

**Media Release****For immediate release**

**Environmental restoration project touted as a turning point for the environment  
wins prestigious Aga Khan Award for Architecture**

**- Large-scale restoration of the Wadi Hanifah turns bioremediation theory into reality-**

(TORONTO- November 24, 2010) – A Canadian company was today awarded the highest professional recognition for its pioneering work considered by many as a modern day environmental miracle. The Aga Khan Award for Architecture was bestowed upon Moriyama & Teshima Planners for its work on the Wadi Hanifah restoration in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The award was presented by His Highness the Aga Khan at the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar. Accepting the award were George Stockton, president Moriyama & Teshima Planners, Drew Wensley, executive vice-president Moriyama & Teshima Planners and Jason Moriyama, partner Moriyama & Teshima Architects. Nineteen projects were shortlisted in the 2010 award cycle with five selected as Award recipients.

Moriyama & Teshima, in joint venture with engineers Buro Happold, successfully developed a design solution that enabled restoration of a 120-km watershed within a 4,032 square kilometre catchment that had become a toxic landfill in the heart of Riyadh.

“We knew this would be a case study for the world and that if it was successful on this scale, it could easily be applied to smaller scale interventions around the world,” said Drew Wensley, who has already twice been asked by the United Nations to speak on the firm’s groundbreaking work. “The success of the Wadi proves that there are solutions available to tackle environmental challenges, even where extreme degradation exists.”

The award recognizes ecologically sound projects, in conception and implementation, which demonstrate sensitivity to environmental concerns. Staggering results include:

- The development of;  
53.2 kilometres of roads,  
six major parks,  
three lakes,  
43 kilometres of recreational trails
- The bioremediation of 400,000 cubic metres per day of waste water cleaned and recycled back to the city
- The plantation of 35,500 shade trees and 4,500 date palm trees
- A reduction of flash floods
- The removal of 1,000,000 cubic metres of dumping
- A 10-fold increase in property values along the Wadi corridor.

“Having the Master Jury refer to this project as a turning point for the environment is such important recognition of our work,” said George Stockton. “As a signature component of all our projects nationally and internationally, big or small, we combine cultural sensitivity and respect for Earth’s natural settings.”

(more)

**Aga Khan Award P.2**

Additional examples of Moriyama & Teshima Planners' unique design philosophy include: The green roof for the Canadian War Museum building designed by affiliate Moriyama & Teshima Architects; Meewasin Valley Master Plan in Saskatchewan, Canada; Niagara Parks 100-Year Vision; Kuwait University Campus; environmental plan for Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

Moriyama & Teshima Planners is committed to creating environments needed to sustain humanity in the 21st century. They have directed its evolution over the past 30 years, building a body of award-winning landscapes and master plans for urban environments, ecological regions and entire watersheds.

The Aga Khan Award for Architecture was established in 1977 by His Highness the Aga Khan, the forty-ninth hereditary Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims, to enhance the understanding and appreciation of Islamic culture as expressed through architecture. The award is presented every three years and selection is governed by a Steering Committee chaired by the Aga Khan. The selection process emphasizes architecture that not only provides for people's physical, social and economic needs, but that also stimulates and responds to their cultural and spiritual expectations.

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**THE AGA KHAN AWARD FOR ARCHITECTURE**

