

Tom Yates

From: Island Coastal Economic Trust <info@islandcoastaltrust.ca>
Sent: October 29, 2019 10:10 AM
To: Tom Yates
Subject: MULTI-USE TRAIL WILL BRING NEW TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES TO NOOTKA REGION

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MULTI-USE TRAIL WILL BRING NEW TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES TO NOOTKA REGION

COURTENAY –The Island Coastal Economic Trust is supporting the development of a multi-use trail in the traditional territories of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht and the Ehattesaht/Chinehkint First Nations.

The Community Unity Trail will use inactive logging roads and new trail sections to create a new recreation corridor between Tahsis and Zeballos. Upon completion, the 25-km trail will accommodate all-terrain vehicles, off-road motorcycles, as well as hikers and mountain bikers, creating new demand for hospitality and other services in all of the partner communities.

“Repurposing deactivated forest service roads will allow us to generate new sources of market revenue by building on existing infrastructure,” said Randy

Taylor, Vice President of the Uniting 4 Communities Society. “Motorized recreation will provide an opportunity for existing businesses to add new visitor services and extend their operations into the shoulder seasons.”

The project is the result of several years of planning and fundraising between the Village of Tahsis, the Village of Zeballos and the Mowachaht/Muchalaht and Ehattesaht/Chinehkint First Nations.

The first phase of the project consists of an 11-km section of trail between Tahsis and the Little Zeballos River headwaters. The trail will facilitate access to new outdoor adventure opportunities, complementing the existing fishing, diving and wildlife viewing markets.

The Community Unity Trail will also join a growing network of off-road vehicle trails on the North Island, such as the Pye Mountain Recreation Site in the Strathcona Regional District. It is a component of a broader vision to develop an off-road circle route connecting to Gold River, Campbell River and Sayward.

“Sustainable tourism provides exciting opportunities for remote and rural communities looking to diversify from largely resource dependent economies,” explained ICET Chair Josie Osborne. “The Community Unity Trail is an asset that will benefit residents and visitors, and contribute to the critical mass of experiences required for successful regional destination development.”

The connection to Indigenous history and culture is an important aspect of the project. All along the trail, interpretive signage will feature Indigenous languages, and will tell the story of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht and Ehattesaht/Chinehkint and their territory.

The first phase of the project, budgeted at \$755,000, will be supported with \$387,080 from the Island Coastal Economic Trust. Led by the Village of Tahsis, project works will include bridge and trail engineering and construction,

historical and cultural information and signage, preparation of the trail on the former FSR sections, and construction of new trail segments.

Work on the first phase is estimated to be complete by September 2020.

About the Island Coastal Economic Trust

Created and capitalized by the Province of BC, the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) has been at the forefront of economic diversification, planning and regional revitalization for the past thirteen years.

ICET is independently governed by a Board of Directors and two Regional Advisory Committees which include more than 50 locally elected officials, MLAs and appointees from the Island and Coast. This exceptional team of leaders collaborate to set regional priorities and build vital multi-regional networks.

Through a community centered decision-making process, ICET has approved more than \$52 million in funding for over 200 economic infrastructure and economic development readiness projects. These investments have leveraged over \$270 million in new investment into the region creating more than 2500 construction phase jobs and 2650 long term permanent jobs.

A full overview of ICET can be found at www.islandcoastaltrust.ca

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