

CITY OF BURNABY

ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS

RE: BYRNE CREEK OFF-LEASH AREA FOR DOGS

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. ***THAT*** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

**REPORT**

The Environment and Waste Management Committee, at its meeting held on 1999 September 14, received the Byrne Creek and Barnet Marine Park Off-Leash Area for Dogs (Manager's Report No. 17, 1999 June 21) report. The report was referred to the Committee by Council for review of concerns raised by council regarding the environmental impact of the proposed off-leash area.

The Committee discussed an environmental assessment prepared for the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department by Mr. Alan Whitehead, an environmental consultant. The report assessed the environmental impact of the proposed off-leash area and suggested steps to mitigate potential off-leash activity impacts.. The report concluded that with mitigation, public cooperation and effective management, the trails could support off-leash use without impacting wildlife or the riparian habitat. During the meeting the Committee discussed proposed mitigation measures that will be done to preserve and protect the river corridor including:

- Spot planting native shrub species to supplement the existing dense vegetative barrier on the banks of the channel.
- Reduce the mowing strip on the channel banks adjacent to the service roads to allow an increase in the riparian cover/barrier to occur naturally.
- Provide a method by which dog owners can dispose of dog waste.
- Remove existing park benches placed on the banks of the channel and close these access points to the water with riparian vegetation.

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- DIR. PARKS, REC. & CULT. SERV.

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On 1999 September 01, Mr. George Clulow and Mr. Al Grass from the Vancouver Natural History Society, Mr. Whitehead and staff walked the proposed off-leash trail to discuss further measures to enhance the habitat, as well as ways to mitigate and monitor possible effects that dogs off-leash could cause to the corridor.

The issues were discussed and a consensus was reached, determining additional requirements that would address any concerns that the naturalists, the consultant and staff have. Monitoring was a key requirement, particularly during nesting season. Proposed monitoring includes:

- Mapping existing access routes into the riparian habitat to establish a detailed description of baseline conditions. This map will serve as a basis for developing a detailed planting and fencing plan.
- Periodic (at least monthly) inspection of the new vegetation barriers and fencing, evaluation of their effectiveness in preventing conflicts between off-leash dogs and wildlife.
- Identification of any new access routes using the baseline map, or encroachments that may be created over time.
- Review of bylaw infraction statistics compiled for the area by the animal control officer.
- Ongoing observations by the naturalist community, including more intensive observations during breeding season.
- Any new problem sites identified during the monitoring period will be promptly remediated with temporary fencing and/or shrub planting and signs as needed.
- Monitoring of any public feedback on the new off-leash facility.

Appearing elsewhere on this agenda is a detailed report from the Parks and Recreation Commission requesting approval for a two year trial off-leash area. Staff are also participating with a GVRD Study to assess the impacts of dogs in parks, and methods to control and mitigate their use. Further measures that will be taken at the Byrne Creek Dog Off-Leash trail include the assistance of the Byrne Creek Streamkeepers with the monitoring, and the provision of information and education signage to help gain public cooperation and acceptance of the requirements of this program.

The Environment and Waste Management support the Byrne Creek Dog Off-Leash trail for a trial period of two years, on the basis that the above mentioned mitigation and monitoring practices will be carried out.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D. Johnston  
Chair

Councillor C. Redman  
Member

Councillor D. Lawson  
Member

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cc Director Planning and Building  
Director Engineering

