



## CASE STUDY

# IMPACT ON COMMUNITY: PORT HARDY AREA

The Port Hardy area has benefited from a series of ICET-funded projects that have jointly created significant new economic activity and follow-up private investment.

Several of the projects are expanding tourism activity in the community and others are creating growth in fishing and fish processing activities. Individually, each of these projects has yielded significant economic benefits, from increased business activity for existing businesses to attraction of new businesses. Collectively, the projects have reached a critical mass which is having a measurable impact on community growth. In the 2006-2011 period, Port Hardy was the only community north of Campbell River to experience growth in population. While there are many internal and external factors which can affect community growth, the cumulative benefits of these projects is believed to be an important contributing factor.

### TOURISM PROJECTS

The first project ever approved by ICET was the North Coast Trail, a spectacular 43 km wilderness hiking experience in Cape Scott Provincial Park. ICET has also provided funding to the San Josef Bay Trail and the Raft Cove Trail, which has created new access to surfing in the Port Hardy area. Surfing is a growing tourism market with the younger demographic and this improved access

in a beautiful, wild and remote setting has been attracting surfing adventurers and new surfing related business ventures.

One of the significant results of the development of these world class adventure tourism assets is that they have increased Port Hardy's international profile as an attractive destination and place to live for the younger demographic. This is evident with the development of traveller's hostels in the area, which signals Port Hardy's growing profile as a hip travel destination for outdoor enthusiasts.

Other tourism projects in the region include the Quatse Salmon Stewardship Centre, an interpretive centre which has so far been attracting over 1500 seasonal visitors and is especially popular with Europeans.

The most recent ICET approved project in the Port Hardy area is the Bear Cove recreation site, which provides improved access and amenities for kayakers. It has recently been designated as the launching point for the BC Marine Trail. Located adjacent to the Prince Rupert Ferry terminal, this project is expected to be the catalyst for increased business development in the area, such as an increase in the number of Eco-cabins, new ecotourism, aboriginal tourism and related service business opportunities.