



Smarter Growth for Farmland Protection in BC




Thinking Globally, Eating Locally


Ione Smith
Smart Growth BC 

November 13th, 2007

Outline

- Smart Growth BC
- Food security in BC...now and in the future
- Role of the ALR
- Strategies for farmland protection: What you can do
- Closing remarks



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Smart Growth BC

Founded in 1999, Smart Growth BC is a non-profit, non-government organization with a mandate to create more livable communities in British Columbia

8 Staff, 10 Board members



- Research
- Advice and Assistance
- Policy Alternatives
- Outreach and Community Engagement
- Professional Development
- Implementation
- Advisory Services

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What is smart growth?

- Smart Growth is a collection of development strategies that
 - ✓ enhances our quality of life,
 - ✓ protects our environment, and
 - ✓ uses tax revenues wisely
- Managing growth
- Providing choice

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Smart Growth Principles

1. Mixed-use and compact
2. **Protect and enhance farmland**
3. Preserve natural beauty and sensitive areas
4. Provide transportation choices
5. Include diverse, affordable housing options
6. Connect jobs to home
7. Use infrastructure (roads, pipes) efficiently
8. Embrace community identity
9. Promote water conservation and green building technology
10. Nurture engaged citizenship

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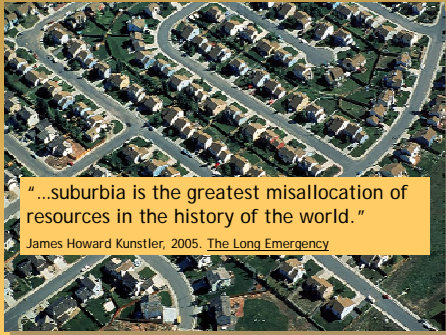
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Smart Growth NGOs in N.A.

▪ Smart Growth BC	▪ 10,000 Friends of PA
▪ Smart Growth ON	▪ Idaho Smart Growth
▪ Smart Growth Canada Network	▪ Montana Smart Growth
▪ Vivre en Ville	▪ Grow Smart Rhode Island
▪ Smart Growth America	▪ American Farmland Trust
▪ 1000 Friends of OR	▪ Plus many more!
▪ Futurewise	

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“...suburbia is the greatest misallocation of resources in the history of the world.”
James Howard Kunstler, 2005. *The Long Emergency*

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This is not news...

There is little to be said for sprawl. It is socially inconvenient and economically stupid. It is born of ignorance and short sight.

It promises “country living” and low costs, but destroys the country and hides the costs.

It offers nothing of lasting value that intelligent development cannot offer in infinitely greater measure.

Nobody wins where sprawl takes over.



April 1956
S.E. Hughes, Chairman
Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board of BC


What does it look like?



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Demographics and Land Use in BC: Living on the edge



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Rural Population Dynamics

From 1981 to 2001...

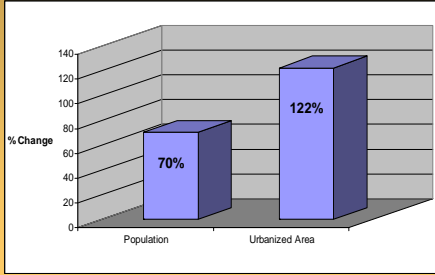
BC population increases

- Rural non-farm: +58%
- Urban: +55%
- Farm: -15%

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Consequences

From 1971 to 1996...



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Consequences

PEOPLE

- Decline of older residential and commercial areas
- Loss of community and sense of place

ENVIRONMENT

- Loss of greenspace and "working lands"
- Increased energy consumption, greenhouse gas production, air and water pollution and water consumption

ECONOMY

- Inefficient use of tax dollars for costly infrastructure and replacement
- Higher taxes paid by fewer people per hectare

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Food security in BC... now and in the future

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World population is estimated to increase from present 6.5B to 9.1B by 2050.

•Scientific American, Sept 2005

Scarcity of Soil Resources

<http://www.farmland.org/news/audiovideo/default.asp#>

One agricultural worker today feeds herself and one city dweller on average. In 2050 she will have to feed herself and two urbanites.

