

Date: March 2, 2007



TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
**SUBJECT: Stanley Park Restoration:
Update on Activities and Community Consultation**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board receive this report for information.

POLICY

In 2005, the Board approved the Strategic Plan for 2005-2010, which includes the following relevant statements:

- “We (the Park Board) will develop sustainable policies and practices that achieve environmental objectives while meeting the needs of the community.”
- “A broader public process is needed when issues are more complex or controversial, when the trade-offs are bigger, or when an issue is of particular interest to the public”.

In 2004, the Board adopted the Stanley Park Commemorative Integrity Statement, as an acknowledgment of the park’s status as a National Historic Site and as a reference for future decision-making.

In 1989, the Board approved the Stanley Park Forest Management Plan, a long-term strategy to ensure that Stanley Park stays a mature coniferous coastal forest while maintaining or enhancing wildlife, interpretive and scenic values.

BACKGROUND

Three major windstorms have struck Stanley Park (December 15, 2006, January 5 and January 9, 2007), causing significant destruction to about 40 hectares (100 acres) of the forest, damaging portions of the seawall and several forest trails between Prospect Point and Third Beach, and destabilizing the escarpment above the seawall.

On January 15, 2007, the Board approved the preparation of a restoration plan for Stanley Park. On January 30, 2007, Council approved a financial framework for the restoration project, which includes \$2 million from the City, a \$2 million donation from the Federal government, and an application for \$2 million in Provincial funding. The Board has also received more than \$3 million in donations and pledges from citizens and corporations.

DISCUSSION

This report provides an update on activities and community consultation since January 2007.

Restoration Objective

Park Board staff and members of the Steering Committee have drafted the following objective for the restoration of Stanley Park:

“To establish safe and environmentally sound conditions under which the damaged forest areas can regenerate into a native coastal forest that is appropriate for an urban park well used by the public.”

Inter-disciplinary Team

- A dedicated team of **Park Board staff** has been created under Jim Lowden, Director of Stanley District, and includes the supervisor of Stanley Park, an arborist, a planner, a researcher, a communications coordinator and a financial analyst.
- Park Board has appointed a **project manager** (Mr. Paul Lawson, the Manager of UBC’s Malcolm Knapp Research Forest in Maple Ridge), who will assist with the preparation of the Restoration Plan and coordinate field work by Park Board crews, consultants and contractors for the duration of the project.
- A volunteer **Steering Committee** has been formed and consists of well respected experts in the following fields: forestry, ecology and geotechnical engineering (see Appendix B for members). The committee offers the Park Board advice on the preparation of the Restoration Plan.
- A team of **consultants** is being retained to develop the detailed assessments and procedures which will drive the implementation of the plan. Disciplines include ‘hazard’ tree assessments, biology and ecology, habitat and environmentally sensitive mapping, entomology, archeology, wind analysis, fire risk analysis, and geotechnical engineering.

Field Work

- Park Board crews have removed fallen trees and branches from all roads and most forest trails. The fallen trees have been moved and are being stored at one of three locations in Stanley Park: the Service Yard parking lot, the Third Beach parking lot and the Prospect Point picnic ground.
- In order to provide a safe environment for park visitors and workers, Park Board crews and contractors have identified and cut ‘hazard’ trees (trees that are still standing but have a high probability of falling down) within 35 metres of roads and forest trails.

Mapping and Analysis

- Park Board staff and consultants have collected, generated or are in the process of creating a series of digital map layers for analytical purposes, including:
 - An air photo of Stanley Park flown on December 28, 2006;
 - Forest classification;

- Ecological classification;
- Environmentally sensitive areas;
- Species at risk;
- Invasive species (e.g. ivy, knotweed);
- Forest fire hazard;
- Archeological and heritage resources;
- Topography;
- Geology;
- Hydrology, including natural elements (e.g. streams) and human-built elements (e.g. culverts, drainage pipes);
- Utilities and services; and
- Transportation and recreation corridors.

Public Access

- All park roads were reopened by January 12th.
- Most forest trails east of the causeway were reopened by February 15th.
- One forest trail west of the causeway, connecting the pedestrian overpass near Beaver Lake and the Third Beach area, was reopened by March 1st.
- Most forest trails west of the causeway will reopen in March.
- The seawall, Siwash Rock Trail and Merilees Trail between Prospect Point and Third Beach are closed to the public and will remain so for several months.



