

Dear City of Burnaby Mayor and Council,

My name is Lyda Salatian, I'm the founder of the registered charity Green Teams of Canada. In 2011, with just a laptop, a passion for the environment, I started a volunteer group on social media called the **Lower Mainland Green Team**. We organize and deliver hands-on outdoor habitat restoration activities in Metro Vancouver using social media to recruit and engage volunteers. Activities are run in collaboration with park staff and existing environmental and stewardship groups, who provide local knowledge and expertise in ecology and habitat restoration. Activities include: removing invasive plants, planting native plant species and picking up litter. Issues we address include:

- Rapid loss of biodiversity; BC is home to more native species than any other province;
- Lack of awareness and education of the threat of invasive species on biodiversity;
- Less time spent in nature and more time spent in front of TVs and computers;
- Lack of younger volunteers in existing stewardship groups;
- Insufficient park staff capacity to care for parks adequately (i.e. to control the spread of invasive species).

Our objectives are: Educate about local environmental issues; engage a new urban volunteer base (aged 12-45); conserve, restore and enhance ecosystems, connect volunteers to nature, connect volunteers to existing stewardship groups; and be a resource to park staff. We run activities for youth, at-risk and special needs youth during school hours and for the general public on weekends. In 4 ½ years we have run over 200 volunteer work parties, and grown to become BC's largest volunteer environmental group (our volunteer base is at 2,300). We have received: the National Earth Day Hometown Heroes Award and three local awards: the Frank Sanford Award from Nature Vancouver, a YWCA Distinction Award for Environmental Sustainability and non-profit award from Recycling Council of BC for providing services beyond expectations in environmental stewardship. Media outlets such as television, radio stations, newspapers and magazines have featured the amazing work of the volunteers!

Our biggest challenge is securing long term funding. Our budget to organize and run 60 activities in municipal, regional and provincial parks between Aug 1 2015-July 2016 throughout Metro Vancouver is \$97,255.

So far, we have not received any funding from local municipalities for our services. If we do not secure longer term funding soon we will not be able to continue running any activities at all, so we are seeking funding from local governmental agencies. We request \$4,000 from the City of Burnaby annually. We will provide a report each year so you may assess whether you wish to continue funding us. Your funds will ensure we can continue engaging volunteers in the restoration and conservation of your parks and offers the following benefits to you:

- A strong message to thousands of volunteers and the public that your municipality values and supports volunteerism;
- Promotion of your municipality's parks and park stewardship programs;
- Promotion of your municipality's local stewardship and watershed groups;
- Additional capacity for park staff and existing stewardship groups to conduct conservation and restoration work;
- A partnership with a charity who can help access funding (i.e. from Foundations) not typically open to municipalities for resources such as native plants and trees and interpretive signs;
- Media exposure for supporting an innovative grassroots initiative.

To learn more about our work in the City of Burnaby please contact Melinda Yong Environmental Technician City of Burnaby. So far we have worked at Central Park, Deer Lake Park, Stoney Creek Park and Terminus Fraser Foreshore Park. Thank you for your consideration.

Warm regards,



Lyda Salatian

Founder Green Teams of Canada, Charitable number: 809488448 RR0001

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<http://www.meetup.com/the-lower-mainland-green-team>, <http://www.greenteamsCanada.ca>

SECTION 2 COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE

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