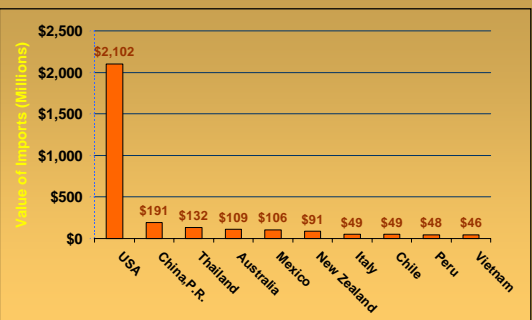


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Top 10 Countries for BC Food Imports (Ranked by 2004 Import Value - \$Cdn)



Source: BC Statistics, March 2005

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In the USA...

- Over 50 hectares of prime farmland are being lost every hour
- Equivalent to BC's total ALR being urbanized in 10 years

American Farmland Trust - 2004




Currently, the agricultural sector provides approx 50% of BC's food needs and over \$2B a year in economic activity.



To maintain this level of food security, in 2025 we will need 1.56 million more acres under production (and 44% of that will need to be irrigated).



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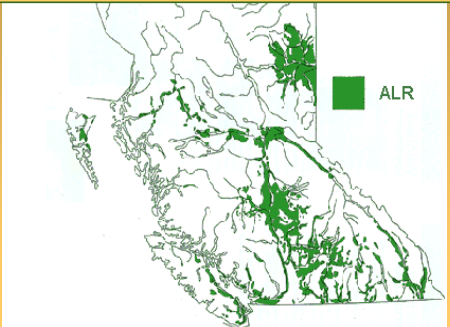

Role of the ALR

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- Established in 1973
- 4.7 million hectares of land (5% of BC land base)
- 6,000 ha of prime farmland were being lost every year

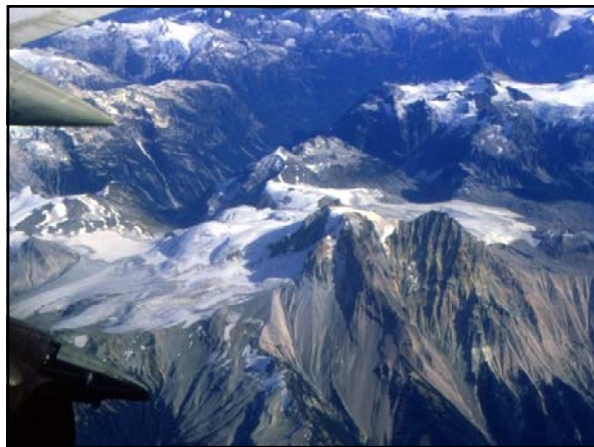


ALR




Agricultural Land Reserve

- Based on land capability
- Only area in which BC agriculture can expand and produce for present and future generations



The ALR as a tool for smarter growth


Urban development is guided *away* from rural agricultural lands and *towards* existing urban areas



Ensuring livability and prosperity by
Keeping the town in the town and the country in the country...

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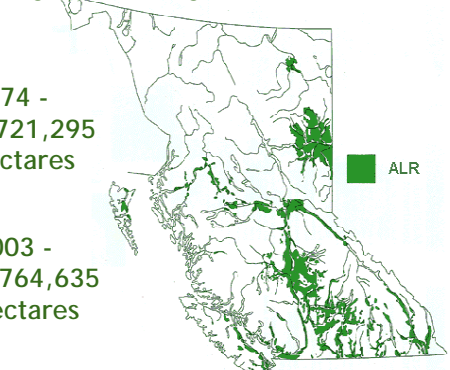
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Changes to the Agricultural Land Reserve

1974 -
4,721,295
hectares



2003 -
4,764,635
hectares



ALR


Land Included - (1974 - 2003)

89.8% of all land included into ALR was in the northern half of the province.

