



# Press Release

## PITT RIVER HABITAT CREATION PROJECT BEGINS WEDNESDAY

**Port Coquitlam, BC – June 21, 2010...** A new 23-acre home for fish, birds and other wildlife is being created along the Pitt River in Port Coquitlam as part of a year-long habitat creation project starting construction Wednesday, June 23.

Two bald eagles' nests formerly on private property will be protected in the new habitat area, and a new intertidal riparian area will be created by relocating the existing dike along the Pitt River further inland. The area, which will be owned by the City, is located on the west side of the Pitt River and north of Lougheed Highway.

The City has worked with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, BC Ministry of Environment and other government agencies to ensure the project will provide productive habitat and benefit the overall ecological diversity of the area. These improvements are planned as part of the environmental compensation requirements associated with road construction, including Dominion Avenue and Broadway Street, and to provide for the enclosure of a number of watercourses on properties located in the Dominion Triangle area (south of Dominion Avenue, east of Ottawa Street and north of Lougheed Highway).

"It's really exciting – this will benefit our environment in a tangible way by providing habitat and enhancing our natural surroundings for recreation users," Mayor Greg Moore said. "It's a win-win that leverages contributions from development to enhance our community in many ways."

About 58% (\$5.7 million) of the \$9.9 million project costs is being funded by private property owners. The City will fund the remaining \$4.2 million from Developer Cost Charges (fees paid by developers to the City), a delay in construction of capital works and available grants.

Enclosed within a new dike, the new habitat area will be sculpted to resemble the foreshore. Channels, ponds, marsh, islands, woody debris and native shrubs, grasses and trees will be installed, along with roosting posts for birds and basking rocks for snakes. A viewing platform is also to be constructed with interpretive signage, as the new habitat is expected to draw even more birds and wildlife to the area, already popular with birdwatchers.

After the new dike is constructed around the perimeter of the new habitat area, the current dike parallel to the Pitt River will be removed, allowing the water to flow in and out of the area based on the tides of the Pitt River.

The project will be constructed by Conwest Contracting Ltd., with environmental monitoring by Envirowest Environmental Consultants and civil engineering inspection by Associated Engineering Ltd. and the City's engineering inspector. Active environmental monitoring of the habitat and landscaping will continue for five years.

The dike is part of the Traboulay PoCo Trail, and a top priority for the City is to maintain user access to the dike throughout the construction period. The new perimeter dike will be constructed over the summer months, followed by landscaping and habitat development works starting in the fall. Project completion is expected by June 2011.

For more information about the project, please visit [www.portcoquitlam.ca/pittriverhabitat](http://www.portcoquitlam.ca/pittriverhabitat) .

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