



## **ISLAND COASTAL ECONOMIC TRUST ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR ALERT BAY WATERFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

**For Immediate Release – June 28, 2007.** Mayor Jack Peake, Town of Lake Cowichan, and Chair of the Island Coastal Economic Trust (Trust), today announced funding approval by the Board of Directors of \$324,000 for the construction of waterfront improvement in the Village of Alert Bay on Cormorant Island, a short ferry ride from Port McNeill in the northern part of Vancouver Island.

“The Alert Bay Waterfront Improvement project is part of the economic diversification strategy supported by the Island Coastal Economic Trust Strategy. This project will increase tourist traffic to Alert Bay by twenty five per cent as well as increase the number of visits of pocket cruise ships, visiting boaters, and tours” stated Jack Peake.

Mayor J. Rowell, speaking on behalf of the Village of Alert Bay Council, stated that the Village, in cooperation with local First Nations and businesses, will invest \$555,755 to improve an existing municipal dock and up to \$143,000 to build a boardwalk that creates a pedestrian corridor from the current B.C. Ferries terminal to the east side of the community. These investments will create new employment and support existing employment related to tourism in Alert Bay. He indicated that all funding is in place now and expects construction to start shortly.

The Island Coastal Economic Trust was established by Provincial legislation on February 27, 2006. It provides \$50-million that is managed by an independent board of directors made up of 8 locally elected government representatives and 5 provincially appointed members from the community. The board’s mandate is to makes strategic investments in regional economic priorities such as forestry, transportation, tourism, mining, energy, Olympic opportunities, economic development, agriculture and aquaculture, and small business. Information about the Trust can be found on [www.islandcoastaltrust.ca](http://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca).

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## FACT SHEET

### Overview - The Village of Alert Bay

- Often referred to as “Home of the Killer Whale”, the Village of Alert Bay is located at the top of Johnstone Strait on Cormorant Island, a crescent shaped island three miles in length and a half mile wide. The oldest community on northern Vancouver Island, Alert Bay was once a key trading post for First Nations people and merchant mariners. The island was named after a coastal cruiser, the H.M.S. Cormorant in 1846. Alert Bay derived its name from the H.M.S. Alert, which was stationed on the northwest coast in 1858.
- Today, Alert Bay has a population of about 1,500 comprised of the Village of Alert Bay, the 'Namgis First Nation and Whe-la-la-u Area Council. Alert Bay is a well-known centre for the powerful resurgence of Native culture and hosts some of the world’s finest historical and cultural artifacts, including First Nations paintings, carvings and totem poles.
- As the gateway to Knight and Kingcome inlets and the Broughton Archipelago, Alert Bay offers exciting ecological adventures including kayaking, air tours, whale-watching, bike-riding and hiking along beaches and through the trails of the Ecological Park, also known as Gator Gardens.
- Historic Telegraph Cove is 10 minutes away by boat and the community of Sointula is located on nearby Malcolm Island, home to Bere Point Park and whale rubbing beach, accessible by ferry or a by a 5 minute boat ride
- Alert Bay is accessible by a 30 minute ferry ride which departs six times as day from Port McNeill. Additional information can be found on the Village website: [www.alertbay.ca](http://www.alertbay.ca) .

### Alert Bay Waterfront Improvement Project – Estimated Economic Benefits

- Economic benefits to the community are valued at \$250,000 of revenues to the business community, local government and the First Nations. The Waterfront Improvement Project is estimated to support the existing 50 jobs in Alert Bay related to tourism, and is expected to create 13 new direct and indirect jobs in tourism. During construction, there will be approximately 5 jobs created for both design and construction phases.
- The estimated economic impacts of the Alert Bay Waterfront Improvement Project expects an increase of local tourist traffic by 25% as follows:
  - Increased number and duration of pocket cruise visits
  - Increased number of boaters accessing local services and attractions
  - Increased number of “rubber-tire” package tours
  - Increased the number of ferry passengers visiting Alert Bay to enjoy the community’s inherent historical and cultural beauty
  - Renewing and extending important marine and pedestrian access and infrastructure.