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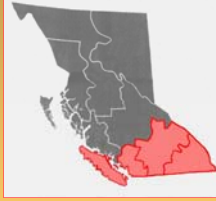
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ALR Land Excluded - (1974 - 2003)

72.0% of all land Excluded from the ALR was in the southern part of the province.

Prime agricultural land - classes 1-3 (22% of ALR):
For every 1 hectare of prime land included 2.8 hectares of prime land was excluded



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Exclusions of Class 1 land are still happening in BC

The Fraser Valley Chapter presents ...

Real Estate Institute of
British Columbia
www.reibc.org

A professional development event

ALR Exclusions

When: February 25, 2004

Where: Abbotsford Ramada Inn, 36035 Parallel Road North, Abt (at Watcom Road interchange/Exit #95)

Time: 5:30 pm - Meet and Greet/6 pm - Buffet/7 pm - Presentatio

Cost: RI Member & Student - \$20.00; Non-Member - \$37.50

Includes buffet dinner

Registration: The Real Estate Institute of BC

Suite 323, 400 Granville Street

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Need for better urban planning

7 temporary parking spaces per vehicle in Abbotsford



Barnston Island - over 2 year's input to stop exclusion?



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How to Protect Farmland in BC

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Regional Resources

There are almost ALWAYS opportunities available for infill/redevelopment before greenfield development in every community and in every region.

eg. 6,859 acres of vacant industrial land in Lower Mainland

- 2,402 acres are "market ready"
- 2,499 acres available in the medium term
- 1,958 acres available in the long term

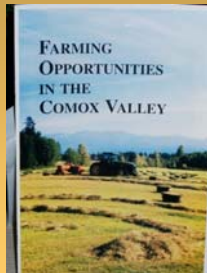
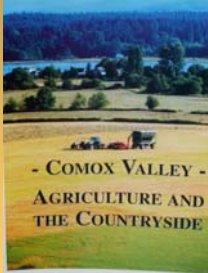
Source: GVRD, 2006

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Making agriculture an attractive investment



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Visibility counts

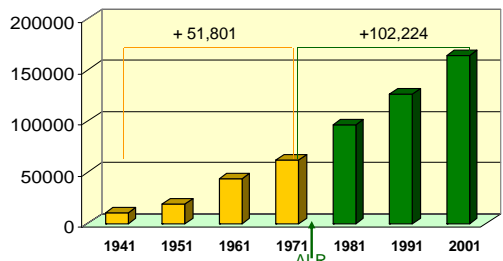


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City of Richmond Population - 1941 to 2001 -



