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January 7, 2014

RDMW STRATEGIC PLANNING GETS GO-AHEAD

COURTENAY – A much-needed integrated approach to regional planning can now go ahead thanks to \$25,000 of partnered funding from the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET).

“The Regional District of Mount Waddington is facing a decline in many resource industries, and this impacts their ability to efficiently and effectively provide services and infrastructure,” said ICET Chair Phil Kent. “A comprehensive development plan helps to ensure that priority issues are addressed in a strategic, focused way.”

ICET is providing \$12,500 through its Economic Development Readiness Program to match \$10,000 from the RDMW and \$2,500 contributed by Community Futures.

“By taking an integrated, region-wide approach to planning for telecommunications, internet coverage, hydro, transportation, forestry and more, we can provide the best support to communities as they undergo their own planning processes,” said Dave Rushton, RDMW Chairperson. “We can focus our regional activities on the things that will have the most significant impact on local economic development.”

The RDMW planning project will examine all strategic sectors in the region and develop a work plan that summarizes economic and demographic trends and identifies key infrastructure and resources that will impact future development options. The strategic plan will outline economic development tasks for each sector over the next five years.

“Developing a regional plan at the district level will be a big help in supporting our local entrepreneurs,” said Community Futures of Mount Waddington General Manager David Mitchell. “Much of what needs addressing in terms of service and infrastructure stretches beyond the scope of our areas municipalities. Having a clear course of action provides a great benefit to people in this area.”

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 \$47 million for over 100 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 \$260 million in incremental funding into the region.

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

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