
TO: CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2005 July 20
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING **FILE:** 33000 01
SUBJECT: B.C. / WORLD RIVERS DAY 2005
PURPOSE: To request Council approval for the proposed approach to B.C. / World Rivers Day in Burnaby.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council approve the proposed approach to B.C. / World Rivers Day as outlined in this report and authorize staff to pursue corporate sponsorship for the *Explore the Foreshore* event.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Commission; Mark Angelo, Head of the BCIT Fish Wildlife and Recreation Program and Chair of World Rivers Day, 3700 Willingdon Avenue, Burnaby, B.C. V5G 3H2; and Jennifer Grenz, Projects Coordinator, Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia, 334-1367 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C., V6H 4A9.

REPORT**1.0 BACKGROUND**

B.C. Rivers Day is an annual event sponsored by the Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia which occurs on the last Sunday in September. B.C. 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 B.C. waterways.

The City of Burnaby first proclaimed B.C. Rivers Day in 1993, becoming the first municipality in the province to do so. Subsequently, some 50 municipalities have proclaimed B.C. Rivers Day in their communities, with more than 40,000 people participating in various events annually. 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

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Foreshore Park, interpretive walks, creek clean-ups, riparian plantings and the development of environmental media including posters, brochures and murals. These efforts have been extremely successful and well received.

2004 marked the 25th anniversary of B.C. Rivers Day. This year, through the dedication of Mark Angelo, founder of B.C. Rivers Day, the United Nations announced that it will begin celebrating World Rivers Day on the last Sunday in September to coincide with B.C. Rivers Day. The purpose of this report is to seek the concurrence of Council to initiate planning for B.C. / World Rivers Day, with a desire to expand the scope and profile of the *Explore the Foreshore* event in Burnaby. As the Environment Committee will not be meeting during the summer months of July and August, this report has been forwarded directly to Council with concurrence of the Environment Committee Chair. The Chair of the Committee has also reviewed the program mentioned in this report and concurs with the proposed preliminary approach.

2.0 PROPOSED APPROACH

The *Explore the Foreshore* event, which is a key component of Burnaby's BC Rivers Day activities, first occurred in 2001. The event has grown in scope and popularity over the past four years, with the 2004 program featuring such elements as:

- displays by local environmental groups and agencies;
- games, arts and crafts by the City's Parks and Recreation Department, the Vancouver Aquarium, SFU's "Let's Talk Science" program, Burnaby Potter's Guild, Burnaby Mountain Secondary School and BCIT;
- interpretive walks in Mandarin as well as English;
- musicians and children's entertainers;
- the REMAX hot air balloon, which offers free rides to the public;
- hands-on exploration of watersheds and fish;
- Trees For Life 10K Fun Run (which happens on-site immediately prior to the B.C. Rivers Day activities); and
- a free salmon barbeque.

This event program has worked well with some 3,000 people attending the event last year. It is proposed that the 2005 program follow the format of previous years, with special emphasis made to the awareness and conservation of rivers throughout the world.

The City and BCIT have co-sponsored BC Rivers Day since its inception. This year, the City will again work with Mark Angelo, Chair of world rivers day, with BCIT and with the Outdoor Research Council of BC to ensure this events success. Corporate sponsorship has been secured in the past for the *Explore the Foreshore* event, and there is a desire to pursue this again. The free salmon barbeque, for example, has been provided with the generous support of local businesses since 2001. With Council's concurrence, staff will pursue the possibility of corporate sponsorship.

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In addition to the *Explore the Foreshore* event, a number of other BC Rivers Day events have regularly occurred in previous years, including the proclamation of B.C. 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 for B.C. / World Rivers Day, working closely with CUPE Local 23 to provide resources such as dumpsters and staff assistance at various event locations.

3.0 CONCLUSION

B.C. Rivers Day has become the largest event of its kind in Canada. With the U.N. declaration of World Rivers Day awareness and participation is expected to continue to grow in to the future. Burnaby was the first municipality to proclaim B.C. Rivers Day in 1993, and has held several events each year in cooperation with community groups, CUPE Local 23, local businesses and agencies. In light of World Rivers Day, there is a desire to expand the scope and profile of the *Explore the Foreshore* event at Burnaby's Fraser Foreshore Park, which the City has sponsored in conjunction with BCIT since the event's inception in 2001.

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



J.S. Belhouse, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

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Copied to: Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Director Engineering
Director Finance
President, CUPE Local 23

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