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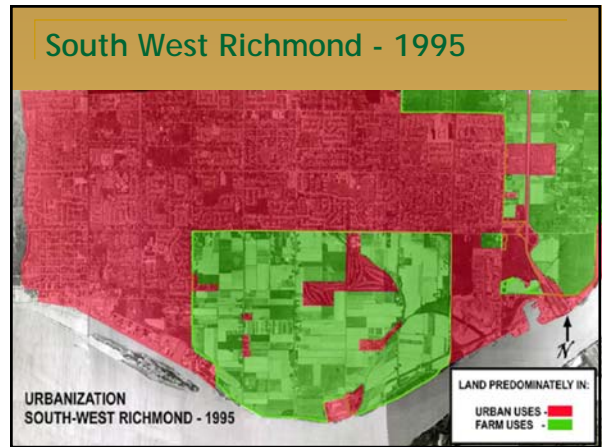
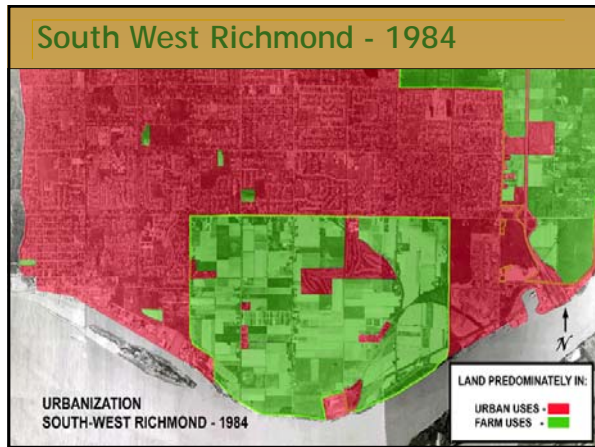
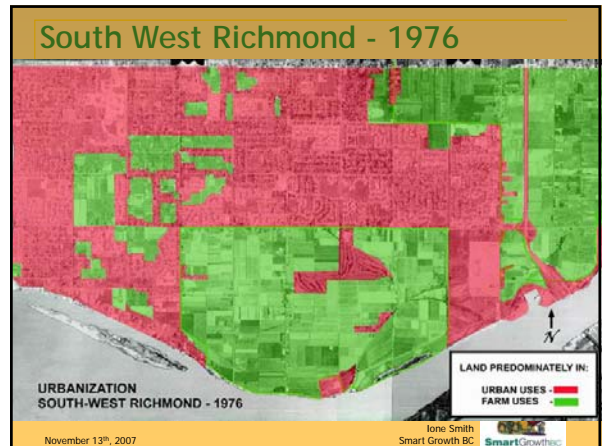
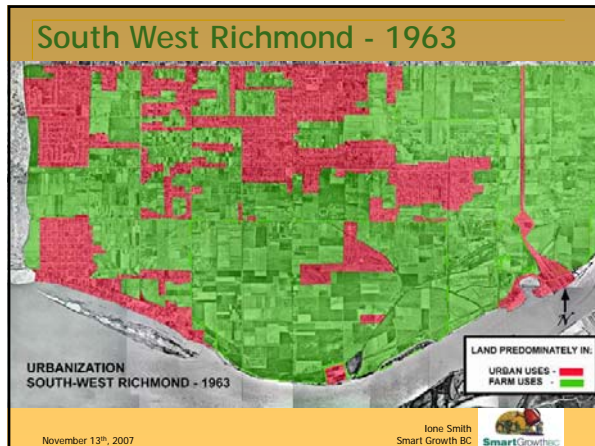


South West Richmond - 1954



URBANIZATION SOUTH-WEST RICHMOND - 1954

LAND PREDOMINATELY IN
URBAN USES - RED
FARM USES - GREEN



Ingredients for protection

- Ensure the ALC stick to their mandate to protect farmland
- Get strong commitments from all levels of governments
- Support and protect the farmer's right to farm
- Establish a strong agricultural awareness
- Local govt must plan urban needs around farmland (ensure efficient planning)

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What can you do? Top 10

- 1 - Create, support, or join a committee or an organization
- 2 - Help write letters: Premier, Minister, ALC, regional, local
- 3 - Learn about the City of Vancouver's Food Policy Council
- 4 - Buy Local! Veggie boxes, farmer's markets, direct farm
- 5 - Voice opposition to exclusion applications - write to your local newspaper
- 6 - Talk about this issue with friends, at parties - preach to the non-converted!
- 7 - Teach the children in your life about where their food comes from
- 8 - Vote
- 9 - Dine at restaurants that serve local food
- 10 - Keep getting informed via meetings, websites, etc

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Concluding Remarks

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Imagine if...

- We planned for our agricultural resources the same way we did for our other resources?

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FOR GENERATIONS

- Home
- Growing Demand
- Filling the Electricity Gap
- Resource Options
- Other Jurisdictions
- Test Your Energy IQ
- Take the Poll
- Join the Discussion

Our economy is growing and so is our demand for energy. For years we've been using more electricity than we produce in British Columbia, and that gap is growing. That's why the Province is acting to make BC electricity self sufficient within the next decade. By planning now, we'll have enough for today - and for generations to come.

Take the tour to learn more.

British Columbia's Energy Facts

- Our population, economy and demand for energy are all growing. →
- We're all using more electricity than ever before. →
- Today, BC uses more electricity than we produce. →
- We must plan now to fill the electricity gap. →

planning for generations



click the images to watch the tv commercial



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planning for generations



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Thank You!



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