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**TO:** CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2007 July 18

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING **FILE:** 33000 01

**SUBJECT:** WORLD RIVERS DAY 2007

**PURPOSE:** To request Council approval for the proposed approach to World Rivers Day 2007 in Burnaby.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** Council approve the proposed approach to World Rivers Day as outlined in this report and authorize staff to pursue corporate sponsorship for the *Salmon in the City – Explore Still Creek* event.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia, 334 – 1367 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC, V6H 4A9, and to Mark Angelo, Program Head, Fish Wildlife and Recreation Program, BCIT.

**REPORT****1.0 BACKGROUND**

World Rivers Day is an annual event sponsored by the Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia which occurs on the last Sunday in September. World Rivers Day celebrates the spectacular natural, cultural and heritage value of British Columbia's rivers. Throughout the province, citizens, local community and environmental groups, government agencies and educational institutions organize river-related events and invite members of the public to participate in appreciating, protecting and enhancing BC waterways.

The City of Burnaby first proclaimed BC Rivers Day in 1993, becoming the first municipality in the province to do so. Over the years, the City, in partnership with BCIT, local environmental groups and the community, has coordinated a variety of Rivers Day events including the *Explore the Foreshore* event at Burnaby's Fraser Foreshore Park, and more recently, the *Nature Next Door – Explore Still Creek* event. Past River's Day celebrations have included interpretive walks, creek clean-ups, riparian plantings and the development of environmental media including posters and murals. These efforts have been successful and well received by the community.

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In 2004, Burnaby celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of BC Rivers Day with a two day event at Burnaby Fraser Foreshore Park. In 2005, the United Nations, as part of the Water for Life Decade, announced that it will begin celebrating World Rivers Day on the last Sunday in September to coincide with BC Rivers Day. The purpose of this report is to seek the concurrence of Council to initiate planning for World Rivers Day activities in Burnaby, with a desire to focus on a hands-on interactive event that once again profiles Still Creek, and engages residents to participate in the restoration of their watershed. As the Environment Committee does not meet during the summer months of July and August, this report has been forwarded directly to Council with the concurrence of the Environment Committee Chair. The Chair of the Committee has also reviewed the program contained in this report and concurs with the proposed preliminary approach.

## 2.0 PROPOSED APPROACH

In 2006, World River's Day in Burnaby aimed to create new opportunities for residents to learn more about and become engaged with Still Creek as one of our key urban waterways. Through a more hands-on approach, residents were made aware of the environmental and recreational values of Still Creek, and the need to conserve rivers throughout the world. There were over 600 participants at last year's World River's Day event, and most took part in at least one activity along the Still Creek corridor; making it a highly successful event.

In 2007, in consultation with local community partners, including BCIT, GVRD, the Still Creek Stewardship Society and others, the proposed theme for this year's World River's Day is *Salmon in the City – Explore Still Creek*. The focus of this event will be to continue raising awareness for Still Creek, and promote environmental stewardship and community involvement. In 2007, the following free activities are being considered:

- Environmental film festival hosted by the Green Ideas Network
- Tours of the Wildlife Rescue Association Rehabilitation Facility
- Burnaby Public Library and Burnaby Art Gallery displays
- Walking tours of Still Creek hosted by the Brunette Rivershed Society
- Interactive display and public consultation for the new Jim Lorimer Park
- Paddling trips along the Still Creek corridor
- Invasive plant removals, native plantings and creek cleanups
- Food for World River's Day event participants
- Educational displays and activities
- Burnaby eco-sculpture exhibit

The City and BCIT have co-sponsored BC Rivers Day/World Rivers Day since its inception. This year, the City will again work with BCIT and the Outdoor Research Council of BC to ensure the success of World Rivers Day. Corporate sponsorship has been secured in the past for the Rivers Day events, and there is a desire to pursue this again. Food for participants, for example, has been provided with the generous support of

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local businesses since 2001. With Council's concurrence, staff will again pursue the possibility of corporate sponsorship.

In addition to the *Salmon in the City – Explore Still Creek* activities, it is proposed that a letter be sent to all commercial and industrial landowners whose properties back onto Still Creek ravine. The purpose of this letter will be to once again raise awareness for Still Creek, and to encourage businesses to become involved in the stewardship of this important urban waterway. Staff from local businesses would also be invited to participate in Burnaby's *Salmon in the City – Explore Still Creek* activities.

Lastly, a number of other river-associated events have occurred in previous years, including the proclamation of World Rivers Day, the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup (coordinated by the Vancouver Aquarium), an annual cleanup by Burnaby Mountain Secondary School and various cleanups and other works by stewardship groups in their respective watersheds. It is proposed that staff continue to assist with these events, working closely with CUPE Local 23 to provide resources such as dumpsters and staff assistance at various event locations.

### 3.0 CONCLUSION

Burnaby was the first municipality to proclaim BC Rivers Day in 1993, and has held events each year in cooperation with community groups, CUPE Local 23, local businesses and agencies. This year for World Rivers Day, there is a desire to continue raising awareness for the Still Creek corridor, and to engage residents and commercial landowners to participate in the restoration of their watershed. As in previous years, this year's World Rivers Day event will be sponsored in conjunction with BCIT and the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC.

With the concurrence of Council, staff will initiate planning for World Rivers Day in concert with community partners and pursue corporate sponsorship for various components of the *Salmon in the City – Explore Still Creek* event. A further report will be provided directly to Council closer to the event date with a finalized list of events.

  
B. Luksun, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

YH/sla

cc: Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services (Manager Parks Operations)  
Director Engineering  
Director Finance  
President, CUPE Local 23