



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MCRI plans ensure environmental protection during construction and restoration

Mission Creek is an invaluable and much-loved environmental asset that warrants continual protection. To that end, the Mission Creek Restoration Initiative (MCRI) has created an Environmental Protection Plan (EPP) and a Riparian Management Plan (RMP) that will guide all construction and restoration activities in and along the creek over the next number of months.

“In-stream work is highly regulated,” says project coordinator Steve Matthews. “All dike realignment and fish habitat restoration plans have been reviewed by experts within all levels of government, and the required authorizations have been secured under provincial and federal legislation. All work will be undertaken according to the applicable regulations, standards, and guidelines, and will be closely monitored by qualified engineering and biological professionals.”

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PLAN (EPP)

An EPP is a site-specific plan that ensures all project activities protect environmental assets and comply with government regulations. Developed by environmental professionals, EPPs list how to minimize potentially harmful effects on air, water, soil, and resident fish and wildlife.

EPPs vary depending on project location, scale, and type. For example, a large housing subdivision near a stream will require a much more comprehensive EPP than a home addition near the same stream. Given that MCRI construction is adjacent to an important urban water body, the EPP will address stringent requirements outlined in the federal *Fisheries Act* and the provincial *Water Act* and *Dike Maintenance Act*.

Environmental risks associated with this project are low, as noted in the dike design report prepared by engineering professionals. For example, dike realignment will be undertaken during the dry period, with no work occurring within Mission Creek or adjoining wetlands. Fish habitat restoration work planned for summer 2016 will be focused along the water’s edge, using various strategies to minimize aquatic impacts. These include isolating the work area from flowing or standing water, and scheduling work during the time of least risk for aquatic species.

“We understand that seeing big machines operating near Mission Creek will concern many people,” says Matthews. “I want to assure them that all precautions have been taken to minimize the project’s impact during construction, knowing that the long-term benefits of MCRI will be overwhelmingly positive.”

RIPARIAN MANAGEMENT PLAN (RMP)

The word 'riparian' is derived from the Latin word '*ripa*,' meaning river bank. In this case, the riparian area is the interface between land and Mission Creek, and riparian vegetation includes plants such as native black cottonwood trees that grow along the creek banks and adjoining floodplain.

The project's RMP, along with pre- and post-construction monitoring, will ensure that sufficient creek-side vegetation is protected to preserve important wildlife habitat values, and to maintain bank and channel stability and bank shading. A follow-up work plan outlining ongoing planting and maintenance is also being developed to enhance riparian renewal over the coming months and years.

For up-to-the-minute information about MCRI visit www.missioncreek.ca or contact Joanne de Vries at 250-766-1777, 250-300-8797, or jo@freshoutlookfoundation.org.