

**Island and Coastal Economic Trust Grant  
Completion Report  
Sunshine Coast Trail and Wilderness Camp  
School District 47 (Powell River)  
September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

**Context of the Project:**

The project in question, for which funding was provided, represented three distinct but complementary projects that focused on the development and improvement of existing and new outdoor wilderness recreation facilities. These projects were undertaken through the partnership of three organizations, School District 47 (Powell River) (SD47), the prime contractor and administrator, as well as Model Community Project for Persons With Disabilities Society (Model Community) and the Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society (PRPAWS). These projects encompass improvements and upgrades to the Inland Lake Provincial Park accessible trail system and the Sunshine Coast Trail system, as well as construction of new shelters on the Sunshine Coast Trail. In addition, funding was provided to assist in the construction of a new fully accessible wilderness camp. These projects were undertaken to grow the tourism sector, create new outdoor youth programs and educational facilities and help with the economic diversification of the region.

**Summary of work completed:**

**Sunshine Coast Trail –**

The following is an itemization of the work carried out;

**Semi-Open Huts:**

- Manzanita Hut
- Rieveley Pond Hut
- Fiddlehead Landing Hut
- Elk Lake Hut
- Rainy Day Lake Hut
- Fairview Bay Hut
- Saltery Bay Kiosk/Emergency Shelter

**Closed Winterized Cabins:**

- Tin Hat Cabin
- Walt Hill Cabin (Pentstemon Bluff)
- Mount Troubridge Log Cabin

## Trail Reroutes and Safety Improvements:

- Fairview Bay rockwork, plus new access trail to creek – 400 m
- Fairview Bay Creek – new access trail for creek water
- Fairview Bay reroute into OGMA – 800 m
- Fairview Bay to Rainy Day Lake switchbacks – 300 m
- Troubridge OG reroute – 5,000 m
- Eagle River improvements – water management 500 m
- Stairway to Heaven reroute, rockwork – 600 m
- Deer Creek reroute, bridges – 800 m
- Suicide Pass reroute – 900 m
- Elk Lake – access trail to hut 100 m
- Tin Hat – 300 m trail to cabin and 2,000 km reroute on East Tin Hat
- Confederation Lake Hut – installed new toilet, built new stairs,
  - re-opened trail through miles of massive blowdown
- Tony's Trail, rockwork, safety improvements – 200 m
- Scout Mountain safety improvements – 400 m
- Dogleg Pond – grubbing, rockwork – 700 m
- Sliammon Lake to Kayach Bluff reroute, toilet, bridge – 600 m
- Appleton Canyon reroute – 300 m
- Thunder Ridge, grubbing, rockwork – 400 m
- Manzanita reroute out of private forestland – 1,200 m
- Cochrane Bay reroute – 1,000 m

Total: approximately 17 km

## Metal Markers and Wooden Directional Signs:

12,000 red metal markers have been installed all along the SCT in both directions (diamonds – north, squares – south).

The project saw the manufacture and installation of some 300 to 400 wooden signs, carved out of cedar.

Most of this work was carried out by volunteer labour using ATV's to transport materials. In more remote locations, materials were air-lifted to the sites by helicopter. PRPAWS acted as their own general contractor for this project at no cost to the project.

## **Inland Lake –**

Approximately ten kilometers of trail was cleared, re-graded and remediated/relocated with new stringers installed along the full ten kilometers. In addition, new barrier walls for soil retention were installed at key locations through-out the trail system. The accessible log cabins were upgraded as well as new picnic sites constructed at various key stopping points around the trail. Extensive remediation work was undertaken in the

prime camping area including installation of new accessible pit toilets, a new well as well as backfilling within the camping areas to ensure the picnic table platforms were at grade level for persons with mobility issues. All roadways within the camping area were graded with new culverts installed to combat erosion from rain run-off. All work was undertaken by a third party contractor with matching funds for the project provided through a Community Development Trust grant.

### **Wilderness Camp –**

The wilderness camp was originally slated to be located on land located at Thornton Bay to be leased from BC Parks. However, agreement could not be reached with the Province and as such was moved to Haywire Bay, still on Powell Lake, on land leased from the Powell River Regional District within the Haywire Bay regional park. This land proved to be more suitable for the camp, having both road and water access and closer to Powell River proper.

