



Building a Diverse
and Sustainable Economy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALERT BAY TO ENJOY NEW PERFORMANCE AMPHITHEATRE

COURTENAY – Entertainers and participants in Alert Bay's Seafest and Music Fest can look forward to enjoying a new covered amphitheatre for the popular annual weekend of community celebrations.

Seafest and *Music Fest* are part of a successful weekend festival of live performances and community activities that bring a large number of visitors to Cormorant Island each year. The existing platform stage that hosts the event does not offer protection from the coastal rainy weather. Current infrastructure lacks technical requirements needed by performers and limits shows the festival can attract.

"Creating a modern performance amphitheatre, with better weather protection, will provide a much needed venue for community cultural events and build upon the other cultural attractions on Cormorant Island," said ICET Chair Phil Kent. "We are pleased to see that the project will benefit both the 'Namgis First Nation and the Village of Alert Bay who have been working together to plan and implement enhancements to the local economy."

The new performance venue builds upon the joint 'Namgis First Nation and Village of Alert Bay "Tides of Change" economic development strategy adopted by the community in March 2015 and partly funded by the Island Coastal Economic Trust.

"Tourists seek out authentic, cultural experiences, and this new facility provides a modern, venue that will attract higher caliber performers," said Alert Bay Seafest Society President Kim Mercer. "If we want to grow our tourism economy, and keep visitors in our community longer, we need to continue to invest in projects like this one."

Along with Seafest and Music Fest, the amphitheatre will host 'Namgis First Nation cultural events, night theatre, music performances, and will complement other local attractions on Cormorant Island such as the U'mista Cultural Centre, 'Namgis First Nation Bighouse, and Alert Bay's unique coastal fishing community.

The new amphitheatre will feature the following elements:

- A 25' wide by 25' deep stage
- Peaked and shingled roof designed to maximize acoustics

- Full electrical wiring to accommodate a variety of show requirements
- Theatre style lighting
- Plumbing to support future plans for an adjacent washroom and greenroom

The Island Coastal Economic Trust is contributing \$38,900 to the \$77,800 project, with \$20,000 coming from local government funds and \$5,000 in applicant equity.

The project will begin April 1, 2016 and is estimated to be completed by fall 2016.

About the Island Coastal Economic Trust

The Island Coastal Economic Trust is a \$50 million endowment established in 2006 by the Government of British Columbia to help diversify the economies of central and northern Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast.

ICET is guided by a Board of Directors and two Regional Advisory Committees which include more than 50 locally elected officials and MLAs and five appointees. This exceptional team of leaders collaborates to set regional priorities and build vital multi-regional networks.

Through a community-centred decision-making process, ICET has approved \$49 million for over 140 economic infrastructure and economic development readiness projects on the Island and Sunshine Coast since implementing its grant program in 2007. ICET investments have leveraged over \$276 million in incremental funding into the region.

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

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