FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 24, 2024

Community-Led Initiative to Restore Merritt's Floodplain: Join Us for the STUWI(x) Naturalization Tour

MERRITT, BC – 2024-09-13 – The City of Merritt is excited to invite residents, community partners, and stakeholders to a special site visit as part of a community-led floodplain restoration project. This initiative is focused on creating a more resilient, naturalized environment to help protect Merritt from future flooding events.

Event Details:

Date: October 10th, 2024
Time: Drop-in between 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM
Location: Parking available at the end of Pine Street, beside the STUWI(x) Site and Wastewater Treatment Site.
Event Flow: Enjoy walking tours of the site, light snacks, and hot beverages.

The site visit will offer attendees the opportunity to learn more about the various phases of the project and engage with the team leading the initiative. Community members will have the chance to view the progress firsthand and understand the vision behind the restoration. Please note that sturdy walking shoes are highly recommended for the site tour.

In Attendance:

Mayor Michael Goetz, City of Merritt
Sean Strang, Director of Flood Mitigation, City of Merritt
Matt Lane, Senior Project Manager, Colliers Project Management
Charlene Joe, Indigenous Engagement Manager, Merritt Flood Mitigation Team
Diana Linde, Community Engagement Strategist, Merritt Flood Mitigation Team
Colliers: Project Management

Invited:

Citxw Nlaka'pamux Assembly (CNA)
City of Merritt Council
Coldwater Indian Band Chief and Council
Cook's Ferry Indian Band Chief and Council
Lower Nicola Indian Band Chief and Council
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS)
Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR)
Nooaitch Indian Band Chief and Council
Public
Scw'exmx Tribal Council
Shackan Indian Band Chief and Council
STUWI(x) Steering Committee Members
Upper Nicola Indian Band Chief and Council

Project Phases:

The aim of this project is to develop a naturalization strategy for the lands at the junction of the Coldwater and the Nicola RIver.
Flood mitigation is crucial for protecting the community, infrastructure, and natural habitats from the adverse effects of flooding. The key objectives of this project include reducing flood risks, enhancing riparian and in-stream habitats, and returning the river to its natural state. The City of Merritt also

gratefully acknowledges the B.C. Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness for its contribution to this project and for its ongoing support of the City's Flood Mitigation Plan.

Phase 1: Property Acquisition
The initial phase focuses on securing properties within the floodplain that are critical for restoration efforts. (Currently underway)
Phase 2: Removal of Man-Made Elements
This phase involves eliminating existing structures, utilities, and non-native species from the floodplain, paving the way for natural restoration.
Phase 3: Collaborative Design Planning
Community partners will collaborate to develop a naturalized floodplain design, ensuring that the plan reflects the values and needs of the community.
Phase 4: Construction and Implementation
Construction will begin based on a flexible, community-driven plan that prioritizes environmental sustainability and flood resilience.

This project represents a major step forward in Merritt's flood mitigation efforts and the commitment to fostering a safer, more sustainable environment for future generations.

For more information, please contact:

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About the City of Merritt Flood Mitigation Initiative:

- The Merritt Floodplain Restoration Project is part of a broader effort to protect the community from flood risks while creating a natural, ecologically rich environment. This initiative aims to involve the entire community in a collaborative approach to flood prevention and environmental stewardship at the confluence of the Nicola and Coldwater Rivers.
- The City of Merritt also gratefully acknowledges the B.C. Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness for its contribution to this project and for its ongoing support of the City's Flood Mitigation Plan.

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Event: October 10th | STUWI(x) Naturalization Tour

The City of Merritt's Flood Mitigation Team would like to acknowledge that we work, live and play on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Nlaka'pamux and Syilx people. We thank you for welcoming us to the territory and allowing us to carry out the work we are doing today.