



## **Island Coastal Economic Trust Announces Funding for Vancouver Island Mountain Centre**

**For Immediate Release  
June 13, 2008**

**Courtenay, B.C.** - Sandy Herle, Mayor of Parksville, and Board member of the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) on behalf of W.J. (Jack) Peake, ICET Chair, today announced funding approval of \$555,500 for the development of the Vancouver Island Mountain Centre (the Centre) project at Mount Washington. The total cost of the project spearheaded by the Vancouver Island Mountain Sport Society (VIMMS) is estimated at \$2,222,500.

“Once built, the Centre will serve the broad community on Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast by promoting “fitness for life” principles through mountain sports and outdoor recreation,” explained Sandy Herle. “User groups of the Centre will include persons of all ages and abilities, athletes and coaches from the regional to national level, and sport experts in athletic testing, training and competition preparation.”

Starr Winchester, Mayor of Courtenay and Chair of ICET’s North Island-Sunshine Coast Regional Advisory Committee, stated, “Funding of this centre will support an ongoing infrastructure and sports development legacy into the future and will increase the region’s ability to capitalize on international exposure from the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The important part for the Island Coastal Economic Trust is the creation of additional economic activity by using sports training and development as part of the economic growth strategy of the Comox Valley.”

The Centre, to be located by the Raven Lodge at Mount Washington Alpine Resort, will include affordable overnight accommodation for groups of up to 40 people in the form of dormitory-style rooms with a group kitchen, classrooms and fitness facilities. It is anticipated that the Centre will attract user groups from the recreation, sport and education sectors.

“This announcement marks the commencement of the fund raising campaign that will be undertaken by VIMSS to secure the balance of the funds to build the Centre,” stated Rick Morson, VIMSS Chair.

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Morson reported that an independent economic analysis of the project indicates that there will be 25 to 30 permanent jobs per year created locally. The economic output is estimated at \$7 million in the first year during construction, with an ongoing impact of about \$150,000 per year to the three levels of government.

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

The Island Coastal Economic Trust was established by Provincial legislation on February 27, 2006. It provides \$50-million that is managed by an independent board of directors made up of 8 locally elected government representatives and 5 provincially appointed members from the community. The board's mandate is to make strategic investments in regional economic priorities such as forestry, transportation, tourism, mining, energy, Olympic opportunities, economic development, agriculture and aquaculture, and small business.

To date, the Trust has approved some \$27.7 million for over 30 projects since inception. The total impact of this investment is estimated at \$164 million. Information about the Trust and approved projects can be found on [www.islandcoastaltrust.ca](http://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca).

### **About the Vancouver Island Mountain Sports Society (VIMSS)**

VIMSS is an independent, non-profit society and umbrella group of many sports and outdoor organizations. Since 2003, it has raised over \$47,000 to assist emerging competitive mountain sport athletes on Vancouver Island. Partners in Vancouver Island Mountain Sport Centre include the Mount Washington Alpine Resort; Strathcona Nordic Ski Club; Mount Washington Alpine Ski Club; Courtenay Biathlon Association; Courtenay Biathlon Association; Mount Washington Freestyle Club; Vancouver Island Society for Adaptive Snow Sports; Comox Valley Cycling Club; and BC Parks.

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