

To: CAO for the Regional and Corporate Services Committee

Date: 2019-11-14

From: David Urban, Manager of Outdoor Recreation Planning
Christina Vugteveen, Manager of Parks Operations

File No: 6120-31-018

Subject: 2019 Job Creation Partnership Program Summary

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board receive the 2019 Job Creation Partnership Program Summary report;

AND THAT staff submit a grant application to the Job Creation Partnership program for funding in 2020 in partnership with Ecoworks Landscape Services Inc.

STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Support Environmental Stewardship
Support Healthy & Sustainable Community

PRIORITIES

Priority #5 Outdoor Recreation
Priority #4 Tourism

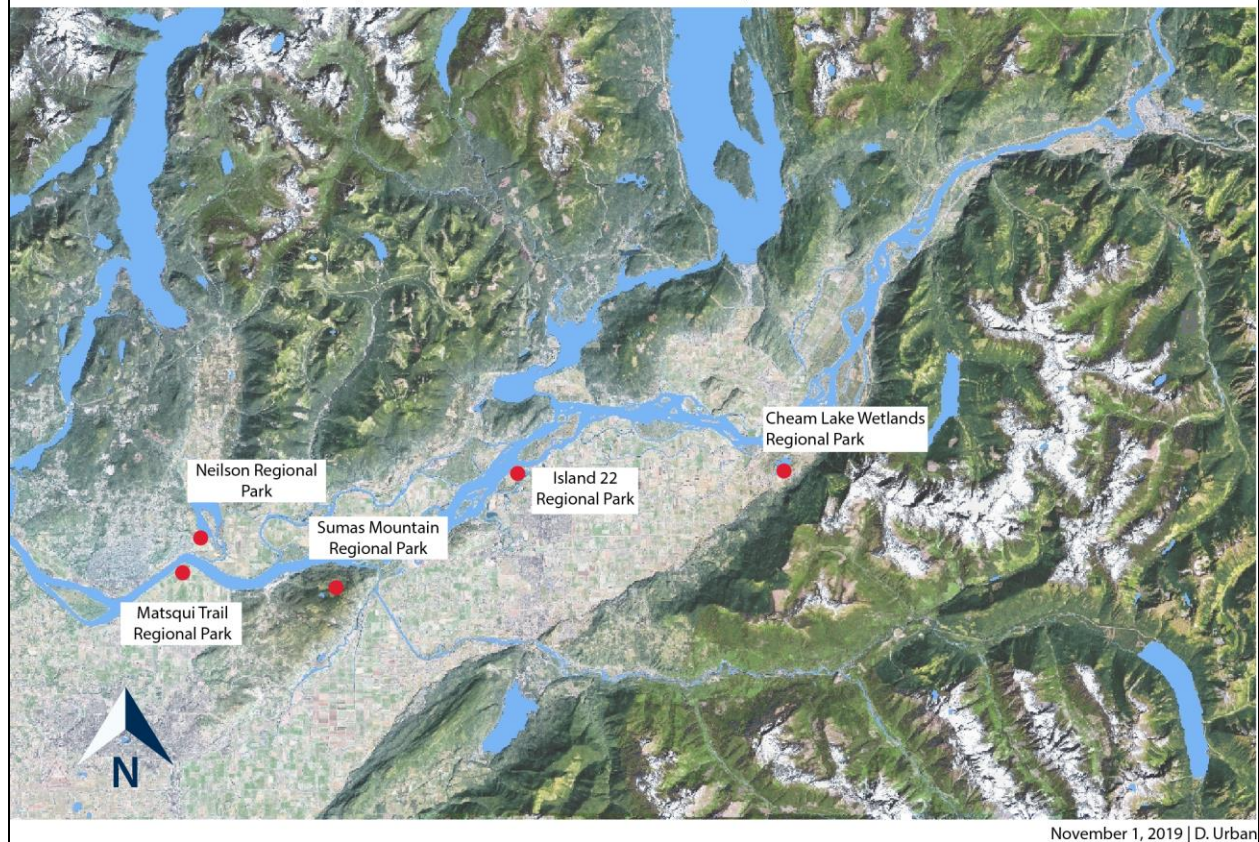
BACKGROUND

Since 2015, Ecoworks Landscape Services Inc. (Ecoworks), a wholly owned subsidiary of Mennonite Central Committee BC, in partnership with the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD), has been successful in receiving grants totaling more than \$1.1 million through the Job Creation Partnership (JCP) program to build out Experience the Fraser (ETF) and Regional Park amenities. The focus of this program is to provide employment and job skills training for unemployed workers. This year \$385,215 was received to continue this work.

DISCUSSION

News of another successful JCP grant came in May. Ecoworks provided the work experience for five eligible participants to start in June and end in November. Participants gained new skills in trail construction, carpentry and landscaping as well as exposure to and safe handling of heavy equipment operation. This skill building was acquired through the expansion of the ETF Canyon to Coast Trail and amenities related to ETF in Fraser Valley, see map below.

Job Creation Partnership: Experience the Fraser, Fraser Valley



Map: Project Locations

This year's program was quite collaborative in nature. The Regional Parks Department, Island 22 Equestrian Park Society, and Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC, all contributed capital improvement funding to this program.

Staff from both the Outdoor Recreation Planning and Regional Parks Departments worked together to develop the various projects, which included:

Matsqui Trail Regional Park – City of Abbotsford

- install ETF wayfinding signs

Sumas Mountain Regional Park – City of Abbotsford and Electoral Area G

- trail enhancement as part of the Canyon to Coast Trail

Neilson Regional Park – District of Mission

- parking lot entrance improvements and workshop facelift

Island 22 Regional Park – City of Chilliwack

- boat launch staging area and equestrian area improvements

Cheam Lake Wetlands Regional Park - Electoral Area D

- day-use and parking lot improvements
- universally accessible viewing platform

The feeling amongst the project partners was to apply again next year for JCP funding to continue to build upon the work that was achieved this year.

COST

Staff time to oversee a future JCP program would be fully funded via the provincial grants previously received for Experience the Fraser. This year's JCP grant covered half the salary of a Parks Technician for the duration of the program to manage the project construction and liaison with the program participants. Next year's application would include the same salary coverage.

CONCLUSION

The FVRD in partnership with Ecoworks has now secured over \$1,100,000 in funding through the JCP program. From both a human, and infrastructure perspective, this program has been positive for both partners and again this year's program was successful. As a result, the sentiment amongst the project partners is that there is interest in applying next year to continue to build out Experience the Fraser and associated amenities in our Regional Parks.

COMMENTS BY:

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| Stacey Barker, Director of Regional Services: | Reviewed and supported. |
| Mike Veenbaas, Director of Financial Services: | Reviewed and supported. |
| Jennifer Kinneman, Acting Chief Administrative Officer: | Reviewed and supported. |