for his innovative housing ideas. Christopher has degrees in international business and architecture and is a LEED accredited professional. He also has the credentials as a registered general contractor in Quebec, for low-rise and mid-rise residential construction. He is an expert in high performance green buildings; his experience includes residential and commercial buildings. He is very knowledgeable about renewable energy systems, passive solar design and net zero energy buildings. He recently directed the development and design of Abondance Montreal: Le Soleil, North America's first 100% Solar condominium project. The project is part of the Equilibrium initiative from CMHC and has won many prestigious prizes from organizations including the Net Zero Energy Home Coalition and the Grands Prix du génie-conseil québécois.

#### **Dale Hildebrand**

Dale is a strategic planner and sustainability specialist with extensive experience providing leadership and innovation to nonprofit organisations. Within the field of ecological sustainability, Dale's strengths include strategic planning and evaluation, organisational change, policy development/analysis and climate change education. Dale specializes in designing and directing programs that result in organisational and social change at the local, national and international level in the areas of ecology, human rights and sustainable energy.

#### **Dru Oja Jay**

Dru Oja Jay (BA) has a background in web development, media, journalism and graphic design. He has over ten years of experience in web design and web site development, and is the co-founder of Fair Trade Media, a design consultancy and web hosting provider. He has

four years of experience as a journalist and editor, and is the founder and editor of the Dominion, a grassroots Canadian newspaper. Dru has developed dozens of web sites for a variety of clients, from labour unions to businesses to artists.

#### **Erica Crawford Boettcher**

Erica is a community and regional planner specializing in environment, resilience, and climate change adaptation strategies. Her extensive research into local and regional climate change effects and institutional processes gives her unique insight into appropriate land use and policy direction decision making. Erica has contributed to several research articles and delivered presentations on the subject. Her experience with First Nations planning and public consultation and facilitation round out her considerable skill set.

#### **Erik Bonnett**

Erik Bonnett's strength is facilitating integrated design processes to generate whole systems solutions. Previously, at Rocky Mountain Institute he managed design integration, the LEED process, and daylighting performance on projects ranging from small buildings to city masterplans. Erik has contributed to two videos on high performance building and integrated design, and has published research focusing on market solutions to sustainability problems, including economic optimization for net zero energy buildings and barriers pertaining to multi tenant buildings. Erik has extensive academic and professional experience with cooperatives, including onsite research into Danish cohousing and service as a board member for low-income cooperative housing in Colorado. Erik is currently a graduate student of architecture and building science teaching at the University of Oregon.

#### **Jacques Morin**

Jacques Morin (B.Ed) is a director of the Hecate Energy Institute and works primarily in the green building, energy conservation, renewable energy and sustainability community projects. He has lived in the Queen Charlotte Islands for the past fifteen years. Jacques has been involved in many local community processes related to land, energy and community development. His participation in the Haida Gwaii Land Use Plan and Community Electricity Plan brings a strong history and capacity to the implementation of community development. Jacques has promoted

training and education programs to schools, residents, local and national organisations on green building designs; renewable energy and energy conservation measures; including organisations such as Gwaii Haanas National Park and Reserve; Laskeek Bay Conservation Society, the Village of Queen Charlotte and Masset.

#### **Jens Münch**

Jens has a background in journalism and photography but transferred to the field of IT in 2007. Since then he has worked as a consultant on online communications, internal and external, to a number of organisations. One of them was SSG where he did a large project to restructure the platform in 2008. He has also worked with SSG on smaller research assignments where his knowledge of Germany and the Nordic countries proved useful in gaining access to information. Since 2008 he works for Google but continues to partner with SSG when his services are needed. His specialities are social media, online communications & advertising, website analysis and IT strategy.

#### **James R. Hamilton**

Jim (BA, MA) is a practiced policy and financial analyst with an extensive background in public policy development as well as the financing of public initiatives. With over fifteen years experience as a senior executive within the Treasury Board of Canada and an equal time as a consultant, Mr. Hamilton has developed business cases, investment and capital plans and executive briefings for a wide range of public initiatives including infrastructural investments, real property developments, energy-savings investments as well as the establishment of social/health programs such as tobacco and drug control. As a result of Treasury Board experience, Mr. Hamilton's skills extend to project mediation as well as the development and establishment of internal project-controls to assure project completion.

#### **Jesse Dill**

Jesse is a land use planner with experience in all facets of planning research and analysis. He is a skilled scenario modeler, mapping technician and policy analyst. Jesse is keenly interested in projects that illustrate the impacts of land use decisions on energy generation, transportation behavior, food security, and community health. He has a strong grasp of technical and visualization tools to convey land use trends in a clear and understandable fashion. Jesse combines his technical expertise with a background

in both reviewing and drafting policies to promote connected and complete communities.