Community Consultation

- In January, Park Board created a central email address for all public comments and inquiries: stanleyparkrestoration@vancouver.ca
- In mid-February, Park Board launched the 'Stanley Park Restoration' website at <http://vancouver.ca/parks/parks/stanley/restoration/index.htm>, which includes photographs, maps and information. The website also includes a 'feedback' page where citizens are encouraged to help us shape the upcoming Restoration Plan by answering questions. See Appendix A for details. As of March 2nd, more than 150 citizens have submitted answers.
- A 'partners and stakeholders committee' was established in February, including representatives from the Squamish Nation, the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, Parks Canada, the Stanley Park Ecological Society, Nature Vancouver, Tourism Vancouver, and the B.C. Society of Landscape Architects.
- Optimum Public Relations have been retained as a communications consultant to advise and assist with community consultation.
- A 500 person telephone survey of Greater Vancouver residents is being designed to assess public views on choices which the restoration team is facing. The survey will be undertaken in March.
- An insert will be included in community newspapers in March, which will include basic information about the project and a series of questions.
- UBC's Faculty of Forestry has offered to organize in March one or two public sessions to have a broad discussion about forest ecology and the restoration of the Stanley Park forest.
- In order to keep Park Board staff apprised of the project, an information sheet is being prepared for inclusion with their pay advice in April.
- The Park Board will hold a special meeting on Monday, April 16th to receive and review the draft Restoration Plan and to hear community comment on its content. The meeting will start at 7:00 pm and be held at the Roundhouse Community Centre (Pacific Boulevard and Davie Street). The public is invited to attend and make presentations to the Board. The report will be posted on the website on April 9, 2007.

SUMMARY

Stanley Park, one of Vancouver's cherished landmarks, has been significantly damaged by recent windstorms. A multi-disciplinary team has been gathered to assist with the preparation of a Restoration Plan. Community consultation has already begun and will continue until the Plan is presented to the Board in mid-April.

Prepared by:

JL/MD

Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

Vancouver, BC

:md

**Stanley Park Restoration Plan: Community Consultation Questions
March 2, 2007**

The following questions were posted on the Stanley Park Restoration website in mid-February:

Forest Access

The Park Board is stabilising and cleaning up the forest in response to the storm damage. Debris and tree removal will be based on risk assessments of public safety, fire and invasive plant and insect infestation. In this process should the forest areas, other than the existing trails, be made:

- More accessible to hikers?
- Less accessible to hikers?

Demonstration Projects

Some suggestions have been made that the damaged areas of the forest should be left as is to regenerate on its own. Should a portion of the damaged areas be left in this fashion as a demonstration project?

- Leave as is
- Replant now

New Buildings in the Park

Some suggestions have been made to mill some of the fallen timber in the park and use it to build new buildings or attractions in the park.

- Agree
- Disagree

**Stanley Park Restoration Plan: Community Consultation Questions
March 2, 2007**

The following questions were posted on the Stanley Park Restoration website in early March:

Retaining New Views

The windstorm resulted in many downed trees along the water side of Park Drive in the Prospect Point area, creating extensive new ocean viewpoints where once there was dense West Coast forest. Reforestation plans for this area will have an impact on these views. Should the Park Board's reforestation plans include retaining the new views or should the priority be the long term reforestation of this area?

- Retain all the views
- Replant the West Coast forest
- Retain only a few of the new viewpoints

Use of Fallen Trees

Thousands of trees were downed by the storm. Some will be left in the forest. Some may be used for special purposes (for example, by the First Nations and for the Olympics). After these uses have been addressed, should the fallen trees that are left over be sold and these funds used to create an endowment to ensure the long term restoration and protection of the park's forest?

- Yes
- No

What Kind of Forest Do We Want?

The Stanley Park forest of today is very different than it was in 1850. The forest then was mostly hemlock, cedar and Douglas fir trees in equal proportions. Logging in the late 1800s changed the proportion of trees. Today hemlocks make up approximately two thirds of the coniferous forest. Hemlocks seed themselves widely and regenerate quickly. They are much shorter-lived trees and are more prone to blowing down. Fir and cedar will not naturally reseed themselves in the current conditions of the park without human intervention. Should the restoration project attempt to re-establish the more historical ratios of the trees in the replanting program, which will require more intervention in the forest over a longer period of time?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Stanley Park Restoration Plan: Steering Committee Members
March 2, 2007

Bob Cavill, RPF

Manager of Watershed Division, Greater Vancouver Regional District

Mike Currie, M.Eng., P.Eng.

President, Kerr Wood Leidal Associates Ltd.

Dr. Hamish Kimmins

Professor of Forest Ecology, Department of Forest Sciences, University of British Columbia

Ken Lertzman, Ph.D.

Professor, School of Resource and Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University

Rick Slaco, RPF

Vice President and Chief Forester, International Forest Products Ltd.

David Smith, P.Eng

Principal, Thurber Engineering Ltd.

Ron Van Oord

Superintendent of Watershed Operations, Greater Vancouver Regional District

Dwight Yochim, RPF

Director of Professional Practice and Forest Stewardship, Association of BC Forest Professionals