
TO: CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2006 August 10

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING **FILE:** 33000-01
Ref: Rivers Day

SUBJECT: WORLD RIVERS DAY 2006

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

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 *Nature Next Door – Explore Still Creek* event.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Commission and to Jennifer Grenz, Projects Coordinator, Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia, 334-1367 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6H 4A9 and to Mark Angelo, Program Head, Fish Wildlife and Recreation Program, BCIT.

R E P O R T**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 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. 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, interpretive walks, creek clean-ups, riparian plantings and the development of environmental media including posters, brochures and murals. These efforts have been successful and well received.

To: City Manager
From: Director Planning and Building
Re: World Rivers Day 2006
2006 August 10 Page 2

In 2004, Burnaby celebrated the 25th anniversary of B.C. 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 B.C. 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 profiles the Still Creek corridor 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

The proposed theme for World Rivers *Nature Next Door – Explore Still Creek* will focus on hands-on community events. In 2006, World Rivers Day in Burnaby aims 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 will be made aware of the environmental and recreational values of Still Creek, and the need to conserve rivers throughout the world. This year the proposed activities being considered include:

- Invasive plant removals and information sessions
- Riparian planting activities
- Creek cleanups
- Library displays
- Free tours of the Wildlife Rescue Association garden
- Free Central Valley Greenway bike tour
- Free paddling trip along the Still Creek corridor
- Free ecology walks in English and Mandarin by the Green Club
- Educational displays and activities
- Food for event participants

The City and BCIT have co-sponsored B.C. Rivers Day/World Rivers Day since its inception. This year, the City will again work with BCIT and the Outdoor Recreation Council of B.C. 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 local businesses since 2001. With Council's concurrence, staff will again pursue the possibility of corporate sponsorship.

To: City Manager
From: Director Planning and Building
Re: World Rivers Day 2006
2006 August 10 Page 3

In addition to the *Nature Next Door – 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 raise awareness for the Still Creek Integrated Stormwater Management Plan titled: “*From Pipe Dreams to Healthy Streams*” and encourage businesses to become stewards of their watershed. Staff from local businesses would be invited to participate in *Burnaby’s Nature Next Door – Explore Still Creek* activities.

Lastly, a number of other river-associated events have occurred in previous years, including the proclamation of B.C. Rivers Day/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 B.C. 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 refocus this event on the Still Creek corridor, and to engage residents to participate in the restoration of their watershed. This year’s World Rivers Day event will be sponsored in conjunction with BCIT, as has been the case in the past.

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 *Nature Next Door – Explore Still Creek* 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

YH:RW/sa

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

