

Real Estate Foundation of BC Announces 2014 Land Champion, Finalists for Land Awards

JULY 9, Vancouver, BC – [The Real Estate Foundation of BC](#) today announced that Gary Runka will be the posthumous recipient of this year's Land Champion award. Runka passed away in July 2013.

The Land Champion is honoured for outstanding work in sustainable land use in BC. Runka, whose career spanned five decades, worked with public, private and non-profit sector groups to facilitate informed land use planning and natural resource management decisions. He was the first manager of the BC Land Commission, forerunner of the Agricultural Land Commission, and directed multi-stakeholder processes to create land and resource management plans for BC regions. After his government career Runka led nearly 700 projects through his company, GG Runka Land Sense Ltd.

“Mr. Runka's impact on land use in BC is immense. He was effective as a public servant, consultant, volunteer, teacher and mentor, not only because of his vast professional knowledge, but also because of his ability to bring people together to cooperate on complex land and natural resource management issues. We are proud to name Gary Runka the 2014 Land Champion,” said Jack Wong, Foundation CEO.

The Foundation also unveiled the finalists for its fifth annual [Land Awards Gala](#). The awards honour companies, non-profits and governments leading innovative land use projects that contribute to sustainable communities.

Finalists are selected on their ability to demonstrate innovation, leadership and collaboration in sustainable land use in BC and are chosen in three categories: private sector, public sector and non-profit sector.

Private sector finalists:

- Kootenay Sustainability Strategy – Teck Resources Limited
- Sustainable Land Care Education – Gaia College

Public sector finalists:

- Agricultural Land Use Inventory Program – Strengthening Farming Program, BC Ministry of Agriculture
- Baikie Island restoration – City of Campbell River

- Duteau Creek watershed assessment response plan – Greater Vernon Water Utility
- Farmland Access for Food Security project – Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, University of BC

Non-profit sector finalists:

- Kettle on Burrard (non-profit housing and youth centre) – Kettle Friendship Society
- Landscape training and accreditation for local governments – Society for Organic Urban Land Care
- The Station (affordable housing, commercial and community space) – Cowichan Green Community Society

The winner in each category will be announced at the Land Awards Gala hosted by the Real Estate Foundation on October 17.

The Land Champion award will be presented at that time as well.

The Real Estate Foundation of BC is a philanthropic organization that helps advance sustainable land use in British Columbia. It funds non-profit organizations working to improve BC communities through responsible and informed land use, conservation and real estate practices. Since 1988, the Foundation has approved more than \$67 million in grants.

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