



Corporate Report

NO: R023

COUNCIL DATE: March 9, 2009

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: March 2, 2009
FROM: General Manager, Engineering FILE: 4809-901
SUBJECT: 2009 Salmon Habitat and Restoration ("SHaRP") Program

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Engineering Department recommends that Council receive this report as information.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to advise Council about the SHaRP program for 2009.

BACKGROUND

The 2009 SHaRP program is a major component of the Surrey Nature Matters initiative. The SHaRP program started in 1996, employing high school and post-secondary students during the summer for the purpose of fish habitat enhancement. Through the intervening years, the program has grown in size and scope, and has evolved into a more integrated approach to watershed restoration. Recent projects have included:

- In-stream restoration and enhancement;
- Agricultural stream enhancement;
- Community education displays and events;
- Education for businesses geared towards protecting water quality;
- Invasive plant species removal;
- Riparian and wetland planting;
- Neighbourhood awareness/education campaigns; and
- Community partnerships.

The program is unique among municipalities due to its size, longevity, integrated watershed-based approach and commitment to career-oriented leadership training for local youth. Over the tenure of the program, summer employment has been provided for over 350 Surrey students.

DISCUSSION

Overview of the 2008 SHaRP Program

In 2008, the SHaRP program hired 7 post-secondary Team Leaders and 16 Surrey high school students for a total of 23 student employees. These students were divided into five teams, each focusing on one of following elements:

- Community Education
- Industrial Education
- Media and Public Relations
- Watershed Enhancement
- Agricultural Stewardship

Consistent with the City's goal of providing year-round student opportunities as part of Nature Matters, a fall SHaRP program was organized for a second year, which allowed planting projects and community event participation to continue through to mid-November. This allowed the program employees to complete an additional 5 enhancement sites and attend an additional 3 community events.

The funding breakdown for the 2008 program was as follows:

City of Surrey	
- Engineering Capital Works	\$124,000
- Nature Matters	\$ 20,000
- Drainage Utility	\$150,000
Outside Organizations	<u>\$ 58,226</u>
Grand Total	\$ 352,226

Outside funders that in past years provided funding support to SHaRP are no longer able to provide funding assistance as their funding criteria are being changed to address the greater number of non-profit organizations applying for similar funding.

However, the Ministry of Environment Habitat Conservation Trust Fund provided the program with a second consecutive year of funding support. The Fraser Salmon Watersheds Program was a new funder for 2008. This is a joint funding program offered by the Pacific Salmon Foundation and the Fraser Basin Council. An application will be made to this Program for 2009 funding assistance.

Proposed 2009 SHaRP program

Similar to last year, this year, the SHaRP program will be comprised of 5 teams with each team being responsible for one of the following areas:

- Watershed Enhancement
- Community Education
- Industrial Education
- Agricultural Stewardship
- Media & Public Relations

The program will run primarily within the spring and summer months. The program may be extended into the fall months, similar to 2008 to complete planting projects and to support community event participation; however, this is contingent on external funding being obtained to allow for such an extension. A brief description of the proposed 2009 work plan is documented in Appendix I.

Funding for 2009 SHaRP Program

The SHaRP program fulfills two roles, namely fish habitat protection/restoration and summer youth employment/training. There is currently \$290,000 of confirmed funding available from City sources including the Drainage Utility, Nature Matters and capital works projects. Cost savings to capital projects are realized through students conducting the environmental work rather than contractors. Based on the confirmed funding, the 2009 program will include 20 students. Staff is continuing to search for external funding partners that can supplement the confirmed City funding. The summary of confirmed and expected funding for 2009 is as follows:

City Funding

- Drainage Utility	\$140,000
- Nature Matters	\$ 50,000
- Engineering Capital Projects	<u>\$100,000</u>
<i>Sub-total</i>	\$290,000

Potential Funding

Fraser Salmon Watersheds Program	\$ 41,500
Ministry of Environment	\$ 20,000
School District #36	\$ 25,000
Habitat Conservation Trust Fund	\$ 18,200
Walmart-Evergreen Green Grant	\$ 10,000
Pacific Salmon Foundation – Community Grant	<u>\$ 8,000</u>
<i>Potential Funding Sub-total</i>	\$122,700

The Ministry of Environment and School District #36 are being requested to provide funding in 2009. In 2007, SD#36 provided the SHaRP program with \$25,000. In 2007 and 2008, the Ministry of Environment provided the SHaRP program with \$20,000 in each year.

In 2008, \$55,226 of external funding was secured to support the SHaRP program. If a similar amount of external funding is achieved for the 2009 program, the program will be increased to include 26 student employees.

