



Item .....
Meeting .....2009 Jul 20

COUNCIL REPORT

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**TO:** CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2009 July 14

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

**SUBJECT: WORLD RIVERS DAY 2009**

**PURPOSE:** To request Council approval for the proposed approach to World Rivers Day 2009 in Burnaby.

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**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 *Go With the Flow – Explore Still 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 to celebrate the spectacular natural, cultural and heritage value of our 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. BC Rivers Day has since expanded and is now called World 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 and its tributaries. In 2007, World Rivers Day in Burnaby was held at Still

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Creek, with the theme of *Salmon in the City – Explore Still Creek*. This 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, Guichon Creek, a tributary of Still Creek that runs through the BCIT campus, was the focus of the *Water and Wildlife – Explore Guichon Creek* event. Activities included a fish release of cutthroat trout, naturalist walks, invasive species removal and native planting, live music, entertainment and educational displays. 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 again profiles Still 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 Chair of the Environment Committee.

## 2.0 PROPOSED APPROACH

City Planning, Parks, and Engineering staff have consulted with local community partners, including BCIT, Burnaby Streamkeeper organizations, Evergreen, the Stream of Dreams Mural Society, the Still Moon Arts Society, Better Environmentally Sound Transportation, Metro Vancouver and others, in developing the proposed theme and event program for World Rivers Day 2009 *Go With the Flow - Explore Still Creek*. The focus of this event will continue to raise awareness of the Still Creek watershed and will encourage people to make the connection between environmentally-friendly choices in their lives, such as green transportation, and preserving our watercourses. The proposed site for the event will be at the intersection of Sperling Avenue and the Central Valley Greenway Urban Trail in Burnaby Lake Park, giving community members the opportunity to take the SkyTrain or use the Central Valley Greenway Urban Trail to get to the event. In 2009, the following free activities are being considered:

- Family paddle along Still Creek
- Naturalist led walks along Still Creek
- Educational displays and activities
- Stream of Dreams mural creation
- Cycling tour on the Central Valley Greenway
- Incentive prizes for those who cycle, walk or take transit to the event
- Free bicycle valet parking provided by Better Environmentally Sound Transportation at the event site
- Invasive plant removals, native plantings and creek cleanups
- Self-guided tour of watercourses in Burnaby
- Burnaby eco-sculpture exhibit
- Environmental film festival hosted by the Green Ideas Network

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- Live music
- Food for World River's Day event participants


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 Recreation Council of BC to ensure the success of World Rivers Day, and highlight one of Burnaby's most significant waterways. 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 in previous years, staff will continue to assist with the event, working closely with CUPE Local 23 to provide resources such as dumpsters and staff assistance at the 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 *Go With the Flow – Explore Still 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/sla

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