

TO: CITY MANAGER 2004 January 14

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING OUR FILE: 15.660

SUBJECT: FRASER RIVER ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
UPDATED PLAN

PURPOSE: To endorse the Updated Estuary Management Plan for the Fraser River, entitled "A Living Working River"

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council endorse in principle the Updated Estuary Management Plan for the Fraser River, entitled "A Living Working River", and encourage FREMP partners to dedicate resources to implement the actions.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Fraser River Estuary Management Program; the Environment and Waste Management Committee; and the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Commission.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Fraser River Estuary Management Program (FREMP) was established in 1985 to coordinate environmental management and decision-making in the estuary. *Map 1* shows the boundaries of FREMP. The six partners are Environment Canada; Fisheries and Oceans Canada; the Ministry of Water; Land and Air Protection; North Fraser Port Authority; Fraser River Port Authority; and the Greater Vancouver Regional District.

Since 1985, FREMP partners have coordinated issues, such as habitat improvements, environmental review of projects, Fraser River navigation and dredging, log management, and water and sediment quality improvements.

In 1994, the FREMP partners produced a strategic Estuary Management Plan for the Fraser River, entitled "A Living Working River". Burnaby Council reviewed the Plan and adopted a resolution supporting the plan directions and actions. In 1997, FREMP reviewed the Plan and added minor updates. The Plan was reviewed again in 2001. The 2001 review indicated that many actions were now complete, some actions were no longer relevant, and some areas were now affected by new legislation. In addition, the FREMP organization was facing restructuring due to budget cut-backs. FREMP, therefore decided to fully update the Plan in 2002.

The Plan Update was completed over 12 months and included public consultation and working groups attended by City Staff. The Updated Plan was signed off by all FREMP partners in 2003. The Updated Estuary Management Plan can be viewed at www.bieapfrempp.org/frempp/publications/current.html. The FREMP partnership recognizes the critical role of local governments in implementing the Plan. The Council agenda of 2004 January 12 contained a letter from FREMP requesting the 12 local governments within the FREMP area endorse the Updated Plan. The following Council report summarizes the Plan content and a staff recommendation for endorsing the Plan.

2.0 THE UPDATED ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PLAN - "A LIVING WORKING RIVER"

The Updated Plan closely follows the vision, goals, and themes of the preceding Plan. The goals of the Plan are to:

1. Conserve and enhance the environmental quality of the river and estuary to sustain healthy fish, wildlife, plants, and people.
2. Respect and further the estuary's role as the social, cultural, recreational and economic heart of the region.
3. Encourage human activities and economic development that protect and enhance the environmental quality of the estuary.

The Plan is divided into the following seven action programs:

1. An action program to integrate the plan
2. Water and sediment quality action program
3. Fish and wildlife habitat action program
4. Navigation and dredging action program
5. Log management action program
6. Industrial and urban development action program
7. Recreation action program

Each action plan includes objectives and specific actions. While the 1994 Plan included 50 actions, the 2002 Updated Plan includes 39 actions, dropping some of the more ambitious 1994 actions (e.g., the 1994 action to "conduct an annual audit of development projects where compensation was not required"). Some 1994 actions are combined and generalized, while other actions reference new programs (e.g., the GVRD Liquid Waste Management Plan, or the GVRD's ongoing Biodiversity Conservation Strategy). Action items in the Updated Plan are summarized in *Appendix A*.

In general, the vision, objectives, and actions in the Plan that are applicable to Burnaby are consistent with City approaches outlined in the Official Community Plan and the Big Bend Development Plan, commitments within the Liquid Waste Management Plans, and ongoing projects along the Fraser foreshore. *Appendix A* indicates the actions to which municipalities were suggested as potential implementation partners. These actions include undertaking habitat improvement projects, protecting water-related industry, strategic intermodal transportation planning within the estuary, development of greenways, coordinating interpretative signage, and developing a water-based recreation plan.

3.0 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION - CHANGES TO FREMP

Over the past 12 months, the FREMP organization has been restructured due to funding cut-backs from the FREMP partners. The annual budget has been reduced from \$385,000 to \$160,000. (In the 1990's, FREMP's budget reached \$540,000). In the past, FREMP employed staff to research and coordinate actions within the Plan. The new FREMP model is more administrative in nature - providing a point of coordination for the FREMP partners, but not leading or coordinating any specific actions (except for the Coordinated Project Review). Staff levels have been cut from 4.5 staff in 2002, to 2 staff in 2003.

The final section of the Updated Estuary Management Plan discusses plan implementation. FREMP's Water and Land Use Committee will oversee the implementation of the Plan, including identifying priority actions to be undertaken each year, responsibilities, and budget and funding sources. The Plan suggests implementation partners for each action.