#### **Katherine Thomas**

Katherine has enjoyed working as a consultant on a wide range of projects over the past 10 years. She has provided analytical, administrative and research services and has written reports/business case documentation for clients such as Natural Resources Canada, Canada School of the Public Service and PWGSC. She provided facilitation services and conducted research to support a project at Royal Roads University on sustainable infrastructure. She assisted the City of Ottawa with two sustainability initiatives – a conference on Planning for our Future, and a series of public consultation hearings on a Green Space Policy. Prior to consulting, Katherine worked as a manager at Bell Canada where she was involved in accounting and regulatory issues as well as consumer marketing promotion.

#### **Kerri Klein**

Kerri Klein (BSc) has experience in developing and facilitating projects that build community capacity to participate in developing sustainability. Kerri currently works as the Vancouver Island Facilitator of BC Healthy Communities and also is involved in the coordination of the Vancouver Island Social Purchasing Portal. Previously, she has worked with universities, international development organizations, community organizations and the business community to build sustainability into planning, programs and operations. She holds a Bachelor of Science in environmental studies as well as a certificate in Community Economic Development.

#### **Kim Hardy**

Kim Hardy is a Community Economic Development (CED) Practitioner with extensive experience in rural and sustainability planning in BC and the Yukon. Kim is an advocate for community-based approaches to local economic development and takes a participatory and appreciative approach to facilitating planning and projects. Kim has ten years experience working with First Nations, development corporations and rural communities on asset based planning and creating solutions for rural and remote economic development challenges. Originally from Vancouver Island, Kim spent four years living and working in the Yukon Territory. Here, she had the opportunity to work with many different communities in

capacity building, social enterprise/community-business development and local economic diversification planning processes. As a CED Planner with Ecotrust Canada for over a year, Kim had the opportunity to work closely with First Nations and communities in developing conservation-based economies along the Pacific coast of BC. Kim studied psychology at the University of Victoria and then completed the Community Economic Development certificate at Simon Fraser University. From here, Kim completed her Masters in Business Administration in Community Economic Development at Cape Breton University. Kim has been an active member of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network participating on the BC/Yukon Council and is currently contributing to Genuine Progress Indicators Pacific as a Board Member.

#### **Dr. Lenore Newman**

Lenore (BSc | MEd | PhD) is a writer and researcher in the areas of sustainable food systems and sustainable urban form. She works to bring sustainable practice to the neighbourhood and household level, particularly in large urban centres. She is currently involved in food security projects in urban areas across North America and is conducting research into sustainable urban form along the West Coast. She is also the creator of the Green Samurai approach to individual action towards livable futures. Her personal website is [www.sandandfeathers.com](http://www.sandandfeathers.com)

#### **Nicole Chaland**

Nicole is the BC/Yukon Coordinator for Canadian Community Economic Development Network and Program Director for Simon Fraser University Certificate Program for Community Economic Development (CED) Professionals. Nicole also teaches CED Approaches to Affordable Housing for this certificate program. She is a co-op activist and educator who worked in the Philippines learning co-operative development and community building from her peers in the social economy in the Philippines. Upon returning to Canada, she continued to work in the co-operative sector as a researcher at the BC Institute for Co-operative Studies. She is a founding member of Roofs and Roots Housing Co-op which converts private rental buildings to co-operative ownership and green buildings over time. For the last five years Nicole has worked with the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet),

initially as the research coordinator who coordinated the first national survey of CED organisations across Canada. She regularly gives workshops on a wide range of CED and housing related topics, and also taught a CED course in Brazil in 2002. Nicole coauthored CED in Canada: Review of Definitions and Profile of Practice in Community Economic Development: Building for Social Change. She has a deep commitment to supporting solutions that come from communities themselves.

#### **Virginie Lavallée-Picard**

Virginie has worked on both sustainability in food systems and educational institutions. Virginie has been involved with SSG on the Algonquin College Sustainability Strategy project which included a Best Practices Report, stakeholder engagement events and a baseline Sustainability Assessment. She has also worked with Lester B. Pearson College to obtain funding and develop their broad based sustainability initiative, The Oikos Project. Her position as project coordinator involved developing a campus sustainability policy, establishing a greenhouse on campus to supply fresh vegetables to their cafeteria, and advancing other initiatives directed at energy and water conservation. Throughout her studies in Human Ecology, Virginie focused on food systems, climate policy, and social justice. Her interests also include the development of innovative strategies to make healthy, locally produced food accessible to our communities. Virginie's approach is deeply rooted in her interdisciplinary background.

#### **Will McDowall**

Will is currently Research Associate with the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE), based in Ottawa. At the NRTEE, Will is developing recommendations on carbon pricing policy for Canada and is developing a research program on the economics of climate change. Until 2008, Will was the Research Manager at the Community Energy Association, where he advised local governments on climate and energy policy, and a Policy Associate of Centre for Health and Environment Research at UBC. Before coming to Canada from the UK, Will was a Research Fellow at the Policy Studies Institute in London. His research areas have energy policy, innovation and long term technological change, and local government climate change policies.