Table 1

SHaRP Program Funding	No. of Students	Program Amount
Confirmed Funding to Date from Surrey	20	\$290,000
Confirmed Funding & Similar Amount of Ext. Funding Secured as in 2008 (\$55,000)	26	\$327,000
Potential additional Ext. Funding (\$120,000)	34	\$385,000

2009 Consultant Assignment for SHaRP

The Engineering Department will oversee the 2009 SHaRP program with the day-to-day management being provided by Dillon Consulting Ltd. (Dillon). Dillon has managed the program in all previous years of the Program's existence.

Dillon has developed a comprehensive training program for the students and is intimately familiar with the community events and stewardship groups with whom SHaRP works each year. For several years, they were also successful in securing funding on the City's behalf through Human Resources Development Canada. Over the years, Dillon's program management costs have not changed significantly. Their efficiency and knowledge of the program has lead to good value for the City.

The Engineering Department will be awarding Dillon Consulting Ltd. the contract to manage the SHaRP program in 2009 on a sole source basis given their experience with the program over the last 12 years.

CONCLUSION

As in other years, the primary benefit of the SHaRP program remains fish habitat restoration and protection; however, important spin-off benefits are the employment opportunities and experience that are provided for Surrey secondary and post-secondary students. Staff is actively pursuing program funding from the Provincial and Federal Governments, as well as other external sources. Dillon Consulting Ltd. will manage the program on behalf of the City in 2009 as in all previous years of the Program.

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LA/KZ/CAB/brb

Appendix I - Description of Proposed 2009 SHaRP Program

Description of Proposed 2009 SHaRP Program

The five work areas described in the following paragraphs were selected as the focus for the 2009 SHaRP program on the basis of their contribution to enhancing existing City projects, restoring and enhancing creek and stream locations and the benefits that would accrue to the general public and government agencies.

- **Watershed Enhancement**

The Watershed team's focus will be to complete in-stream enhancement work and plantings that complement ongoing City projects. The team will work extensively to complete enhancement works in riparian areas that are required as part of the City's commitments to fulfill planting requirements to satisfy Fisheries and Oceans Authorizations associated with past capital work projects. By linking the needs of Surrey capital works projects and the abilities of the SHaRP team, the City is able to obtain better value to complete these required works. The team will also continue to undertake stabilization of erosion sites identified in the ravine assessment report completed in 2007, enhance the creek relocation initiative and wetlands created for the Campbell Heights development, and complete restoration works at riparian sites identified by the general public and stewardship groups.

- **Community Education**

The focus for the Community Education team will continue to be directed at raising awareness of natural areas and fish habitat within Surrey. This year, emphasis will be placed on improving water quality within Surrey's watercourses and limiting intrusions into watercourses, wetlands, and riparian areas. The team will attend various community events and deliver education programs at day camps throughout the spring and summer. The team will also organize neighbourhood awareness days to inform residents in neighbourhoods of the local natural areas and creeks and sustainable practices that can be implemented in their daily tasks. New display materials and programs will be developed that will focus on various environmental initiatives that are a part of the overall Nature Matters program; the new displays and programs will be utilized throughout the year by the Nature Matters program.

- **Industrial Education**

The Industrial Education team will again target industrial areas within Surrey and go door to door, providing educational information to businesses. The team will also gather information to add to the City database that is being developed to help track pollution and spill events when they occur in the City's storm sewer system and/or watercourses. It should be noted that areas targeted last year by the students have resulted in industrial park tenants contacting the City regarding pollution concerns associated with neighbouring tenants; this would indicate that the education initiatives within the targeted areas played an important role in community awareness and responsibility. This team will also complete an extensive storm drain marking program that was started in 2008, to increase the awareness of the sensitivity of storm water runoff for Surrey's salmon habitat. Storm drain markings will be placed adjacent to storm drains in high pedestrian locations on arterial roads and around City facilities (e.g., recreation centres).

- **Agricultural Stewardship**

The Agricultural Stewardship team will continue to be active in the agricultural community. In the eight years that this team has been part of SHaRP, they have expanded their scope from on-farm, in-stream projects to include community outreach, education, and participation in many agricultural events. The team worked on several projects in partnership with local community groups and provided information to the local farm community on property stewardship. The team conducted an extensive resident contact program for landowners living on Twin Creeks within the Little Campbell Watershed. The team also conducted invasive plant removal activities to eradicate invasive plants from City property adjacent to agricultural property in order to reduce the potential of invasive plant impacts on crops, and to increase the interaction of the general community with the agricultural community. In 2009, we hope to continue to develop partnerships within the farming community and to work closely with the Surrey Agricultural Advisory Committee and the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands to ensure that their initiatives within Surrey are achieved.

- **Media & Public Relations**

The Media & Public Relations team presents the visible component of the program that is essential to the overall success of SHaRP. This team actively searches for opportunities for multimedia coverage to highlight the environmental initiatives accomplished by Surrey through various programs, such as SHaRP. In 2009, the media team will link search for media attention across a wide cultural base in order to spread the stewardship message to more audiences, and will help host joint events with other 'Nature Matters' initiatives throughout the summer.