



## **Island Coastal Economic Trust Announces Funding for Hidden Grove Access Trail**

### **For Immediate Release**

**February 13, 2012**

**Duncan, BC** - Mayor Phil Kent, the Chair of the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET), today announced funding approval of \$6,681 for the Sechelt Groves Society to develop a wheelchair accessible destination trail, in the Hidden Grove Forest, a preserved area of old growth forest in the District of Sechelt. The total estimated cost for this initiative is \$27,000.

The Hidden Grove area has evolved to the top of the promoted trail areas on the Sunshine Coast. Located only 4 km from the highly popular Porpoise Bay Provincial Park, and close to a vibrant residential community, Hidden Grove is a prime destination for travelers.

The purpose of this unique trail project is to provide spectacular old growth forest access to people with mobility challenges and special needs. "This project will provide recreation opportunities to address the shortfall in outdoor recreation facilities for people with disabilities," stated Mayor Kent. "This trail will draw these visitors to the Sechelt area and build on the area's existing tourism and outdoor recreation infrastructure. This is consistent with the Trust's mission to diversify the regional economy and provide the building blocks for sustainable economic development," concluded Kent.

"We are thrilled with the financial support we have received. This type of regional collaboration between funders, the business community and volunteers, has moved this trail project from the realm of possibility to reality," stated Robert D'Arcy, President of the Sechelt Groves Society. "Our small non-profit society is pleased to see that our work will not only enhance recreational opportunities for the region, but will also have an impact on the regional tourism economy."

The public can follow project progress and see virtual tours of the Grove at [www.secheltgroves.com](http://www.secheltgroves.com).

## **About Island Coastal Economic Trust**

The Island Coastal Economic Trust was established in February 2006 under an Act of the Province of British Columbia. It provided a \$50-million endowment that is managed by an independent Board of Directors comprised of thirteen members – eight Mayors and five provincial appointees from the region encompassing all Regional Districts and municipalities on Vancouver Island north of the Malahat as well as the Powell River and Sunshine Coast Regional Districts.

The Board's mandate is to make strategic investments in economic development priorities including forestry, transportation, tourism, mining, energy, economic development, agriculture and aquaculture, and small business.

Since implementing a grant program in 2007, ICET has approved over \$46 million for over 80 projects on the Island and Sunshine Coast. The total impact of these investments is estimated at over \$245 million. A full overview of ICET is available at [www.islandcoastaltrust.ca](http://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca)

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