

**From:** [Metro Vancouver](#)  
**To:**  
**Subject:** IIWWTP Projects Updates – Summer 2023 Community Newsletter  
**Date:** September 15, 2023 12:56:34 PM

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You are receiving this newsletter because you have expressed an interest in, or a connection to, the Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant Projects, the adjacent Iona Beach Regional Park, resource recovery opportunities, or the area's ecology.

[Learn more about the projects](#)

**September 15, 2023**

## Wastewater Treatment Plant Project Updates

### Barge Berth

Metro Vancouver is planning to reduce traffic impacts related to construction of the project by bringing in a barge to transfer materials like sand. It will require construction of a temporary barge berth, which will:

- Improve safety for cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles travelling to xʷəyeyət (Iona Island)
- Reduce both traffic throughout the Lower Mainland and greenhouse gas emissions
- Help to minimize costs and delays

On October 5, 2023, Metro Vancouver will host an information session and an opportunity for community members to share their feedback on potential impacts of the barge berth. The session will provide updates on the measures that Metro Vancouver will undertake to mitigate impacts on residents.

### Current Procurement Initiatives

Metro Vancouver issued a [request for proposals \(RFP 23-041\)](#) on July 18, 2023 for "Consulting Engineering Services on the Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade".

The deadline to place a **bid closes on September 19, 2023 at 2:00 pm (PDT)**. Metro Vancouver intends to award the contract in early 2024. More details on this procurement are available on the [procurement webpage](#).

### Ground Improvements

The Fraser River Delta has challenging geotechnical conditions that require site-wide ground improvements to enable seismic and climate resiliency prior to construction of the new plant. Preparation work such as grubbing, clearing, and stripping is anticipated to start as early as spring 2024.

## Outfall Rehabilitation

Currently, treated wastewater is conveyed from the treatment plant to the Salish Sea through two outfall pipes that were constructed around 1987. The land section extends 4.5 km and the undersea section extends an additional 3.5 km. In July 2023, Metro Vancouver selected CDM Smith to assess the condition of the land section of the outfall pipes and commence preliminary design of the outfall (land section) rehabilitation works. Preliminary design is anticipated to complete by the end of 2024.

### DID YOU KNOW?

**The popular Iona Jetty walking trail is located on top of the outfall pipes.**

It's true – the trail extends 4.1 km in length with pit toilets located at 2 km and 4 km along the trail.

Visitors to the park are welcome to venture out to the Iona Jetty year round and may be able to spot pelagic birds as you approach the end of the 4.1 km trail. Pelagic means the birds spend most — if not all — of their time on the open ocean!



Caption: The view from the Iona Jetty looking north towards the plant

## Park and Ecological Restoration Project Updates

### Global Environment Facility Field Trip to Iona Island

Approximately 1,500 people from around the world gathered in Vancouver from August 22 to 26 to attend the Seventh Assembly of the [Global Environment Facility \(GEF\)](#). The main objective of GEF is to fund conservation

initiatives in developing countries that tackle environmental challenges like biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution.

On August 26, GEF organizers arranged a field trip to [Iona Beach Regional Park](#) for assembly participants. The regional park sits in the midst of the Pacific Flyway — making it a gathering place for thousands of migrating birds. Field trip participants learned about shore birds and land birds, went bird watching, and visited the Iona Island Bird Observatory to see how populations of migratory birds are tracked by researchers.

Participants also learned how the projects on xʷəyeyət (Iona Island) are being designed to consider the importance of the island and its foreshore for providing shelter and food sources to migrating, wintering, and resident bird populations.



Caption: Global Environment Facility Field Trip to Iona Beach Regional Park (Photo Credit: Birds Canada)



Caption: Catherine Jardine, representative of Birds Canada and WildResearch, leading participants in a bird banding activity at the Iona Island Bird Observatory (Photo credit: Birds Canada)

For more information about the numerous projects that make up the Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant Projects, please see the [conceptual design backgrounder paper](#).

## Upcoming Events

### Wings Over Iona

The [Wings Over Iona](#) event is returning to Iona Beach Regional Park on September 16, 2023 from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm.

Join us to mark one of nature’s wonders – the fall migration of shorebirds, songbirds, and other avians as they journey from northern breeding grounds to warmer habitats in the south. Take part in a bird walk, watch bird banders work their magic, or try other activities to get a glimpse into the life of an avian world traveller.



Caption: Wings Over Iona returns to Iona Island on September 16, 2023

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why is Ferguson Road being upgraded?

Ferguson Road will be upgraded to accommodate IWWTP construction traffic, improve safety by separating cyclists and pedestrians from traffic, and meet future servicing requirements for the upgraded plant. The new road will add turning lanes, provide cycling lanes, and a multi-use path.

### Will Iona Beach Regional Park be closed during construction of the IWWTP Projects?

No, the park will remain open to visitors. Please use caution when travelling in the area and follow the direction of signage and traffic control personnel.

## About the Projects

The Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant in Richmond, BC was built in 1963 and today serves approximately 750,000 residents in the Vancouver Sewerage Area (serving Vancouver, parts of Burnaby and Richmond, the University Endowment Lands, and UBC). The facility provides primary treatment and processes about 200 billion litres of wastewater each year.

The plant is being upgraded to protect public health and the environment in our growing region. The design concepts for the projects include:

- **Tertiary wastewater treatment** to improve the treated wastewater quality being discharged to the Salish Sea
- **Ecological restoration projects** to restore Iona Beach Regional Park's diverse and sensitive ecosystems, build climate resilience, increase park visitor connection to nature, and create integration between the wastewater treatment plant and Park
- **Resource recovery opportunities** to help support the region's carbon neutrality objectives, by recovering important resources such as reclaimed water for non-potable uses, and biogas captured and used at the plant to generate heat for operations as well as supply for renewable natural gas to the Fortis BC natural gas distribution system

- **Extensive ground improvements** to protect the plant from earthquake events and account for future sea level rise this century

The projects are now in the Early Works and Preliminary Design phase, with early works to prepare the site underway. Please visit the [project webpage](#) to see a list of engagement events and meeting summaries from the Project Definition Phase (June 2018 to February 2022).

Visitors to xʷəyeyət (Iona Island) may see crews conducting work related to these activities.



## Keeping You Informed

Thank you for your interest in the Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant Projects. If you know others who are interested in the project, please forward this email and encourage them to sign up for future newsletter by visiting the [project webpage](#) and clicking on the “Sign Up” button under “Stay Connected”.

### CONTACT US:

A Community Liaison is available to address questions and concerns:

**Community Liaison:** 604-432-6200

**Email:** [IonaWWTP@metrovancover.org](mailto:IonaWWTP@metrovancover.org)

**Website:** [metrovancover.org](http://metrovancover.org)

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Metro Vancouver is a federation of 21 municipalities, one electoral area, and one treaty First Nation that collaboratively plans for and delivers regional-scale services. Its core services are drinking water, wastewater treatment and solid waste management. Metro Vancouver also regulates air quality, plans for urban growth, manages a regional parks system and provides affordable housing. The regional district is governed by a Board of Directors of elected officials from each local authority.