The FREMP restructuring will require individual partners to take a leadership role in implementing the plan actions. Direct contributions to FREMP have dramatically reduced, so funds and resources must instead be committed directly to FREMP plan projects, such as ongoing updates of habitat mapping, habitat improvements, and the comprehensive dredge management strategy.


Municipal partnerships will continue to be critical to the success of plan implementation. Municipal staff have participated in FREMP committees and projects for many years, including the recent completion of GIS-based habitat mapping throughout the estuary. Specific Burnaby projects that reflect the FREMP vision include the establishment of the Fraser Foreshore Park, property acquisitions for parks purposes, support of water-based industrial development, urban trail linkages, habitat enhancement works at Terminus Park, the City's Total Stormwater Management approach, participation in the GVRD Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, and the extraordinary success of Rivers Day Explore the Foreshore celebrations (with over 2,000 visitors in 2003). Burnaby will continue to promote these and other initiatives, as contained in Council adopted plans and budgets.

The major players for implementing the Updated Estuary Management Plan, however, continue to be the FREMP partners. Withdrawal of funding and resources threaten the vision. FREMP partners are, therefore urged to take a leadership role in coordinating, undertaking, and funding the initiatives.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

The Updated Estuary Management Plan is a broad policy-level document. Estuary management crosses numerous jurisdictional boundaries and agency responsibilities, and FREMP is to be commended for continuing to promote an integrated vision for management. The Plan Updates provide a revised list of actions for FREMP's focus.

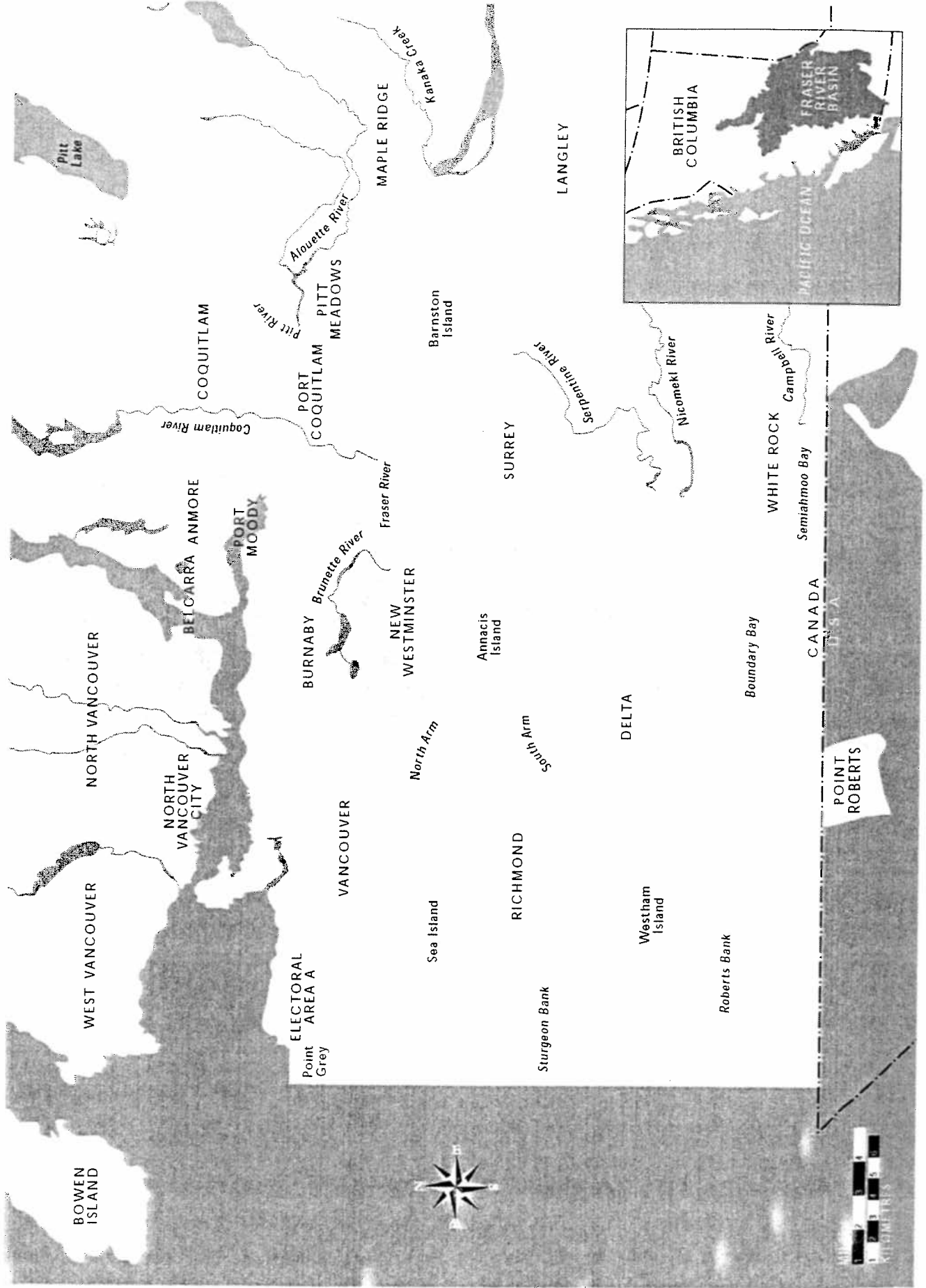
City staff support the updated Plan, and recommend that Council endorse the document in principle. FREMP partners are also strongly encouraged to dedicate the necessary resources to achieve the Plan vision of coordinated management for "A Living Working River". Burnaby's efforts in this regard will be done in conjunction with ongoing Parks, Planning and Engineering initiatives as well as allocated resources within our Operating and Capital Financial Plans. It is recommended that copies of the report be forwarded to FREMP, the Environment and Waste Management Committee, and to the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Commission.