Prior to actual construction commencing, environmental assessments were carried out as well as permits obtain relating to waste water treatment and food services to ensure that the project conformed to government guidelines. Actual construction work carried out included site clearing and leveling, road construction and improvements, construction of a central dining/events hall with commercial kitchen, office and storage areas, accessible washrooms complete with showers, six accessible sleeping cabins capable of housing 12 individuals plus a counsellor each with their own wash room, a self-contained caretakers cabin, plus two event/storage cabins, waste treatment system and water system plus landscaping playground and beach areas.

All work was carried out by third party contractors with School District 47 acting as their own general contractor with a project supervisor retained on a consulting basis to monitor construction activities, submit reports and permit applications. Funding to match the ICET grant was provided from a UBCM grant as well as SD47's own resources.

### **Completion of project objectives:**

Substantial completion of all facets of the project has occurred. All objectives of the Sunshine Coast Trail segment of the project were met. The majority of the objectives for Inland Lake and the wilderness camp were also achieved.

### **Project objectives not completed:**

Inland Lake – there remains 3 kilometers of the trail to be up-graded that could not be worked on during the project due to instability of the retaining wall for this part of the trail. The cost of the work needed to correct this problem far exceeded funding available and has been postponed until new grant monies can be sourced.

Wilderness Camp – some of the water access points have not been completed to make the lake more accessible however are not essential to the overall operation of the camp and will form part of a second phase of improvements.

**Variance to original scope of work:**

Sunshine Coast Trail – none

Inland Lake trail – only as noted above

Wilderness camp – the major change from the original grant application is the actual location of the camp. Originally, the camp was to be located on leased land within the Inland Lake Provincial Park at Thornton Bay on Powell Lake. This was a water access only site and the camp itself was to be more basic in design.

However, after much discussion, we were unable to obtain approval from the Province for this site. The Regional District of Powell River then offered to lease approximately 5 hectares of water front property within the Regional District Haywire Bay park area also located on Powell Lake. This property actually proved to be more advantageous as it had both land and water access and was closer to Powell River proper. This allowed for an expansion of the facility to include a larger dining/meeting hall and larger cabins. Because of the nature of the land, we were also able to install a proper waste treatment system which allows the facility to cater to larger groups of people. It also made access during construction much easier and less costly thus allowing for the expanded foot print.

**Man months of employment created during project:**

The following employment numbers represent jobs created excluding third party contractors' employees who if not working at this site would have been working at other projects held by the contractor. However, for information purposes, the private contractors had approximately 3 workers on site for the majority of the project which lasted approximately 18 months.

Actual direct employment created by all three of the components would amount to 100 man months of employment, which equates to 1.7 full time positions over the whole construction period not including the contractor employees noted above.

**Number of temporary jobs created:**

There were five temporary jobs created during the construction period

**Number of permanent jobs created:**

One permanent job has been created as a result of the project, as well as six seasonal positions, all graduates of the local university skills program and working at the

wilderness camp however additional part-time jobs will become available on a seasonal basis to meet program demands.

### **Economic Impact:**

#### Sunshine Coast Trail:

The improvements to the trail over the past year have seen a greater interest by users of the trail. Based on people signing the guest books, there were approximately 400 new users of the trail, and as such new consumers visiting the Powell River area, however this number is most likely higher as not all visitors sign the guest books.

#### Inland Lake trail:

The improvements to the trail have resulted in a higher usage however there is limited specific data available for users of the trail system versus the over-night campers which totalled approximately 300 visitors. However, based on our observations when visiting the site for trail maintenance we can confidently state that the number of day hikers is significantly higher although the majority are from the Powell River area.

#### Haywire Bay Wilderness camp:

The camp opened in the spring of 2013 on a reduced program basis. There were 1,100 visitors of which 2/3rd were over-night stays including families. Of this, 60 families were from outside of the Province and 25 were international students. As noted above, this resulted in six permanent part-time positions being staffed. There was a waiting list for program use during the summer, with inquiries from Japan, the US and other provinces for group bookings. The camp was used for a variety of activities outside of the School District's youth programs, being booked by such organizations as Powell River Association for Community Living, VIU, local corporations and various individuals for reunions and weddings. The camp was also featured in an article in the in-flight magazine for Pacific Coastal Airlines.

In summary, the improvements and additions undertaken within this project and funded in part by Island Coastal Economic Trust has enhanced the ability of Powell River to attract a variety of new visitors to the region and thus increase revenues within the Tourism sector. It is expected that these numbers will increase as marketing efforts of the School District and Tourism Powell River create a greater awareness through-out North America and other countries of these unique outdoor attractions.