



Date: February 23, 2004

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
**SUBJECT: AUDUBON SANCTUARY CERTIFICATION FOR
FRASERVIEW, LANGARA AND MCCLEERY GOLF
COURSES**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

Fraserview, Langara, McCleery Golf Courses are comprised of 186 hectares (460 acres), which totals almost 15% of the city's parkland. These sites provide prime habitat for numerous species of birds, mammals and aquatic wildlife.

The Vancouver Park Board's strategic plan identifies Environmental Stewardship as a key area - the goal being: "Protect and preserve natural areas in the City, operate in an environmentally responsible manner, and develop public awareness of conservation and ecological values". To this end, early in 2000 staff began the process of attaining Audubon Sanctuary certification for our three major municipal golf courses. The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System of Canada (ACSSC) is a national, non-profit, environmental organization, dedicated to enhancing and protecting wildlife and their habitats, and promoting environmental quality through education, research, and stewardship action.

DISCUSSION

For the past four years, staff have been involved in the process of having the Vancouver's three major municipal golf courses recognized as fully certified properties by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System of Canada. Final Certification was awarded to Fraserview Golf Course on October 31, 2003, while certificates were awarded to McCleery and Langara on January 20, 2004.

The ACSSC educates people about environmental stewardship and motivates them to take action in their daily lives that will enhance and protect wildlife and their habitats and conserve natural resources. In order to become fully certified, golf courses are required to plan, implement and document efforts in six environmental quality areas:

1. **Resource Inventory and Environmental Plan** - Course staff and volunteers completed a basic inventory of the course property, including: size of areas; types and sizes of various habitats; site history; plants and wildlife present; and other resources. An Environmental Plan was developed to evaluate current management strategies, define goals and priorities, and outline objectives for achieving environmental quality in all areas. The Environmental Plan is the blueprint for achieving certification.

2. **Wildlife & Habitat Management** - This category encompasses the management of areas to provide habitat for wildlife on the golf course. Some of the initiatives undertaken include:
 - establishing a comprehensive wildlife inventory for our properties
 - leaving woodland under story where possible
 - naturalizing out of play areas by not mowing or maintaining these areas
 - leaving dead trees standing where not dangerous, thus providing a food source and shelter for birds
 - mounting bird boxes
 - incorporating native plants into the landscape
 - re-forestation with native trees

3. **Integrated Pest Management** - A comprehensive IPM program employs proper cultural and pest management practices, educates workers and members of the public about responsible plant management and safety, and ensures a clean maintenance complex. Our IPM philosophy and practice emphasizes:
 - promoting sound cultural practices to enhance turf health and minimize pest problems and the damage they may cause
 - constantly monitoring for signs of pest problems
 - properly diagnosing pests and turf diseases, thus ensuring the appropriate method of control is used
 - doing regular soil and tissue tests to maintain plant health
 - when chemical control is required, choosing chemicals on the basis of highest effectiveness with the least impact to health and environment
 - chemicals are not used for aesthetic purposes - they are used only to maintain quality playing conditions and to protect the golf courses' assets

4. **Water Conservation** - Water conservation is a key environmental concern for golf courses all across Canada. Conservation management includes maximizing irrigation efficiency; determining proper irrigation times and rates; reducing hectares irrigated; recapturing and re-using water; and incorporating drought tolerant plant species. Vancouver's municipal golf courses were redeveloped between 1993 and 1999 and have new and efficient irrigation systems. Langara and McCleery do not use city water as they get their water from underground aquifers. Fraserview uses some city water but has its irrigation supply supplemented by storm sewer runoff from the surrounding neighborhood.

