



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 7, 2017

***HUU-AY-AHT WALKING TRAIL TO CONNECT BAMFIELD AND ANACLA,
PROMOTING ABORIGINAL TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES***

COURTENAY – A new walking trail connecting Anacla and Bamfield is being built by the HUU-ay-aht First Nations, and a \$279,763 investment from the Island Coastal Economic Trust is helping to move the project to completion.

“Aboriginal tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the overall tourism market and the HUU-ay-aht are at the forefront thanks to their vision for the region with projects like this one,” said ICET Chair Phil Kent.

The 4.5km trail will traverse a culturally-significant route and include opportunities to participate in HUU-ay-aht guided tours, self-guided walks, and to visit the traditional capital - Kiixin - a designated National Historic site.

“Over the past year, the HUU-ay-aht have been working to develop a Cultural Tourism Destination marketing strategy, and this trail is an important piece of the work we are doing,” said HUU-ay-aht Chief Councillor, Robert J. Dennis Sr. “We’ve purchased multiple properties in Bamfield including the motel, pub, Kingfisher Lodge and Marina, and airport, and we are redesigning many of them to feature a First Nations theme.”

Along the route structures will be built to resemble longhouses, featuring First Nations story and history panels with interpretive content about the local area, the HUU-ay-aht people, the cultural importance of cedar, and the archaeological sites at Kiixin.

Design and construction of the Anacla-Bamfield trail will ensure that the trail is an age-friendly stroll, allowing for use by a variety of visitors including persons with mobility aids and families with strollers.

The project will begin construction shortly and, once complete, will help link tourism destinations and infrastructure in the region and offer visitors an authentic nature-based Aboriginal cultural experience.

About the Island Coastal Economic Trust

Created by the Province of BC in 2006, the Island Coastal Economic Trust is celebrating its tenth year of investment in economic diversification, planning and regional revitalization.

ICET is independently governed by a Board of Directors and two Regional Advisory Committees which include more than 50 locally elected officials, MLAs and appointees from the Island and Coast. This exceptional team of leaders collaborate to set regional priorities and build vital multi-regional networks.

Through a community-centred decision-making process, ICET has approved \$49 million for over 160 economic infrastructure and economic development readiness projects. ICET investments have leveraged over \$270 million in investment into the region creating more than 2500 construction phase jobs and 2600 long term permanent jobs.

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

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For further information:

Mayor Phil Kent, ICET Chair
City of Duncan
Tel. 250-709-0186
mayor@duncan.ca

Line Robert, CEO
Island Coastal Economic Trust
Tel. 250-871-7797 (Ext. 227)
line.robert@islandcoastaltrust.ca

Cynthia Rayner
Economic Development Officer
Huu-ay-aht First Nation
Tel: 250-723-0100 ext 208
cynthia.r@huuayaht.org