- Awarded to Moriyama & Teshima Planners in November 2010 for one of the largest ever environmental restorations: The Wadi Hanifah project.
- This is the 11<sup>th</sup> cycle of this most prestigious recognition, awarded every three years. The Aga Khan Award for Architecture was established in 1977 by His Highness the Aga Khan, the forty-ninth hereditary Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims.
- The Award strives to explore new frontiers while maintaining a generous and pluralistic perspective, engaging projects that contribute to the transformation and improvement of the quality of the built environment.
- Promotes the most successful interventions in the built environment, while ensuring that they set the highest standards of excellence.
- In 2010, 401 projects were nominated, 19 of which were shortlisted and five selected as Award recipients.
- All award-winning projects brought forward the need for improving the quality of life in local communities while being capable of serving as role models for other communities in the Islamic world. They provide an ethical sensitivity to their contexts, by promoting sustainability on all fronts: environmental, social and economic.
- The Award recognizes:
  - Ecologically sound projects in conception and implementation which demonstrated sensitivity to environmental concerns;
  - Projects aiming at the preservation and reclamation of recent heritage;
  - An understanding that enlightened design is crucial in the development of safe and efficient workplaces, and that the worst effects of industrialising our world can be avoided; and
  - The need for extreme sensitivity to location and historic landscape.
- The selection process emphasizes architecture that not only provides for people's physical, social and economic needs, but that stimulates and responds to their cultural and spiritual expectations. Particular attention is given to building schemes that use local resources and appropriate technology in an innovative way and to projects likely to inspire similar efforts elsewhere.
- Prizes are awarded for architectural excellence in a wide variety of areas including contemporary design, social housing, community improvement and development, restoration, reuse, area conservation, as well as landscaping and environmental projects.
- The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) brings together a number of development agencies, institutions, and programmes that work primarily in the poorest parts of Asia and Africa. AKDN is an endeavour of the Ismaili Imamate to realise the social conscience of Islam through institutional action. AKDN agencies conduct their programmes without regard to faith, origin or gender.

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### THE WADI HANIFAH RESTORATION

- Longest and most important valley, or *wadi*, in the middle of the Najd Plateau that runs for a length of 120 kilometres (75 miles) and cuts through the city of Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia
- Watershed of over 4,000 square kilometres and a unique geographical feature in this arid region
- For years segments of the valley had been exploited in an aggressive and environmentally destructive manner
- The Saudi government and the Arriyadh Development Authority appointed Moriyama & Teshima Planners in joint venture with Buro Happold to plan the environmental restoration of the Wadi Hanifah
- Restoring balance between the resources of the *wadi* and the people living around it, the ADA implemented a comprehensive development strategy, a program of works that aims to restore and develop Wadi Hanifah as an environmental, recreational and tourism resource
- The Saudi government invested over \$1 billion (U.S.) into this environmental rehabilitation project
- Master planning started in 2001 and construction is ongoing
- A new green corridor 120 kilometres long, *Wadi Hanifah*, is now a popular destination for recreational activities such as fishing and picnicking and has also become a stop for migratory birds
- Project statistics:
  - Length: 120 kilometres
  - Side Wadis: 10
  - Dumping Removed: 1,000,000 cubic metres
  - Urban Wastewater Bioremediated: 400,000 cubic metres per day
  - Wadi Roads: 53.2 kilometres
  - Major Parks: 6
  - Lakes: 3
  - Recreational Trail: 43 kilometres
  - Planted Shade Trees: 35,500
  - Planted Date Palm Trees: 4,500
- The City of Riyadh recycles the cleaned remediated water back into the city for non-potable use including for greening and agriculture. This method conserves water and reduces the energy and cost for producing potable water in the desert environment.
- Wadi Hanifah is now an integral part of the city used by thousands every weekend as a destination city park

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### **BIOREMEDIATION: NATURE'S WAY TO A CLEANER ENVIRONMENT**

The bioremediation facility is an essential component of the Wadi Hanifah environmental restoration project.

#### **The problem:**

Large quantities of urban wastewater loaded with harmful bacteria and nutrients that were being derived from decomposing sewage.

- This was creating an environmental health problem that limited the public use of Wadi Hanifah, the watershed running through the Saudi capital.
- Water quality needed to be restored as an essential first step.

#### **The solution:**

Moriyama & Teshima Planners developed a design to address the specific water quality problems which included: harmful coliform bacteria, excess nutrients and hydrocarbon contamination.

- Developed the first bioremediation facility for cleaning water that is purely biological, rather than mechanical.
- The facility's function is to reduce coliform bacteria, de-nitrify the water and bio-accumulate excess nutrients using a food chain.

#### **The result:**

- This design, now proven successful after one year of operation, can be applied around the world at any scale for significantly less cost than a mechanical water treatment facility.
- On-going water testing is showing the facility is performing beyond design expectations and producing water clean enough for human contact and non-potable use.
- Mass reduction of harmful excess nutrients:
  - Fecal coliform bacteria by 97%;
  - Total coliform by 87%,
  - Emonia by 92%,
  - Biological oxygen demand (BOD) by 60%;
  - Phosphorous by 48%
  - Suspended solids by 97%.

