SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

A MODEL FOR ECOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC BALANCE

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The Burns Bog Sustainable Development Strategy was developed to explore and describe the potential for sustainable development opportunities at the Burns Bog peatlands. Burns Bog is the largest raised peat bog on the West Coast of the Americas, and home to over 150 blue and yellow-listed species of birds, 28 sensitive, vulnerable, or managed species of mammals and countless species of plant and insect. A multitude of factors make this 4000-hectare urban wilderness unique; it is an ecosystem that provides some of the worlds most effective ecological services. Some such services include atmospheric cleansing, climate regulation, and nutrient recycling by absorbing carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, and transforming them into elements that nourish the Boundary Bay region and the Fraser River, the world's largest salmon bearing river.

The current challenge is finding a way to harmonize the Bog's processes with human or industrial ones, necessitating a plan that delivers human and economic benefits without sacrificing the integrity of one of the Lower Mainland's most important ecosystems.

This report examines how the concepts of ecotourism, eco-industry and inter-group collaboration can guide development efforts, protect the integrity of the ecosystem and stimulate investment. Design and construction practices that harmonize with Burns Bog's ecological process, rather than alter them, are suggested. Coordinated and timely action can potentially position Burns Bog as an internationally recognized model for sustainable development, research, and education. The report investigates a wide spectrum of development alternatives, and delivers an action play for its administrators, of which the following is an element:

THREE TIER ECO-EXPOSITION SITE

Three core development concepts are presented that are intended to provide a platform for environmentally responsible practices, processes and technologies. The realization of these proposals relies upon a sustainable development paradigm; that is, their design and construction should incorporate ecologically responsible methods as well as waste management, resource cycling and alternative energy technologies. Each tier has multiple components that together represent an opportunity for Delta to become an international attraction for investment, science, and travel while providing a national nucleus for environmental technologies, industrial ecology, and sustainable practices. To prevent further

disturbance of the Bog's ecological integrity, existing industrially zoned sites on the Bog's periphery are proposed as locations for the developments.

- RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FACILITY - to initiate further scientific study of peatlands' ecological processes, environmental technology innovation, and facilitate education initiatives.
- ECO-TOURISM FACILITY - to capitalize on the trend in global tourism markets towards natural experiences and low-impact behaviours while offering exposure to the latest technologies and practices in the environmental industry.
- ECO-INDUSTRIAL PARK - attracting industry leaders and investment from across Canada and around the world by providing an arena to showcase environmental technologies and sustainable practices.

Each of these proposals is examined in detail with particular attention paid to the unique ecological, social, economic and cultural characteristics of Burns Bog and British Columbia. Ultimately, the report reveals how the intelligent management of this resource will play a key roll in the future health and wealth of BC and its residents.

The notion of optional trade-offs between conservation and development interests through collaboration and innovation among all stakeholders for the enhancement of Delta and the region is paramount in this plan.