



ICET ANNOUNCES FUNDING SUPPORT FOR ELK FALLS SUSPENSION BRIDGE PROJECT

For Immediate Release

June 26, 2013

Courtenay, BC. The Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) today announced funding approval of \$325,000 towards the Rotary Club of Campbell River's Elk Falls Suspension Bridge Project.

The Island Coastal Economic Trust will provide funding for the construction of the suspension bridge, viewing platforms and an access trail. Elk Falls has been recognized as a major tourism attraction for decades and has been identified by BC Parks as an underutilized asset. The 90 metre suspension bridge will be 72 metres above the bottom of Elk Falls Canyon, making it the highest pedestrian only suspension bridge in Canada. The project will also feature an accessible viewing platform and access trail, creating new tourism opportunities for individuals with mobility challenges and families with strollers. The overall project will also include an improved access road, expanded parking designed to accommodate tour buses and public washroom facilities, which will be constructed by BC Hydro in cooperation with BC Parks.

The new and unique status of being the highest suspension bridge in Canada will help transform this existing natural asset into a world-class visitor experience, bringing significant media attention and an increased profile to the entire region. The project offers the potential to attract new tourism markets and create niche businesses to service them.

"This project is a perfect fit for the region and also supports the broader BC Tourism strategy and its focus on creating world class visitor experiences," stated Mayor Phil Kent, Chair of the Island Coastal Economic Trust. "We are pleased to put these provincial funding dollars to work with funding partners BC Hydro and the federal government, to support this community based approach to economic diversification and job growth. In our region, non-profit community groups such as the Rotary Club of Campbell River are increasingly becoming important partners in the development of tourism infrastructure and tourism products, and we would like to acknowledge their significant contributions to community and regional economic growth."

"The Rotary Club of Campbell River is very excited to have received grant approval from Island Coastal Economic Trust. We now have all the funding in place so we can begin the construction of the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge located in Elk Falls Provincial Park," stated Todd Peachey, President. "On behalf of the members of our club, we appreciate the confidence that Island Coastal Economic Trust has in our

club's ability to complete this world class tourism destination attraction. We are eager to see the long term sustainable economic growth to Campbell River and region brought on by this project.”

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 funds community driven economic development initiatives in targeted sectors to spark new and sustainable regional economic growth. These sectors include: forestry, transportation, tourism, mining, energy, economic development, agriculture and aquaculture, and small business.

ICET is managed by an independent Board of Directors comprised of thirteen members – eight Mayors and five provincial appointees from the ICET Region. ICET has approved \$47 million for over 90 projects on the Island and Sunshine Coast since implementing its grant program in 2007. ICET investments have leveraged over \$260 million in additional funding to the region.

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

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