
TO: CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2008 July 09

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING **FILE:** 33000 01
Reference: World Rivers Day

SUBJECT: WORLD RIVERS DAY 2008

PURPOSE: To request Council approval for the proposed approach to World Rivers Day 2008 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 *Water and Wildlife - Explore Guichon Creek* event.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia, 334 – 1367 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC, V6H 4A9, and to Mark Angelo, Program Head, Fish Wildlife and Recreation Program, BCIT.

REPORT**1.0 BACKGROUND**

World Rivers Day is an annual event sponsored by the Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia created to celebrate the spectacular natural, cultural and heritage value of British Columbia's rivers. World Rivers Day is celebrated on the last Sunday in September 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 BC waterways.

The City of Burnaby first proclaimed BC Rivers Day in 1993, becoming the first municipality in the province to do so. 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 BC Rivers Day. 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, and more recently, events that focus on the Still Creek corridor, including the *Nature Next Door – Explore Still Creek* event in 2006, and the *Salmon in*

To: City Manager
From: Director Planning and Building
Re: World Rivers Day 2008

2008 July 09..... Page 2

the City – Explore Still Creek event in 2007. Past River's Day celebrations have included interpretive walks, creek clean-ups, riparian plantings, an environmental film festival and the development and display of environmental media including books, posters, and murals. These efforts have been successful and well received by the community.

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 a watercourse within the Still Creek watershed (Guichon Creek), 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

In 2006, World River's Day in Burnaby aimed to create new opportunities for residents to learn more about and become engaged with Still Creek as one of our key urban waterways. In 2007, the event focus continued to be centred on Still Creek, with the *Salmon in the City – Explore Still Creek* theme. The 2007 event took place at the new Jim Lorimer Park and included educational and interactive display material, walking tours along Still Creek, creek clean-up and native plantings, and public consultation opportunities for the new park.

In 2008, in consultation with local community partners, including BCIT, Metro Vancouver, the Rivershed Society of BC and others, the proposed theme for this year's World River's Day is *Water and Wildlife - Explore Guichon Creek*. The focus of this event will continue to raise awareness of the Still Creek watershed and the City's waterways, by focusing on one of its tributaries, Guichon Creek. Guichon Creek runs through BCIT's campus, which will encourage the local community, including students, to participate and learn more about their local waterways. In 2008, the following free activities are being considered:

- A fish release of cutthroat trout fry into Guichon Creek
- A "Rivershed Stories" contest hosted by the Rivershed Society of BC
- A naturalist led walk along Guichon Creek
- Walking and cycling trips along the Still Creek corridor
- Environmental film festival hosted by the Green Ideas Network
- Invasive plant removals, native plantings and creek cleanups
- Food for World River's Day event participants
- Educational displays and activities
- Burnaby eco-sculpture exhibit and planting opportunity
- A "Biodiversity Blitz" to measure biodiversity on the Still Creek corridor

To: City Manager
From: Director Planning and Building
Re: World Rivers Day 2008
2008 July 09..... Page 3

The City and BCIT have co-sponsored BC Rivers Day/World Rivers Day since its inception. This year, the City will again work with BCIT and the Outdoor Research Council of BC to ensure the success of World Rivers Day, and highlight an open portion of Guichon Creek running through BCIT campus. 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.

As with a number of other river-associated events that have occurred in previous years, including the proclamation of 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, staff support is key to event success. 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 BC 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 continue raising awareness of the Still Creek watershed, and to engage residents, businesses, and students to learn more about and participate in restoring local waterways. As in previous years, this year's World Rivers Day event will be sponsored in conjunction with BCIT and the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC.

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 *Water and Wildlife - Explore Guichon Creek* event. A further report will be provided to Council closer to the event date with a finalized list of events.



B. Luksun, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

MW:sa

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