

REFBC Announces 2016 Land Champion and Land Award Finalists

Deborah Curran named Land Champion; Land Awards will be presented at Land Awards Gala on Oct. 21.

SEPTEMBER 15, 2016, VANCOUVER, B.C. – The Real Estate Foundation of BC (REFBC) has named Deborah Curran, an environmental lawyer and educator, the 2016 Land Champion.

The Land Champion is honoured for outstanding work in sustainable land use in BC. Curran, the recent Hakai Professor in Environmental Law and Sustainability at the University of Victoria, is a national leader in law reform, applied research and education. Through her work as co-founder of Smart Growth BC, acting executive director of the Environmental Law Centre at UVic and as a practicing lawyer, Deborah has established herself as a thought leader on sustainable built environments and freshwater governance. Her current work, in partnership with the POLIS Project on Ecological Governance, matches indigenous water law with the framework of the new *Water Sustainability Act*.

“Deborah’s work is innovative, cutting-edge and highly practical,” said Jack Wong, REFBC CEO. “Over the course of her career, she’s helped to create legal tools like green bylaws and sample policies that can be used by local governments. Her work on watershed governance and on smart growth has informed decision makers and changed the way we think about development and sustainability. We are proud to name Deborah Curran the 2016 Land Champion.”

The Foundation also announced the finalists for its sixth [Land Awards Gala](#). The awards celebrate projects that demonstrate leadership, innovation and collaboration in sustainable land use in British Columbia and are chosen in three categories: private sector, non-profit sector and public sector.

Private sector finalists:

- The Beer Farm – Persephone Brewing Company
- City of Coquitlam District Energy (heat and energy recovery technology) – Thermenex
- RED Talks – Wesgroup Properties

Public sector finalists:

- Indigenous Community Planning Program – UBC School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP)
- Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Area B, District of Lillooet and St’át’imc Agricultural Plan
- User Network for Insect Biology in the Urban Garden (UNIBUG) (citizen science) – Douglas College

Non-profit sector finalists:

- Kwayatsut (affordable housing, youth resource centre) – Vancouver Native Housing Society

- Moving Towards Reconciliation (resources, capacity building for First Nations communities affected by resource development) – Fair Mining Collaborative
- The Post at 750 and CBC Vancouver Community Spaces – 110 Arts Co-operative and CBC Vancouver
- Rental Housing Index – BC Non-Profit Housing Association

The Land Awards, including the Land Champion award, will be presented at the Land Awards Gala, hosted by the Real Estate Foundation of BC on Oct. 21, 2016 at the Rocky Mountaineer Station in Vancouver.

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About the Real Estate Foundation of BC:

The Real Estate Foundation of BC is a philanthropic organization that helps advance sustainable land use in British Columbia. It provides grants to non-profit organizations working to improve B.C. communities and natural environments through responsible and informed land use, conservation and real estate practices. Its funding programs support research, education, and law and policy reform. Since 1988, the Foundation has approved more than \$74 million in grants. The Foundation also conducts research and special projects to support collaboration and knowledge-sharing around land use. Learn more at www.refbc.com.

The Land Awards Gala is one way the Foundation is able to connect with communities and organizations to share information on BC land use issues and to celebrate innovation, collaboration and leadership in the broader sector.

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