

For Information

DATE: August 9, 2011

REPORT TITLE: **2011 PEEL CHILDREN'S WATER FESTIVAL UPDATE**

FROM: Dan Labrecque, Commissioner of Public Works

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this report is to inform Regional Council of the outcomes from the 2011 Peel Children's Water Festival (PCWF). This report provides details on the 2011 PCWF and the plans underway for the 2012 Festival.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2011 PCWF marked the sixteenth anniversary of the annual festival with more than 75,000 Peel students visiting since its inception in 1996.
- More than 7,522 people (4,990 elementary students; 918 teachers and parent chaperones; 583 secondary school volunteers; 38 Region of Peel volunteers and approximately 993 Family Fun Day residents) participated in the 2011 water festival.
- The theme for the 2011 water festival was "Teaching Green in Peel".
- The festival boasts more than 50 interactive activity centres that are designed to fulfill Ontario Curriculum learning expectations and that focus messaging around environmental conservation and stewardship.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

The 2011 PCWF was held between May 26 and June 1, 2011 (excluding Sunday, May 29) at the Heart Lake Conservation Area in Brampton. The PCWF is an annual, six-day environmental education event, which provides learning opportunities to students in grades two through five during the weekday, as well as to all Peel residents on the Saturday Family Fun Day event. Using more than 50 practical and interactive activities run by Peel secondary school students, participants learn about important environmental messages related to the protection and stewardship of water resources and water and wastewater treatment. To ensure that the PCWF supports Peel elementary school education, activities are designed to connect with the Ontario Curriculum learning expectations.

The 2011 PCWF event marked the 16th anniversary of the festival, with more than 75,000 Peel students having attended the event since its inception in 1996. Through the collaborative efforts of Peel's Health Services, Corporate Services and Public Works departments great event successes have been achieved. Because of the commitment and

August 9, 2011

2011 PEEL CHILDREN'S WATER FESTIVAL UPDATE

dedication from each department and its staff the festival delivers an exceptional grass-roots community event which highlight Peel's cross-departmental environmental messages. The planning and execution of the PCWF is also supported by the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Boards along with many external community partners.

In 2011, the theme "Teaching Green in Peel" highlighted environmental education enrichment throughout the festival. The theme also supports the Region's Strategic Plan 2011 - 2014, specifically: Goal 1.4 - to "protect and restore water resources, significant natural heritage and environmentally sensitive areas"; Goal 3.4 - to "ensure a clean, safe and adequate water supply" and Goal 7.8 - to "manage growth through long-term integrated planning". Through education, the event also supports the Term of Council Priorities (TOCP): TOCP1: reduce greenhouse gas emissions, TOCP2: increase waste diversion and TOCP3: reduce per capita water consumption.

With significant support from the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), the festival provides a great opportunity for residents to learn more about local issues and projects being undertaken by various community partners.

Partners in attendance included:

- Brampton Clean City
- City of Brampton
- City of Mississauga
- Credit Valley Conservation
- ecoCaledon
- Ecosource
- Izaak Walton Fly Fishing Club
- Ontario Clean Water Agency
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

2. Outcomes of the 2011 Peel Children's Water Festival

a) Attendance

The six day festival reached a maximum weekday (5 days) capacity of approximately 1,000 students per day and 993 residents attended the Family Fun Day event in 2011. More than 7,522 people (4,990 elementary students; 918 teachers and parent chaperones; 583 secondary school volunteers; 38 Region of Peel volunteers and approximately 993 Family Fun Day residents) participated in the 2011 water festival.

b) Family Fun Day

The eighth annual PCWF Family Fun Day was held on Saturday, May 28, 2011 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. With the inclement weather, participation rates at the festival were lower with a total of 993 residents attending the event. In past years the festival has averaged an attendance of 3,500 residents on Family Fun Day. Survey results indicated that even after 16 years, 35% of the residents return each year and approximately 65% of residents are new comers to the PCWF. From a geographical perspective, 65% of participants attended from Brampton, 17% from Mississauga, 4% from Caledon and 14% from other areas.

A total of \$1,865.37 was raised for the United Way of Peel Region during the Family Fun Day event. New for 2011, residents were charged a nominal entry fee of \$5 per car.

August 9, 2011

2011 PEEL CHILDREN'S WATER FESTIVAL UPDATE

Admission into the park raised \$1,260. The entry fee was implemented to encourage residents to car pool to the event which helps ease the flow of traffic entering and exiting the park as well as raise funds for charitable donation. Results from the Family Fun Day survey found no negative feedback in regards to the new admission fee. Visitors also enjoyed a charity barbeque, which was hosted by the United Way Committee and raised \$605.37.

Visitors had the opportunity to attend over 50 water-related educational activity centres delivered by Regional staff, partners and members of the community. In addition to the activity centres, residents were treated to a wide variety of entertainment and educational shows, including: Bugs without Borders, Creature Quest, Birds of Prey, Freddy Fusion's Science Magic Show, Izaak Walton Fly-fishing Club, Sciensational Sssnakes, Peel Health Puppet Show, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's - Trout Release and an Electro-fishing demonstration.

Interesting statistics collected through the Family Fun Day survey indicate that the best form of advertising for such an event is either through the mobile signs (35%), newspaper (20%), or word of mouth (17%).

c) Student Volunteer Support

Approximately 583 volunteers contributed 4,664 hours of work in 2011. The volunteers were secondary school students within the Region of Peel, many of whom were also visitors of the festival as children. Given the long history of the Festival over a generation of children have been educated on the importance of water and many are interested in giving back through volunteering. By adopting a peer-mentorship format of delivering the festival's messages, student volunteers are also able to develop valuable interpersonal and leadership skills.

This year, seven secondary schools participated in the festival, including: St. Aloyisus Gonzaga, St. Augustine, St. Edmund Campion, St. Marguerite d'Youville, Louise Arbour, Mayfield, and Turner Fenton.

3. Future Direction of the Peel Children's Water Festival

The PCWF Organizing Committee will continue to build on the accomplishments of past festivals, by providing a unique educational opportunity for the young citizens of Peel. With valuable feedback gained from all stakeholders, preparations are underway for the 2012 PCWF.

The theme for the 2012 PCWF will be determined in the following months and will be related to the environmental health of our water supply. A number of new activities will be designed to focus on the importance of protecting water sources and to ensure safe water today and in the future.


CONCLUSION

The PCWF Organizing Committee continues to meet the expectations set by past festivals. With weekday attendance at capacity, great Family Fun Day attendance, positive media coverage, significant volunteer support, and high quality activities, the 2011 festival demonstrated the Region of Peel's commitment to the promotion of environmental protection and stewardship initiatives through education. Recognized as a leader among water festivals in Ontario, the

August 9, 2011

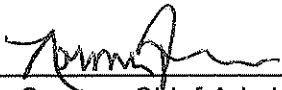
2011 PEEL CHILDREN'S WATER FESTIVAL UPDATE

PCWF will strive to maintain its successes by continually searching for new and innovative approaches to convey environmental messages related to the health benefits, protection and stewardship of water resources with a local community focus.



per Dan Labrecque
Commissioner of Public Works

Approved for Submission:



per D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

For further information regarding this report, please contact Carol Chaput at extension 3318 or via email at carol.chaput@peelregion.ca

Authored By: Kristina Hatton

c. Legislative Services