

FROM FISHING VESSELS TO TANK-LIKE TRACTORS, NORTH ISLAND LEVERAGES HERITAGE ASSETS

COURTENAY – A pair of projects focused on heritage tourism in the North Island region are receiving a funding injection from the Island Coastal Economic Trust.

On Malcolm Island, the Sointula Museum and Historical Society will be building a viewing pavilion to display the Sturgeon I, a circa-1948 gillnet fishing boat. The fully restored vessel is a tangible representation of both the boatbuilding and fishing industries that helped shape the region in the early and mid-20th century.

The viewing pavilion will feature construction in a traditional Finnish post-and-beam style - a nod to the Finns who came to Malcolm Island in 1901 - complemented with interpretive panels that tell the story of the Sturgeon I and boat building on Malcolm Island.

“The craftsmanship and detail in historical boats like the Sturgeon I attract enthusiasts from around the world, and having a proper, permanent display and interpretive elements will boost visitor attraction and spending in our community,” said Kathy Gibler, Manager of the Sointula Museum.

In Quatsino Sound, an interpretive exhibit is also underway for the Hornsby Steam Crawler - a large iron tracked vehicle deployed in the early days of North Island forestry and mining, and a notable precursor to the military tank and bulldozer.

“Heritage artifacts provide complementary attractions for visitors coming to the area,” explained Pat English, Economic Development Officer for the Regional District of Mount Waddington. “But there is also a niche market of heritage enthusiasts who will travel great distances to get up close to artifacts such as these.”

The Hornsby Crawler project will become the central attraction in a heritage site being developed on the traditional territory of the Quatsino First Nation. Its location in Quatsino will ‘bookend’ a series of heritage sites, beginning with the heritage steam locomotive 113 site in Woss at the Nimpkish Valley Heritage Park.

“We’re seeing more heritage projects borne out of the region’s traditional industries and natural resources,” said ICET Chair Josie Osborne. “Collectively, these projects contribute to the potential for a ‘heritage trail’ creating year-round opportunities at historical points of interest in the North Island and throughout Vancouver Island.”

Both projects are underway, with completion anticipated in early 2020.



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 \$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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