
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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July 29, 2010

Ministry of Community and Rural Development

\$1.3 MILLION HELPS LINK WORKERS WITH ISLAND JOBS

CAMPBELL RIVER – The Job Opportunities Program and the Island Coastal Economic Trust is providing approximately \$1.3 million in funding to assist Vancouver Island communities by providing jobs and improvements to area trails and recreation sites, said Ministry of Community and Rural Development Minister Ben Stewart.

“The North Island region has been hard hit by the economic malaise, so it is important for us be involved with an initiative which helps us retain our resource industry workforce,” said Island Coastal Economic Trust chair, Barry Janyk. “Our investments will not only yield short-term employment and economic benefits for displaced forestry workers and their communities, but will also improve and help revitalize the region’s tourism infrastructure.”

“Cost-sharing among organizations is a practical way to achieve the maximum benefit for Island families,” said Stewart. “Through this joint funding, trails are improved and recreation sites are maintained giving unemployed resource workers some additional work experience leading to future job opportunities.”

Thirty-three workers will tackle five projects underway in a variety of communities. The work involves trail and recreation site improvements as well as fuel management.

“These projects will mean improvements including wheelchair accessibility at Lighthouse Country regional trail, a safety upgrade at Upana caves near Gold River, and building a new trail as part of the Port Hardy Loop,” said Comox Valley MLA Don McRae.

“This is all about workers gaining access to employment opportunities,” said Parksville-Qualicum MLA Ron Cantelon. “We need to be ready as the economy improves, and this way, workers are enhancing their skills as well as getting a paycheck.”

The three-year, \$86.25-million Job Opportunities Program, now in its final year, was first announced in May 2008 as a component of the Community Development Trust through funding provided by the Government of Canada. In July 2009, the Government of Canada and Province of British Columbia each committed up to an additional \$30 million toward the program.

The Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) was established by legislation in 2006 and makes strategic investments in economic development priorities including forestry, transportation, tourism, mining, energy, Olympic opportunities, economic development, agriculture and aquaculture, and small business.

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The ICET region encompasses all Regional Districts and municipalities on Vancouver Island north of the Malahat as well as the Powell River and Sunshine Coast Regional Districts. The trust has committed more than \$41 million to over 70 projects to date.

For more information about the Community Development Trust and Job Opportunities Program, go to: www.cd.gov.bc.ca/cdt/.

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

-30-

A backgrounder follows.

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BACKGROUND

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Development

JOB OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM AND ICET FUNDING

Greenways Connector Loop: This is part of a larger trail network and is designed to link the Beaver Lodge Forest Lands with the southern end of the Seawalk, creating a full 25-km loop around Campbell River. The project will be managed by Oceanside Scaling and Residue and employ 10 workers in the Campbell River area for trail building, danger tree removal, bridge placement, invasive plant removal, native plant replacement, fire interface and drainage.

JOP Funding: \$135,346
ICET Funding: \$250,000
Total Funding: \$385,346

Broughton Strait Phase 2: This involves the complete restoration of the aging Cormorant Island Trail Network. It also includes the restoration of the Gwakawe recreation site and establishment of the Lady Ellen Point recreation site. Managed by the Regional District of Mount Waddington this project will employ six workers in Alert Bay (Namgis First Nation) and Port McNeill (Kwakiutl First Nation) for recreation site and trail maintenance, to repair or replace existing facilities; maintain and clean up trails and sites; add sites, parking areas, and connector trails; installation of area of interest maps for hub locations, and signage.

JOP Funding: \$158,101.50
ICET Funding: \$90,277.50
Total Funding: \$248,379.00

Port Hardy Loop: This is part of a multi-year project that will support the connection of the North Coast Trail from Port Hardy to Cape Scott. This phase of the project, managed by Richply Plywood Corporation Ltd, involves building approximately 10 kms of new trail. This will employ five workers in the Port Hardy area to undertake trail building, including trail armouring, establishing some structures and brushing of the existing trail.

JOP Funding: \$124,067.50
ICET Funding: \$41,970.00
Total Funding: \$166,037.50

Gold River Recreation Sites: This will improve a number of area trails located at Malaspina Lake, Muchalat Lake, Santiago Creek, Tahsis Viewpoint and Star Lake. It also includes an important safety and accessibility upgrade at the Upana caves, with the installation of an engineered metal staircase. Managed by Forsite Consultants Ltd, this project will employ five workers in the Gold River area to undertake site maintenance including removal of garbage; construction and maintenance of existing structures; information sign maintenance, brushing of trails, replacing staircase, falling dangerous trees; construction of boardwalk, picnic tables, fire rings, and outhouses.

JOP Funding: \$152,716
ICET Funding: \$97,284
Total Funding: \$250,000

Lighthouse Country Regional Trail: This is the final phase of the much larger Lighthouse Country Regional Trail South Loop project and involves the completion of approximately two km of wheelchair-accessible trails and boardwalks. Managed by the Regional District of Nanaimo, this project will employ seven workers in the Qualicum Bay, Bowser, Deep Bay, Parksville and Qualicum Beach areas to carry out hazard- and other tree removal; clearing, realignment and widening of trail corridor; channelling of surface water; installation of culverts; preparation of trail base; surfacing; construction and installation of about 200 metres of boardwalk.

JOP Funding: \$151,216
ICET Funding: \$98,784
Total Funding: \$250,000

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