



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2018

***TOQUAHT NATION RECEIVES \$400K INVESTMENT IN NEW SECRET BEACH MARINA***

COURTENAY – The Toquaht Nation is set to begin construction of a new \$1.35M marina development at Secret Beach and the Island Coastal Economic Trust is supporting the project with a \$400,000 investment.

The project includes the construction of 40-slip marina, construction of a new double-wide boat launching ramp, a new marina access road, parking facilities, and breakwater at Secret Beach.

The Marina is the first phase of a broader plan that will transform Secret Beach into a regional tourism hub. Future developments will include the construction of a common building with café, gift shop and meeting rooms, rental cabins, kayak comfort station and other infrastructure to support cultural tourism.

In conjunction with the future replacement of the marina at Toquaht Bay, there will ultimately be slips for 80 boats in the two nearby locations, with access to campgrounds and other services for the growing number of visitors to the region.

“The Toquaht Nation has been proactive and innovative in building new economic opportunities, and when environmental concerns forced a change in their plans to redevelop the Toquaht Bay campground and marina, the Nation identified a new opportunity at Secret Beach,” explained ICET Chair Phil Kent. “This project will attract visiting boaters to the islands and coastline of this rugged area creating new opportunities for eco-tourism, cultural tourism and hospitality business development.”

The region is a key access point for visitors to explore the Broken Group of islands between Bamfield and Ucluelet on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The Secret Beach Marina will provide safe harbour for those arriving by water and a safe access route for those arriving by land.

“My father – Chief Bert Mack – spent decades fishing in Barkley Sound, and I know he would be proud to see this new marina at Secret Beach,” said the Toquaht Nation’s Chief Anne Mack. “Our economic development mission is to create businesses that respect the history, culture, and traditions of the Toquaht Nation, and this project embodies that mission exactly.”

The Broken Group is a prime destination, particularly for the growing kayak tourism market. The islands, which number more than 100 uninhabited islands, is often described as 'dream destination' for paddlers. The routes are part of the new BC Marine Trails network - another project which has benefitted from ICET investment.

"Congratulations to Toquaht Nation and the Island Coastal Economic Trust on a partnership that will support Toquaht's continued success as a tourist destination on the west coast of the Island, said Scott Fraser, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and MLA for Mid Island-Pacific Rim. "This investment will drive new economic opportunities and create jobs for the Toquaht community, to the benefit of the entire region."

The project is expected to create approximately 3.0 person-years of new construction phase jobs as well as 15 permanent local jobs within a 3-5 year term.

### **About the Island Coastal Economic Trust**

Created and capitalized by the Province of BC, the Island Coastal Economic Trust has been at the forefront of economic diversification, planning and regional revitalization for the past eleven years.

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 centered decision-making process, ICET has approved almost \$50 million in funding for over 180 economic infrastructure and economic development readiness projects. These investments have leveraged over \$270 million in new 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](http://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca).

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