

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
January 30th, 2014

Renowned community economist and author, Michael Shuman, to speak in Lillooet February 27
Event marks the launch of several community economic development activities taking place in 2014

Lillooet, BC - The Northern Economic Development and Initiatives (NEDI) Committee is pleased to bring Michael Shuman, one of North America's leading experts on community economics, to speak in Lillooet on February 27th. Mr. Shuman will share his thoughts on economic development as practiced today, and will set out an alternative set of principles and practices that focus on local business and the entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports them. The event will take place at the Lillooet REC Centre with the program running from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Doors will open at 6:00 p.m. and refreshments will be served; people are encouraged to come early to mix and mingle. Admission is free. The event is being made possible through funding provided by the Northern Development Initiative Trust with several local businesses and community groups stepping up to provide support.

"We are thrilled to bring Michael Shuman to Lillooet to kick off our regional community economic development activities," says Marg Lampman, District of Lillooet Councillor and Chair of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District's NEDI Committee. "It promises to be an informative, interactive and inspiring evening, so mark your calendar for Feb 27th as this will be an event you do not want to miss!"

The event will be a great opportunity for citizens, small businesses and community groups from across the region to learn more about local ownership and community self-reliance, local investment strategies, regional supply chains, and how to plug the leaks to create a more vibrant regional economy.

This high profile speaking engagement marks the beginning of the NEDI Committee's 2014 Community Economic Development (CED) activities. Following the completion of an Economic Development Strategy in 2012, the NEDI Committee identified several priorities to assist in strengthening the regional economy. In December 2013, the Fraser Basin Council was hired to oversee these activities which include: (1) Conducting a feasibility study to determine the best governance model for regional economic development, (2) Carrying out a community visioning process, (3) Developing a comprehensive inventory of the community's assets, and (4) Generating an economic leakage analysis to determine where money is leaking out of the local economy and to identify strategies for plugging the leaks.

As work on these initiatives moves forward, there will be many opportunities for citizens, businesses and community groups from around the region to get involved, learn more about CED, ask questions, provide feedback, and contribute new ideas. A series of community information and visioning sessions will take place between April 1 and June 30, 2014 with the goal of engaging people from across the sub-region in the process of creating a shared vision of success and charting a course for further action.

Michael Shuman is Director for Research and Economic Development for the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE). He is an economist, attorney, author and entrepreneur and one of North America's leading experts on community economics and the advantages of small-scale business. Shuman advocates that economic localization offers the key to solving a growing number of global problems, including peak oil, climate disruption, and financial meltdowns. He has led community-based economic development efforts across North America and has authored, coauthored or edited eight books and written nearly 100 published articles. His most recent book is *Local Dollars, Local Sense: How to Move Your Money from Wall Street to Main Street and Achieve Real Prosperity*.

The Fraser Basin Council (FBC) is a non-profit society that advances sustainability in the Fraser River Basin and across BC. Established in 1997, the Council is a collaboration of four orders of government (Federal, Provincial, Local and First Nations) together with representatives from the private sector and civil society. FBC helps bring people together to find solutions to balance economic, environmental and social issues — with a focus on healthy watersheds and water resources, climate change action and air quality, and sustainable, resilient communities. Their vision is *social well-being, supported by a vibrant economy and sustained by a healthy environment*.

The Northern Economic Development and Initiatives (NEDI) Committee is a Standing Committee of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) Board. Composed of elected officials from both the SLRD and the District of Lillooet, its purpose is to develop and recommend strategies and implement plans that support and enhance sub-regional economic development opportunities and initiatives in the northern areas of the SLRD.

-30-

More Information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

Margaret Hohner
Communications and Grants Coordinator
Northern Economic Development and Initiatives Committee
Telephone: 250-256-4289
Email: mhohner@lillooetbc.ca