



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW SALISH SEA MARINE TRAIL WILL BRING PADDLESPORTS TOURISTS TO REGION

COURTENAY – The Trans-Canada Trail is quickly becoming a world-renowned tourism asset, and a new project will build on its success with a connected marine trail, aimed at paddlesport tourists.

The Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) will be providing up to \$30,000 of funding from its Economic Development Readiness Program for the Salish Sea Marine Trail Project.



“The vision is to create a network of amenities, recreation areas, launch points, and access to local businesses along a 257-km marine route for paddlers and other self-propelled watercraft,” explained Paul Grey, president of the BC Marine Trail Network Association (BCMNTA). “Paddlesports is already a significant contributor of tourism revenue around the Island and Sunshine Coast, but stakeholders haven’t yet been able to bring a single, strategic focus to optimizing and growing the impact. This project will help us make that happen.”

The project, which is now underway, will include a clear marine trail route, including new recreation sites in the Winchelsea Islands, South Ballenas Island, Wilson Creek near Sechtel, and more. The project will also connect the route’s access and

destinations with related businesses such as accommodation providers, food and beverage, and outdoor equipment and supplies.

“Paddlers are a dynamic and desirable tourism market,” said ICET Chair Phil Kent. “This project can help bring exposure to many locations to establish key service hubs and promote tour and exploration options along a single marine recreation travel corridor.”

This new Salish Sea Marine Trail will ultimately link the pre-existing marine-accessible provincial and national park campsites with the new service hub areas to strategically market clean, green, and active tourism with the Salish Sea Marine Trail as a new focal point for adventure ecotourism along the BC coast.

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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