

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

SUBJECT: WORLD RIVERS DAY 2023

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Sunday, September 24, 2023 be declared as World Rivers Day;

THAT the proposed program for a community celebration of World Rivers Day at the Burnaby Village Museum be approved; and

THAT an expenditure of \$5,000 from the Boards, Committees and Commissions operating budget for promotion and advertising of World Rivers Day, and to support Indigenous programming and inclusion, be authorized.

REPORT

The Environment Committee, at its meeting held on June 15, 2023, received and adopted the attached report seeking authorization to declare September 24, 2023 as Burnaby World Rivers Day (WRD), seeking approval of the proposed program for a WRD community celebration at Burnaby Village Museum, and seeking authorization of an expenditure of \$5,000 for promotion, advertising and supporting Indigenous programming and inclusion.

On behalf of the Environment
Committee,

Councillor J. Keithley
Chair

Councillor M. Santiago
Vice Chair

TO: ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (EC)
FROM: GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
SUBJECT: **WORLD RIVERS DAY 2023**
PURPOSE: To seek authorization to declare September 24, 2023 as Burnaby World Rivers Day (WRD), to seek approval of the proposed program for a WRD community celebration at Burnaby Village Museum, and to seek authorization of an expenditure of \$5,000 for promotion, advertising and to support Indigenous programming and inclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT Council declare Sunday, September 24, 2023 as World Rivers Day;

THAT Council approve the proposed program for a community celebration of World Rivers Day at the Burnaby Village Museum; and

THAT Council authorize an expenditure of \$5,000 from the Boards, Committees and Commissions operating budget for promotion and advertising of World Rivers Day, and to support Indigenous programming and inclusion.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

Civic promotion and celebration of World Rivers Day (WRD) with a community celebration at the Burnaby Village Museum (BVM) aligns with City policies for shared environmental stewardship, healthy ecosystems and a healthy community in accordance with Burnaby's *Climate Action Framework (2020)*, *Corporate Strategic Plan (2022)*, *Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2016)*, and *Official Community Plan (1998)*.

2.0 BACKGROUND

WRD occurs annually on the fourth Sunday in September. Communities across British Columbia and Canada, and in more than 100 countries around the world, host events to celebrate waterways and their many values. These events strive to increase public awareness and encourage stewardship of streams and rivers.

The City of Burnaby has supported and hosted annual community celebrations of BC Rivers Day and WRD since 1993. The first BC Rivers Day was in 1980, created by renowned river advocate and Burnaby resident, Mark Angelo. The City of Burnaby was the first municipality in BC to proclaim 'BC Rivers Day' in 1993. WRD launched in 2005 as part of the United Nations Water for Life Decade.

WRD falls this year on September 24. The BVM closes for the season after Labour Day but reopens to the public for one day to host WRD. The BVM first hosted the WRD community celebration in 2013 and has hosted every since, with the exception of 2020 and 2021 because of the pandemic.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

A committee consisting of BVM and Planning and Development Department staff and Mark Angelo organize the community celebration of WRD. This work has been underway as of March 2023 and will continue through the summer. Described below are the main program elements. Additional programs and activities may be added.

3.1 Date, Time and Location

11:00am to 4:30pm on Sunday, September 24, 2023 at the BVM.

The BVM is an ideal venue to host the event because of the physical connection to Deer Lake Brook bisecting the museum grounds and because of the historical and contemporary connections of waterways to Indigenous communities and the community of Burnaby, recognized as falling within the shared, ancestral and unceded territories of the hə́n̓q̓əmiṇ̓əṇ̓ and Sḵwxwú7mesh-speaking people.

3.2 Welcome Remarks

Welcoming remarks to open WRD are scheduled for 12:00pm at the Bandstand. A proposed new program element is inclusion of a traditional welcome led by representation from local First Nations in alignment with City protocols. Remarks by the City of Burnaby (Mayor and Council) and Mark Angelo (Chair of the World Rivers Day organization) will be part of the ceremony. Planning for this program element is ongoing.

