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### Lawson Creek Restoration Project

West Vancouver Streamkeepers received some disappointing news this past week.

ISL Engineering & Land Services, the designers of the proposed side-channel to create new salmon spawning and rearing habitat, have advised us that the present design for the Lawson Creek restoration project could be compromised by events we can identify broadly as “climate change”.

The two key issues identified by ISL are the need to maintain sufficient creek flow, and the prospect of creek stagnation; both of which could prove lethal to fish. The WVSS Project Group is also aware that elevated creek temperatures could prove lethal to fish. The earlier challenge of the low gradient through the park was resolved some months ago by significantly reducing the length of the side-channel.

Anyone observing the much-depleted flow of Lawson Creek this Summer will understand the lack of water would certainly present a challenge in creating off-channel salmon habitat (see attached photograph – August 5, 2021).

ISL advises that an attempt to modify the most recent design will not achieve the objective of creating new fish habitat that would have provided opportunity for spawning salmon, rearing habitat for juvenile coho and a permanent home for resident cutthroat trout.

It is the opinion of the WVSS Project Group that the curve ball thrown at us by “mother nature” is not realistically remedied. The challenges of low water flow and elevated temperatures do not appear to be manageable and would put fish and other aquatic species at risk due these factors.

This has left us with no choice but to cancel the Lawson Creek restoration project. We cannot be proponents of a project that falls short of the fish habitat objective, or puts fish and other aquatic species in peril that come to depend on this watercourse.

Streamkeepers regret that this has come to an end having spent some seven years hoping to achieve this meaningful objective which would have also provided a splendid natural amenity for John Lawson Park.

In closing, we would like to thank ISL Engineering and Land Services for the hours of pro-bono work they provided to this project and also West Vancouver Council members and District employees for their constant support. And lastly, we thank the public for their united support for this stream habitat proposal.

The Board of Directors  
West Vancouver Streamkeeper Society  
September 25, 2021