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MORE MARINE VISITORS MEANS MORE DOCK SPACE NEEDED IN LADYSMITH

COURTENAY – A 71% surge in the number of marine tourists wanting to tie up their boats to the visitor docks at the Ladysmith community marina means an expansion is needed, and an investment from the Island Coastal Economic Trust is helping the project move forward.

“Marine tourism is enjoying a surge in popularity, and one of the exciting facets is the growth of boat rendezvous, where groups of boaters converge for several days of activities, both on and off the water,” said ICET Chair Phil Kent. “This is a high value tourism market and all of the marinas in the region stand to benefit from the attraction of these group events to our waters.”

The Island Coastal Economic Trust is investing \$21,573 in the Ladysmith Maritime Society’s (LMS) \$65,000 project to add a 150-foot extension to the visitor dock, along with installation of necessary electrical and water services. The relatively modest investment provides a big bump in economic activity.

“With this new dock extension, we’ll be able to accommodate larger groups and larger boats during these multi-day meet-ups,” said Doug Bell of the Ladysmith Maritime Society. “These additional visitors are projected to directly spend an additional \$72,000 annually, with a total economic impact of \$130,000.”

The dock expansion project - in concert with the previous revitalization of marine visitor facilities – is strengthening the profile of the entire Island/Coast region as a preferred destination for large-scale marine tourism.

Work is expected to begin in January, 2014, with completion by the end of March 2014, in time for the start of the marine tourism season.

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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