3.3 Activities

A variety of activities for children, and people of all ages, are planned for WRD, taking place throughout the BVM grounds. Planning for the following activities is underway.

Indigenous programming: Museum Education Programming staff are planning Indigenous programming as part of WRD. This may include guided ecology tours or storytelling by Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and hands-on activities such as making a seed bomb using Coast Salish plant seeds.

Streamside interpretation: a Museum interpreter will be stationed on the bridge near the information panels to speak to the ecology of the stream and riparian areas.

Film screenings: short films on Burnaby waterways will be shown on a loop in the Central Park Theatre on the BVM grounds. Films under consideration include those

of the City of Burnaby Heritage Commission: *Saving Burnaby Lake* and *Saving the Salmon – the Brunette River Story*. Also under consideration are films produced by Mark Angelo, including *Kids, Creeks and Nature* about fish releases with local elementary schools.

Ecological restoration and Urban Forestry: The Planning and Development Department will host a 'Community Development and Ecosystem Protection' display that highlights stream restoration projects in Burnaby. The display will include the 'Big Map' of Burnaby consisting of a 3 metre by 4 metre aerial photo of the entire City and waterway network. 'Waterways of Burnaby' poster sized maps will be given away. Burnaby's Urban Forestry group will host a separate display about the City's trees and forests and the important environmental functions and services they provide. A tree seedling giveaway is planned.

Vancouver Aquarium: The Vancouver Aquarium is planning an interactive, hands-on display to encourage passion, knowledge and stewardship of waterways and oceans.

Deer Lake Brook streamside restoration demonstration: Enhancement of Deer Lake Brook streamside areas by removing invasive plants and planting native plant species is ongoing. Tentatively planned for WRD is an information display and hands-on activity involving the Lower Mainland Green Team (LMGT) and or other community partners. Depending on the status of this work and suitability for this community event, an offsite and separate WRD event for the LMGT may also be considered.

3.4 Entertainment

Ginalina (www.ginalinamusic.com) returns as the headlining musical performer. Her music features lively guitars, fiddles and a blend of entertaining folk and other instruments. Her performance will include an original song written for WRD called 'Save the Mighty River'. Other entertainers expected to return, include Nylon Zoo, Kelly Haines and Stories on Wheels. Performances will be scheduled throughout the day.

3.5 Exhibitors

Community stewardship partners have been invited to participate in WRD as exhibitors and will be encouraged to include an interactive activity for the public.

3.6 Food

Having food trucks present onsite was well received at last year's WRD event. Depending on availability and spacing, up to three food trucks are planned for this year. Vendors are currently being finalized.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Corporate Services - Marketing and Communications – will lead promotion and advertising for WRD at the BVM, including but not limited to social media, digital advertising and information posted at civic facilities. Our community partners participating in WRD will promote the event to their networks. Staff will promote WRD directly to the environmental stewardship community in Burnaby, including Streamkeeper groups, School District 41, the Burnaby Youth Sustainability Network, and post-secondary institutions. For inclusion of the City’s diverse communities, staff will also promote WRD through communications to Burnaby’s Inter-Agency Council.

Some recent BVM events were promoted directly to local First Nations by the BVM, resulting in a greater number of Indigenous families attending these events. BVM proposes to use this approach for WRD. Including incentives to attend the event is also under consideration. For example, free carousel ride tickets could be included in the invitation for families or persons invited to attend.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The WRD program at the BVM is funded by operating funds from the BVM and a modest contribution of operating funds from the Planning and Development Department, along with community grants received from time to time. Costs for promotion and advertising are requested separately through this report. Indigenous programming and engagement referenced in this report, including the traditional welcome, are newer program elements. As such, this report requests Council authorize an expenditure of \$5,000 from the Boards, Committees and Commissions operating budget to support promotion and advertising and to supplement available operating funds to support Indigenous programming and engagement.

Respectfully submitted,
E.W. Kozak, General Manager Planning and Development

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Mark Sloat, Planner 2, and reviewed by Carl Isaak, Director Community Planning, and Lee-Ann Garnett, Deputy General Manager Planning and Development.