



China Creek Bridge – ICET Completion Report

November 2014

Project Background

The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, together with partners, is working on a multi-year project to construct a 30 kilometre hiking trail down the Alberni Inlet from the City of Port Alberni to Headquarters Bay. The Alberni Inlet Trail promises to be one of the most scenic on Vancouver Island, featuring a year-round backcountry experience with spectacular views over the Alberni Inlet. It also has high historic values, ranging from traditional First Nations presence on the inlet, to evidence of more recent mining activity in the 19th century. For much of its length the trail follows the grade of the historic CNPR railway which originated in Victoria on what is now the Galloping Goose Trail. Although it was never completed, extensive railroad construction took place in the early 1900's, the remains of which are still visible along sections of the trail.

Stage 1 of the Alberni Inlet Trail was completed in November 2011, also with partial funding from ICET, and Stage 2 was completed in the Fall of 2014. The project which was the subject of this application – construction of bridges over China Creek – is part of that overall project and represents completion of a critical link between Stages 1 and 2 of the trail.

Project Objectives

The objective of this project was to construct a pedestrian bridge over China Creek. The original application envisaged two components: a major span of 13.5 metres over the main stem of the creek and a shorter, secondary bridge of 6 metres over an adjoining back channel. However, once work was underway and a fisheries assessment was completed, it was determined that a third, smaller overflow channel should also be bridged. With the agreement of ICET, that crossing of 80 metres was added to the project and completed within the original project budget. Installation of informational signage and directional signs was also included.

Project Partners and Management

The project was overseen and managed by the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District. The Alberni Valley Enhancement Association assisted by arranging for and funding pre-engineering work, fisheries assessment and submission of the Section 9 notification under the Water Act. Funding

was also contributed by the Port Alberni Port Authority. Details are in the table under the financial section below.

The China Creek bridges are located on property owned by Island Timberlands. The company have been a major partner in the overall Alberni Inlet Trail project from its inception, contributing parking lots and assistance in facilitation in all stages of the trail. For this specific application, they took part in site inspections and issued a permit for construction.

Funding Sources

The budget estimate for this project was \$68,185.00. The contribution agreement with ICET was for 40% of total funding, not to exceed \$26,945.00. Additional funding provided was \$3,500.00 from the Port Alberni Port Authority and \$2,470.00 from the Alberni Valley Enhancement Association. The AVEA also provided many volunteer hours during construction. The ACRD provided the remainder of the funding.

Final Project Costs

While ICET expressed some initial concerns about the proposed project budget, specifically whether it was too low, the project came in on budget. As indicated under Project Objectives above, it was also possible to include a third smaller crossing of a flood channel when this was determined to be necessary for fisheries requirements.

Project Benefits

Employment:

All work associated with this project was contracted to companies in the Alberni Valley. In total, engineering, bridge construction and installation, kiosk construction and signage created over 1000 man hours of employment.

Recreation and Tourism Benefits:

As noted above, the single most immediate benefit of the China Creek bridge is completion of a much-needed link between Stages 1 and 2 of the Alberni Inlet Trail. This renders the two phases much more useable and is expected to result in increased usage of both stages of the trail.

To put this in context, the Inlet Trail is already proving extremely popular with both the local community and visitors. A trail counter was installed in May 2014 near the start of Stage 1 just outside Port Alberni. In the period May 28th – Aug 14th a total of 3,144 trail users were recorded. While some of those numbers may represent return trips, it speaks to the importance of trails and the level of support in the Alberni Valley.

A second important benefit lies in expanded use of China Creek Regional Park which is linked to the new bridge by the Inlet Trail. Part of the park is leased by the Port Alberni Port Authority which operates the campsite and boat launch. However much of the upper section has been underutilised until now. A connector trail been opened up between the campsite and the bridge access and will allow campers to access the upper reaches of China Creek and fishing opportunities beside the bridge. The Port Authority is actively promoting wider use of the park and has been very supportive of bridge and trail.

Mid-Island Regional Importance:

In the regional context, the Alberni Inlet Trail, overall, and the China Creek bridge as a major feature of it, is more than just a single destination trail, it is an integral component of what will be a major mid-island trail route. The trail has been recognised and endorsed by the Vancouver Island Spine Association (VISTA) as a major link in the Vancouver Island long corridor which they are promoting. The south end of the Inlet Trail connects to the Runners Trail, which extends eastwards to Francis Lake. VISTA is currently working on a link from there to the Cowichan Valley and an ultimate connection to Victoria. The north end of the trail connects to the City of Port Alberni's trail system which in turn links up to the Log Train Trail and thence to the north end of the Alberni Valley.

Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District has also recognised the importance of the Alberni Inlet Trail by officially designating it as its first "Regional Trail". This is reflected in the district's regional parks plan, which is nearing completion and which will also include recommendations for promotion of regional parks and trails.

Economic Benefits:

The economic benefits to the Alberni Valley of a good trail system have been well documented in several reports over the last decade. The number of users demonstrated by the trail counter illustrates the validity of these projections and the potential to the community in marketing these types of assets.

Increasingly, visitors from outside the immediate area are visiting the Alberni Valley to avail themselves of the trails here. The China Creek bridge is another reason to visit the valley.

Going Forward

With the completion of the China Creek bridge, another milestone has been completed in the construction of the Alberni Inlet Trail. Stages 1 and 2 are now linked up and it is anticipated that there will be a formal opening of Stage 2 in the Spring of 2014.

Stage 3 is already under construction. The majority of the trail work for that section is complete; however construction of one more major crossing – this one over the Franklin River will be required to link Stages 2 and 3, so there is still work to be done.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

China Creek Bridge Construction

Period: March 2014 to August 2014

Project Expenditures

Engineering Design and Site Preparation	\$ 6,043.00
Fabrication	\$20,052.87
Construction and Transportation	\$38,610.75
Signage	\$ 2,140.13
Contingency	<u>\$ 346.75</u>

Total Expenditures **\$67,193.50**

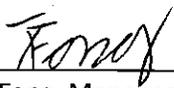
Project Income (Sources of Funding)

Alberni Valley Enhancement Association	\$ 2,470.00
Port Alberni Port Authority	\$ 3,500.00
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District	\$34,346.10
ICET	\$26,877.40

Total Income (Sources of Funding) **\$67,193.50**

Balance \$0

I hereby certify that this statement accurately represents all project expenditures and all sources of project funding.



Teri Fong, Manager of Finance

Dec 3/14

Date