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**APPROVED QUOTES**

- **Drew Wensley, Executive Vice President, Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited**

“This has been a 10-year process that has never been done on this scale,” said Drew Wensley. “Through this project we have learned a great deal about environmental restoration. This skill set can now be used to proactively seek out solutions to environmental challenges around the world.”

- **George Stockton, George Stockton, President, Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited**

“This project breathes new life into the Wadi. The idea was to bring it back to life so after decades of neglect we are now seeing this amazing rebirth and transformation of Wadi Hanifah as a naturalized park system.”

- **Aga Khan Jury Award Committee**

“The Award has been given in recognition of the project’s vision and persistence in developing a sustainable environment. Using landscape as an ecological infrastructure, the project has restored and enhanced the natural systems’ capacity to provide multiple services, including cleaning the contaminated water, mediating the natural forces of flood, providing habitats for biodiversity and creating opportunities for recreational, educational and aesthetic experiences.”

- **Abdullatif bin Abdulmalik Al-Sheikh, Member of the High Commission for the Development of Arriyadh and President of the Arriyadh Development Authority**

“Buro Happold along with Moriyama and Teshima Planners Limited deserve unmeasurable recognition for the master plan's focus on restoring the Wadi's natural beauty, which had been spoiled by decades of unrestricted dumping and development, and also for harnessing and rehabilitating its water. The plan has restored and developed the Wadi as an environmental, recreational and tourism resource.”

“With this project we will create awareness for future generations, educate and show our youth that the environment is our main wealth. These benefits can increase if we are good stewards and conserve our environment.”

- **King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz**

“We will not jeopardize the future of coming generations for the comfort of the present generation. Similarly, we will not impose suffering on the present generation for the comfort of the future generations. We will create a balance between the present and the future for the benefit of all.”

- **Visitors to the Wadi**

“The Wadi is now a great attraction for family visits”

“What has been done to restore the valley could not be better”

“Our families find comfort and pleasure when they come here”

“The valley is once again a beautiful environment”

“The restoration of the valley brings joy to my heart” – Ibrahim Alsalim, farmer

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Source for select quotes: <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/6400893/Wadi%20Hanifa%20-%20A%20Journey%20of%20Change-s.mov>

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### **MORIYAMA & TESHIMA**

- Moriyama & Teshima Planners ([mtplanners.com](http://mtplanners.com)) is the landscape and planning affiliate of Moriyama & Teshima Architects ([mtarch.com](http://mtarch.com)).
- Founded in 1958, Moriyama & Teshima Architects has built its reputation creating distinctive landmark projects such as the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, and in Toronto the Multi Faith Centre, that have garnered numerous awards for innovative design.
- Moriyama & Teshima Planners is a team of landscape architects committed to the process of creating the environments needed to sustain humanity in the 21st century, building a collection of award-winning landscapes and master plans for urban environments, ecological regions and entire watersheds.
- World leader in environmental restoration and development of natural systems bioremediation, water conservation strategies, watershed management and policy, naturalized desert parkland systems and land-use planning.
- Consistently recognized for pioneering, science-based, and culturally and environmentally sensitive award winning projects around the world.
- Master plans have won prestigious awards including the top honour from the Waterfront Center in Washington, D.C., and the gold prize from the International Award for Liveable Communities in London, England.
- Moriyama & Teshima provides service in architecture, interior design, urban design, landscape architecture, and planning.
- Today, Moriyama & Teshima Planners is responsible for over 1.5 billion dollars of construction internationally.

Selected Noteworthy projects by Moriyama & Teshima. Visit [mtarch.com](http://mtarch.com) or [mtplanners.com](http://mtplanners.com) for details.

- **Wadi Hanifah Restoration Project**, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- **Canadian War Museum**, Ottawa, Canada
- **University of Toronto Multi Faith Centre**, Toronto, Canada
- **Lakehead University**, Orillia, Canada
- **Niagara Parks: 100-Year Vision, 20-Year Plan, Five-Year Action Plan**, Niagara Falls, Canada
- **The Meewasin Valley 100-Year Conceptual Master Plan**, Saskatchewan, Canada
- **Calgary Riverwalk**, Calgary, Canada
- **Kuwait University, Master Plan and Landscape Implementation**, Kuwait City, Kuwait
- **Canadian Embassy**, Tokyo, Japan
- **The National Museum**, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



