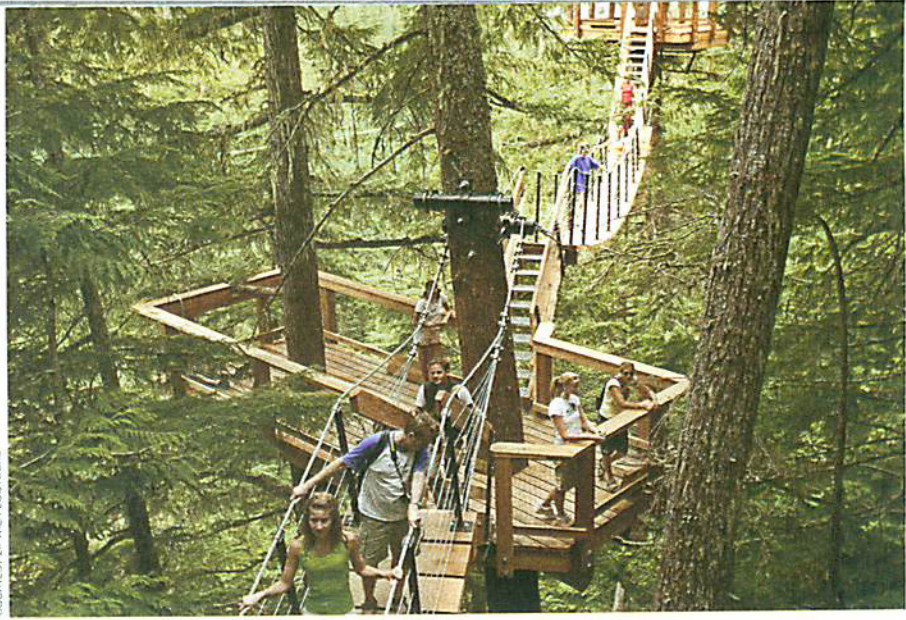


## [FRESH TRACKS]

# Keeping it Green

BY STEVEN HILL

**S**urrounded by such gorgeous natural settings and pristine scenery, it shouldn't come as too much of a surprise that individuals and businesses in Whistler foster a strong commitment to developing environmentally friendly products and services in the resort. From where we live and what we wear, to what we eat and how we travel — Whistler's eco strategies and initiatives are all about reducing the resort's environmental footprint and taking the best path toward sustainability.



COURTESY ZIPTREK ECOTOURS

### HIGH-FLYING ECO-FRIENDLY ADVENTURES

Ziptrek Ecotours offers visitors the unique opportunity to soar high over the forest's canopy on ziplines and also explore this magnificent setting on Treerack's network of catwalks and platforms — all while learning about the area's flora and fauna from a knowledgeable guide. But right from its initial construction using eco-friendly methods through to its operations today, the company has always tried to minimize its environmental impact on the pristine forest it showcases. In addition, using a small-turbine, micro-hydroelectric generating unit in the creek below its operation, Ziptrek generates all of the electricity it uses on the mountain without producing a single molecule of carbon dioxide.



JOEFIN HOMES: WWW.FINSHOUTPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

### BUILDING A GREENER HOME

Whistler-based RDC Fine Homes ([www.rdcfinehomes.com](http://www.rdcfinehomes.com)) is an award-winning homebuilding company that's designing houses with green living in mind. Last year, RDC completed the first 'Built Green' home in the Sea to Sky corridor, earning a spot on HGTV's World's Greenest Homes and winning two Georgie Awards. RDC's projects include homes using geothermal heating systems, triple-paned gas-filled windows with Low E coatings, photovoltaic roof membranes that are able to produce 5,000 to 6,000 kilowatt hours of electricity and a net metering system that cycles extra power back onto the grid.

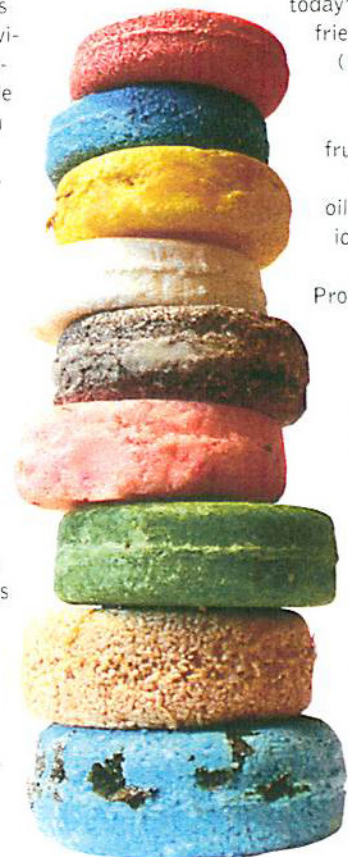


### WHISTLER BLACKCOMB

The resort's largest employer shares the community's commitment to the environment. Whistler Blackcomb's award-winning environmental practices include the use of GM hybrid pickup trucks, an employee carpool program that saves more than 617,000 kilograms of emissions annually, and a 1.0 megawatt run-of-river turbine in Flute Creek to power the lights and heat in the lift hut and washrooms at the bottom of the Symphony Express Chairlift. The company is also a partner in the construction of a small hydroelectric plant on Fitzsimmons Creek (between Whistler and Blackcomb) that, when completed in late 2009, will produce 7.5 megawatts of power — the equivalent of what the company's Whistler operations consume. Employees also donate a percentage of their paycheques to the Whistler Blackcomb Foundation Environmental Fund, which supports fish and wildlife habitat projects, mountain bike trail maintenance and improvement, education and interpretive work, bear management and other projects in Whistler, Squamish and Pemberton.

### EARTH-FRIENDLY COSMETIC CHOICE

You can make a positive difference choosing products that reflect today's eco- and animal-friendly values. Lush ([lush.ca](http://lush.ca)) handmade cosmetics are created with organic fruits and vegetables, the finest essential oils and safe synthetics — and are never tested on animals. Products such as the "Go Green" So Perfume are not only made from natural ingredients such as grapefruit, fennel, thyme and cedar wood, they also come in a small, recyclable, recycled tin container. Just one of Lush's shampoo bars is the equivalent of three 250ml bottles, and has no waste packaging.



COURTESY LUSH