5. **Water Quality Management** - This section ensures sound practices are used to maintain the water quality in the ponds and streams that exist on the properties. Some of the practices being followed include:
- providing buffer zones around all water features where no chemicals or fertilizers are used
 - using cultural methods to control algae and other unwanted aquatic plants
 - use of controlled release fertilizers to prevent nutrient loading to water sources
 - protecting streams and ponds from bank erosion
 - ensuring equipment wash areas are contained and do not contaminate water features
 - establishing water quality monitoring programs for all water features
6. **Outreach and Education** - This category is designed to gain public recognition and support for environmental practices, and increase understanding and appreciation of wildlife and environmental quality on the golf course. A resource advisory group, made up of course personnel, golfers and local naturalists help plan and implement various projects within the different certification categories, and help to ensure the long-term success of environmental management practices. Appendix "A" lists our partners who contributed in this component. Some examples include:
- school children built and mounted bird boxes at Langara
 - volunteer birders from the Vancouver Natural History Society compiled a detailed bird list for Fraserview and McCleery (84 species have been identified so far - see Appendix "B")
 - writing regular updates to post on the Clubhouse bulletin boards
 - writing press releases
 - providing nature trails around our properties so that people other than golfers can enjoy the beauty of our properties
 - planting native trees at Langara and Fraserview golf Courses

CONCLUSION

Certification as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary, within the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program, is designed to recognize and support golf courses that have worked to ensure a high degree of environmental quality for both people and wildlife. Certification demonstrates a course's leadership, commitment, and high standards of environmental management. Of the more than 2000 golf courses in Canada, 29 are currently certified by the ACSSC. Fraserview, Langara and McCleery are the only municipal golf courses in western Canada to have achieved this prestigious designation, which reflects the dedication and leadership of the Board in promoting sustainable management practices and environmental stewardship.

Prepared by:
Vancouver East District
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

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APPENDIX "A"

Contributing Partners

Langara Golf Course:

John Oliver Secondary Students	Tree planting
Sexsmith Elementary Students	Nest boxes
Trudeau Elementary Students	Nest boxes
Laurier Elementary Students	Nest boxes

McCleery Golf Course:

Laurier Elementary Students	Bat boxes
Lloyd George Elementary Students	Bat boxes
John Oliver Secondary Students	Bat Boxes

Fraserview Golf Course:

Vancouver Natural History Society	Bird count
Stanley Park Ecology Society	Tree planting

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APPENDIX "B"

Bird Species Sighted at Fraserview and McCleery Golf Courses in 2003

1	American Coot	29	Glaucous-winged Gull	57	Pied-billed Grebe
2	American Goldfinch	30	Golden-crowned Kinglet	58	Pileated Woodpecker
3	American Robin	31	Golf Crowned Sparrow	59	Red Winged Blackbird
4	American Wigeon	32	Great blue Heron	60	Red-breasted Nuthatch
5	Bald Eagle	33	Greater Scaup	61	Red-tailed Hawk
6	Barn Swallow	34	Green Heron	62	Ring billed Gull
7	Belted Kingfisher	35	Green Winged Teal	63	Rock Dove
8	Bewick's Wren	36	Gull species	64	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
9	Black Swift	37	Hairy Woodpecker	65	Rufous Hummingbird
10	Black-capped Chickadee	38	Hammond's Flycatcher	66	Song Sparrow
11	Black-headed Grosbeak	39	Hooded Merganser	67	Spotted Towhee
12	Black-thr. Grey Warbler	40	House Finch	68	Stellar's Jay
13	Blue Winged Teal	41	House Sparrow	69	Swainson's Thrush
14	Brown Creeper	42	Hutton's Vireo	70	Swallow sp.
15	Bufflehead	43	Killdeer	71	Townsend's Warbler
16	Bushtit	44	Lesser Scaup	72	Tree Swallow
17	Canada Goose	45	Mallard	73	Varied Thrush
18	Cedar Waxwing	46	McGillivray's Warbler	74	Violet-green Swallow
19	Chestnut-bck. Chickadee	47	Merlin	75	Warbling Vireo
20	Common Goldeneye	48	Mew Gull	76	Western Tanager
21	Common Raven	49	Morning Dove	77	Western Wood-Pee-wee
22	Cooper's Hawk	50	Northern Flicker	78	White Crowned Sparrow
23	Dark-eyed Junco	51	Northern Shoveler	79	Willow Flycatcher
24	Double-crested Cormorant	52	Northwestern Crow	80	Wilson's Warbler
25	Downy Woodpecker	53	Olive-sided Flycatcher	81	Winter Wren
26	European Starling	54	Orange-crowned Warbler	82	Wood Duck
27	Fox Sparrow	55	Osprey	83	Yellow Warbler
28	Gadwall	56	Pacific slope Flycatcher	84	Yellow-rumped Warbler