



## MEDIA RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# MEC headquarters certified as BC's first Salmon-Safe urban site

**(Vancouver, BC – October 23, 2015)** The distinctive building and grounds that comprise the head office campus of MEC (Mountain Equipment Co-op) near the historic eastern terminus of False Creek Flats in Vancouver have been certified as the first Salmon-Safe urban site in British Columbia. The recognition came today from the Fraser Basin Council and Pacific Salmon Foundation, non-profit organizations that jointly deliver the Salmon-Safe program in BC.

Since 2011, over 45 BC farms, ranches and wineries have been certified as Salmon-Safe for actions they take to protect Pacific salmon, enhance water quality and restore habitat on agricultural land. Building on that momentum, the Fraser Basin Council and Pacific Salmon Foundation launched the "Salmon-Safe Communities for BC" initiative in 2014 to introduce standards for urban sites.

MEC earned the Salmon-Safe certification for its progressive land and water management practices at its head office facility, including the on-site capture and use of rainwater, rain garden swales designed to filter storm water, and other environmentally friendly landscaping practices.

"I commend MEC on its vision and leadership in meeting Salmon-Safe urban certification standards," said David Marshall, Executive Director the Fraser Basin Council. "Here is a good example of how environmentally innovative practices, even in the middle of a city, can help protect Pacific salmon by enhancing the quality of water that ultimately flows back to streams, rivers and marine habitat."

Marshall encouraged BC businesses, communities, institutions and non-profit organizations to show leadership in their communities by seeking Salmon-Safe certification for the sites they develop, renovate or manage, such as offices, retail centres, parks and campuses in urban and suburban areas.

"MEC Salmon-Safe certification adds to the successes we have had in encouraging fish-friendly practices on agricultural land, with more than 10,000 acres currently certified Salmon-Safe across

the province,” said Dr. Brian Riddell, President and CEO of the Pacific Salmon Foundation. “Yet most of BC’s population live in urban areas, so I welcome the leadership of MEC in achieving the first certified urban site. I hope this increases the profile of Salmon-Safe as an important ecological certification that applies broadly in urban and rural environments.”

Salmon-Safe certification is another step towards MEC’s goal of net zero environmental impact for its buildings. MEC’s head office, located on Great Northern Way across from China Creek Park, is highly energy and water efficient and designed to LEED Platinum standards.

MEC CFO Sandy Treagus said, “This is a tremendous honour, and we are delighted that our new headquarters is now recognized as being Salmon-Safe. By carefully managing water, our facility demonstrates the potential of urban developments in BC to positively influence the future of Pacific salmon in the province. If MEC can help these iconic fish thrive, we’ve done well.”

The Salmon-Safe assessment panel noted MEC’s strong commitment to water sustainability and innovative approaches to environmental best practices. In particular, MEC:

- captures rainwater to irrigate its rooftop garden and to flush toilets in the building, cutting use of non-potable water by 55%
- captures storm water in the parking lot and directs it through a bio-filtration rain garden
- landscapes with drought-tolerant native plants
- uses no chemical pesticides or herbicides, and
- fertilizes as indicated by periodic soil testing, using slow-release organic fertilizers or compost, if needed.

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## About Salmon-Safe BC

Salmon-Safe is a site-specific certification program that recognizes and promotes progressive, environmentally friendly land and water management practices that protect Pacific salmon, enhance water quality and restore habitat. Salmon-Safe began in Oregon in 1996, and now works across more than 600 sites in Oregon, Washington, California and British Columbia.

The Pacific Salmon Foundation and Fraser Basin Council introduced Salmon-Safe in British Columbia in 2011. Over 45 BC farms, ranches and wineries, and now the first urban site, have been certified.

## About MEC

Canada’s leading outdoor retailer, MEC (Mountain Equipment Co-op) is passionate about inspiring and enabling everyone to lead active outdoor lifestyles. From city streets and yoga studios to backcountry trails and pristine waterways, MEC matches people with the expertise, experience, enthusiasm and gear they need for camping, snowsports, watersports, cycling, climbing, hiking, running, yoga and fitness. Through our commitment to 1% for the Planet, every year member purchases allow us to donate one percent of sales (\$3 million in 2014) to Canadian non-profit organizations that help conserve ecologically and recreationally important areas. MEC has over 4 million members across Canada. Become part of MEC with a \$5 lifetime membership and visit us at our 18 stores, at [www.mec.ca](http://www.mec.ca) and our Shop MEC iPhone® app.

Members of the media are invited to:

## **Salmon-Safe BC Announcement, Presentation and MEC Building Tour**

October 23 (3:00-5:00 pm) | 1077 Great Northern Way

The Fraser Basin Council and Pacific Salmon Foundation will present a Salmon-Safe BC certificate to MEC on Friday, October 23 at the MEC head office, 1077 Great Northern Way in Vancouver.

Media are invited to attend the event (3-5 pm) to:

- learn more about Salmon-Safe BC and details of the MEC certification
- take a building tour (approximately 4 pm).

Speakers at the event will include:

- Colin Hansen, Chair, FBC
- Amy Greenwood, Assistant Manager, Watersheds and Water Resources Program, FBC
- Randy Sharp, former partner at Sharp & Diamond, Landscape Architects
- Pietra Basilij, Vancouver Economic Commission
- Deputy Mayor Andrea Reimer, City of Vancouver.

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