for J.S. Belhouse, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

RW/jc
Attachment (2)

cc: Director Engineering
Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

MAP 1: FREMP BOUNDARIES



Appendix A: Updated Estuary Management Plan (2003) Summary of Programs and Actions

Programs and Actions	
1. Integrate the Plan	a. Develop a reach overview for each reach in the FREMP area.
2. Water & Sediment Quality	a. Establish and maintain water quality (WQ) monitoring database b. Work with GVRD Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) Environmental Monitoring Committee to determine WQ monitoring duplication and gaps and address these c. Work with LWMP process to promote public understanding of and interagency agreement on WQ targets d. Work with GVRD to coordinate WQ initiatives with Integrated Stormwater Management Plans e. Increase awareness of source control measures and Best Management Practices for pollution prevention f. Continue developing guidelines and enforce legislation for pollution abatement g. Reduce agricultural run-off and pollutants into estuary h. Encourage good boating practices, including pump-out stations i. Support efforts to remediate contaminated sediments
3. Fish & Wildlife Habitat	a. Work with local and regional governments to facilitate critical habitat improvement projects * b. Participate in developing regional Biodiversity Strategy; help develop incentives for habitat protection * c. Create additional habitat compensation banking projects * d. Use and update FREMP habitat classification system e. Use the Coordinated Project Review (CPR) process to protect and manage habitat f. Regularly compile and distribute available knowledge on estuarine processes; sponsor periodic information exchanges on these issues g. Coordinate and support partnership research projects relevant to the estuary h. Monitor habitat losses and gains i. Audit projects through the CPR process
4. Navigation & Dredging	a. Develop comprehensive dredge management strategy (including areas for further study) b. Ensure adequate channel maintenance to support navigation, and facilitate funding for this purpose c. Undertake study on links between dredging and floodplain management d. Evaluate sediment budget every five years e. Coordinate a monitoring program for sediment budget data (e.g. Water Survey of Canada monitoring gauges)

Programs and Actions	
5. Log Management	
a.	Monitor and promote BMPs for log handling and boom construction
b.	Promote new mechanisms to capture debris (e.g. mini booms)
c.	Develop options for debris disposal
d.	Monitor and enforce log storage guidelines
e.	Use Area Designations and other agreements to designate and protect existing log storage areas *
6. Industrial and Urban Development	
a.	Protect existing nodes for water-related industries and minimize impacts on adjacent shoreline *
b.	Define and protect lands at strategic nodes along the river *
c.	Develop partnerships to increase market demand for water-related business *
d.	Work with levels of government to promote water-related businesses and integrated waterfront development *
e.	Ensure the CPR process continued to be a flexible, effective process
f.	Complete Area Designation Agreements and reach overviews *
g.	Work with Translink and others on strategic intermodal transportation planning in estuary *
h.	Work to consolidate and harmonize regulatory standards for water-based transportation
i.	Monitoring research on links between water-based transportation and regional air quality, and research trends
7. Recreation	
a.	Support GVRD efforts to acquire and protect land for recreation and conservation; includes biodiversity strategy; also support municipal efforts to create parks or green spaces where appropriate along the river *
b.	Support efforts to develop greenways between parks along estuary *
c.	Install consistent signage in parks and greenways re. estuary *
d.	Facilitate development of a water-based recreation plan for the estuary *

* = actions where municipalities are identified as “suggested implementation partners”