**GEORGE STOCKTON**



George Stockton is a landscape architect and planner who has been working with Moriyama & Teshima since 1969. As President of Moriyama & Teshima Planners Limited, he has been project director of several long-term environmentally sensitive visionary plans which have won significant international awards from the Waterfront Center in Washington: Wadi Hanifah (Saudi Arabia) Comprehensive Development Plan, Ramsey Lake Community Improvement Plan, 100-year conceptual master plan for the Meewasin Valley in Saskatchewan, and the 100-year vision for Ontario's Niagara Parks. George's landscaping projects, which include university and corporate campuses and one of the largest green roofs in North America for the new Canadian War Museum in Ottawa, are respectful of existing natural features and ecological conditions.

A graduate of North Carolina State University with a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, George takes an integrated approach to planning with expertise in the areas of tourism development, strategic planning and ecological sustainability. He is a member of the Canadian and Ontario Society of Landscape Architects who understands the importance of private sector investment, job creation, and development of tourism. A skilled facilitator, he has worked with numerous communities to help formulate future visions that are both inspirational and achievable.

Over the past decade, George has built up a significant body of work in the Middle East. He was responsible for the master plan and landscape design for the 83-acre King Abd al Aziz Historical Centre and National Museum of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh. Subsequently, George headed a team of landscape architects and engineers to undertake the Wadi Hanifah Comprehensive Development Plan to rehabilitate the most significant watershed system in central Saudi Arabia.

**DREW WENSLEY**

Since becoming Executive vice president of Moriyama & Teshima Planners in 2003, Drew Wensley has played a fundamental role in the evolution of the firms' award winning planning group. Focusing on innovative master planning, environmental and urban design projects, Drew and his team of young talented designers have established an impressive portfolio of work.

Drew is a graduate of the landscape architecture program from Ryerson University. In 2001, he started work on the Wadi Hanifah Comprehensive Development Plan in Saudi Arabia and has been involved in every aspect of the project from vision building to design and implementation. The restoration of the 120-kilometer long oasis has now entered its ninth year of development and continues to be recognized as one of the most significant environmental projects in the world. In 2004, Drew was invited to present the plan to the council for sustainable development and delegates at the United Nations in New York as a leading example of sustainable urban renewal.

Continuing to develop a number of international projects, Drew has established a large body of work in the Middle East including the New Campus Plan for Kuwait University. The plan is now in its final phases of design and will be the new home for 40,000 students and showcase a strong environmental focus. Other selected credits include Calgary's East Village Riverwalk, Lakehead University, Havergal College Campus Plan, Canadian War Museum, and his ongoing work with His Highness the Aga Khan in both Toronto and Ottawa.

Drew's unique ability to translate vast amounts of information and multi-dimensional ideas into pragmatic environmental solutions is demonstrated through his understanding of complex projects from concept to construction detail. His skill set is applied to all aspects of Moriyama and Teshima's design business providing clients with exceptional service and end product.

## **JASON MORIYAMA**



Jason's education in both Industrial Design and Architecture informs his holistic and deeply integrated approach to design, and his ability to work at a range of scales from door handles and furnishings, to building form and site planning.

Jason is one of M&T's lead design partners and his exceptional abilities are expressed in most of M&T's award-winning projects including the Saudi Arabia National Museum in Riyadh (won by International Design Competition); The New Canadian War Museum in Ottawa (2008 Governor General's Medal for Architecture); the Jury-winning Jabal Omar Development Competition in Makkah, Saudi Arabia; and, at the University of Toronto, both the School of Continuing Studies and the Multi Faith Centre.

In addition to cultural projects, Jason has specialized in university design having lead or contributed to some 15 university buildings over his career at M&T. He is currently working on two multi-disciplinary Academic Buildings at Carleton University, and has recently completed the University of Ottawa's Desmarais Building, home to the Telfer School of Management and the Faculty of Social Sciences, and the state-of-the-art new Science Building on the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus.

Jason is presently leading M&T's Master Planning Team as part of a Canadian consortium master planning the Holy Cities and Holy Sites of Makkah and Medinah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Jason earned his Bachelor of Industrial Design (B.I.D.) from Carleton University and his Masters of Architecture from Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-ARC).