

CAYCUSE RECREATION SITE, NEW TOURISM HUB FOR NITINAHT LAKE

COURTENAY – Nitinaht Lake, a world-renowned destination for windsurfers and kiteboarders, will soon be home to new visitor recreation amenities. Developed by the Ditidaht First Nation, the Caycuse Recreation Site project will receive \$237,000 in funding support from the Island Coastal Economic Trust.

“Windsurfers and kiteboarders, as well as West Coast Trail hiking enthusiasts, have historically been our target markets at Nitinaht Lake,” explained Ditidaht Development Corporation CEO Bryan Cofsky. “These new visitor amenities will serve to draw broader and more family-based markets into the area, supporting the development of new businesses, services and sustainable employment opportunities for our rural community members.”

The Caycuse Recreation Site project will feature the development of new facilities which include 52 new campsites and related cultural tourism elements. The project will also include the development of 5.1 km hiking trail access to the Looper Creek Canyon, a unique cave system characterized by limestone karsts and watery narrows that has potential to gain regional and provincial recognition.

“We have long-term aspirations for this area, defined in our “Unleashing the Nitinaht” plan, a tourism initiative to transform Nitinaht into a world-class tourism destination,” said Ditidaht First Nation Chief Robert Joseph. “The project will enable us to build on our existing expertise in cultural recreation and trail management, and serve as a stepping stone to attract new visitor markets while continuing to build our vision where we are leaders of change, not recipients.”

The project, with a total budget of more than \$1.2M, has also been designed to integrate employment and skill training opportunities for the community.

“In the past few years we have seen a growing trend in the development of remote Indigenous tourism hubs in several parts of the Island and Coastal region,” said ICET Chair Josie Osborne. “Visitors are seeking authentic experiences and are interested to learn directly from Indigenous communities and tourism operators about their territories and culture. The Ditidaht First Nation is creating opportunities to do just that.”

An economic analysis of the project demonstrates that 3-5 years post-completion, the additional campsites, trails, and related activity will generate an additional \$775,000 of tourism spending per year, leading to 4.9 permanent new jobs. During the 6-month construction phase, 14 temporary full-time equivalent jobs will be created.

Construction is now underway with completion anticipated by the end of November.



Building a diverse and sustainable economy.

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 twelve 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 \$50 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 2600 long term permanent jobs.

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

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