

use these ditches as habitat. The City applied to the Province for a Water Act approval “Section 9” with Phase 1 development. However, the Province determined that since the waterways are man-made and not historic, the Water Act did not apply to the site drainage. The City recognized the fisheries values of the on-site ditch-like creeks and ensured fisheries authorizations and enhancement strategies were applied throughout the project.

In 1999 and 2002, the City retained Dillon Consulting Ltd. as our Environmental Consultant to evaluate the fisheries values of all of the watercourses/ditches on the Campbell Heights development area, and to determine conceptual options for retention and mitigation prior to any development proceeding. Dillon Consulting presented recommendations, which were subsequently incorporated into the design of the Phase 1 development.

As part of the Phase 1 development of industrial lands at Campbell Heights, a number of existing ditches/watercourses were relocated as illustrated on the attached maps. The project involved the protection/creation of 14 ha of riparian area and 3.5 ha for a detention facility. This included the reconstruction of over 2,000 metres of meandering creek to preserve existing vegetation, construction of pools and wetlands along the creek alignments, and a stormwater management pond. In addition, the development was designed with sustainable features to enhance water infiltration and water quality from the site. Such features included the construction of bioswales on each parcel, installation of oil/water separators on each parcel, oil/water separators on all City storm systems prior to creek outfalls and biofiltration ponds at each outfall. This multi-tiered treatment system is one of the most advanced in terms of incorporating sustainable features in a development area for the protection of our natural environment.

In 2005, the City completed the creek relocation works after receiving approvals from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), which included providing corridor widths in excess of those recommended by the original Dillon Consulting Ltd. reports. The approvals from DFO also required the City to provide temporary habitat during construction and to provide habitat to an equal or higher value than the pre-development condition from May 1, 2004 until September 15, 2009. This was to allow time for the initial construction, and the vegetation and complexing of the creek network to be completed and to function as intended.

The City has diligently been proceeding with the necessary work to ensure compliance with all DFO permit requirements. All relocations are done on a “no net loss” basis and invariably additional habitat is created. The allegations of a loss of 600 metres of creek habitat in the Suzuki report are unsubstantiated.

Qualified professionals have undertaken all design, construction, and monitoring activities related to fish habitat protection and compensation. When difficulties have arisen, staff have been quick to resolve these. Some of the difficulties have been illegal trespass by all terrain vehicles through the creek and pond sites during and just after construction, beavers, and isolated bank instability. To address these issues, staff have hired 24-hour/7-day-a-week security guards, fenced riparian areas, conducted bioengineering on the slopes and installed extensive plantings along the corridors.

Additional silt control and full-time silt monitoring occurred throughout the construction process and is still occurring as building sites develop.

Enclosed are some current pictures of the creek and wetland areas that were reconstructed with this project. Salmon returned to the area in 2005 and 2006, and have continued to thrive in the reconstructed channel. SHaRP, SNAP and RELEAF programs, along with contractors working for the City, continue to plant the riparian and wetland areas of the creek corridor. DFO staff are satisfied with the creek preservation and restoration work.

In 2005/2006, staff set up a working group with local streamkeeper groups and members of the public concerned about activities in Campbell Heights and specifically the Stokes Pit area. Staff have met on 3 occasions with the group to go over works conducted to date and those planned to occur, and to have them assist in reporting of violations. The group even conducted a community planting in 2006 on the site. The Suzuki Foundation biologist was invited to those meetings and did attend one in 2005 but has not attended the subsequent meetings even though he was invited, but has agreed to visit the site with staff this coming week.

The Suzuki Foundation Report and the newspaper articles are a repetition of allegations made in 2005 and only provide a quick 'snap-shot' of a large project during its construction. As a result, the observations and results reported do not provide a fair assessment of the current activities, as many works were actively under construction at the time of their assessment. The Suzuki Foundation Report fails to examine the larger picture that includes evaluating the pre-existing condition, the post-construction condition, and the ongoing watercourse stewardship the City and local community groups have undertaken and are continuing to undertake.

CONCLUSION

Staff will continue to work towards completing the fisheries enhancement works as per DFO's authorization. The City is committed to the preservation and retention of fisheries and wildlife habitat while retaining the flexibility to adjust its location from time to time to accommodate reasonable land uses and development. All Federal, Provincial, and Municipal legislation, Policies and Protocols have been followed and will continue to be followed for this and all other sites throughout Surrey. The City has a good working relationship with the DFO and fully intends to maintain such a relationship. The DFO is satisfied with the works that have been undertaken in Campbell Heights in relation to the recent land development project. The newspaper article is based on information that does not reflect the situation that presently exists.

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Attachments: Maps & Photographs