



## **The Coast Sustainability Trust II**

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### **July 2009 News Release**

#### **The Coast Sustainability Trust Invests in the Islands**

In its recent meeting, the Queen Charlotte Islands – Haida Gwaii Regional Steering Committee of the Coast Sustainability Trust approved funding of almost \$470,000 for six initiatives in the Islands.

All of the Island communities will benefit from a \$250,000 grant that was approved for the Queen Charlotte Islands Recycling plant. The current recycling program on the Island is less effective than it could be. The location at the Port Clement landfill is limited by space and the recyclable boxes in the various communities have the material mixed together. By establishing a separate location for recyclable materials and having boxes which invite the segregation of the material, the goal of expanding the program will be enhanced. It is expected that 30% less waste will be entering the landfill within three years, which will extend the landfill life by up to 20 years. This project involves establishing a separate site for the delivery of recyclable material at a location at Miller Creek (between Skidegate and the Village of Queen Charlotte) and is expected to create 3 new jobs.

The Queen Charlotte Islands Visitor Centre was approved for \$36,000 to add a variety of improvements. One is the acquisition of portable web cameras to move about to capture seasonal wildlife such as salmon spawning, grey whale migration and cultural events, as well as a weather cam on continuous feed. These will be linked to the Visitor Centre website so potential tourists can see why they would want to visit the islands. Another part of this grant will be used to create a native plant interpretive display. The final part will entail construction of a salt water aquarium in partnership with Gwaii Haanas and the Vancouver Aquarium. These will be “hands-on” tanks filled with species representative of different tidal and exposure zones from the shores of Haida Gwaii. This will allow people to have a close-up look and touch experience with the great diversity of intertidal species of the area. The improvements are expected to increase tourist traffic to the region, and create additional job opportunities for local residents through an increase in visitors.

The Sandspit Community Hall will receive \$70,000 towards a \$560,000 renovation. The recreation/community centre is in need of repair and modifications. While structurally sound, an energy audit revealed that 50% of the heating costs could be saved through better insulation, different heat generation and improved circulation. People in the community will now have a usable commercial kitchen, larger washrooms with change rooms and showers, storage space, dividable space for various size meetings, and office space. This project will address energy loss concerns and make the building more versatile for multiple user groups. In addition, the building will feature a rain water capture system, solar heating and a

handicapped washroom facility. As a result of the improvements, the facility will provide a venue for training programs and economic planning and development activities in addition to being a recreation and gathering place for the residents.

Port Clements was approved for a \$41,173 grant to build concession stands in their community park. The park, which is used for social, cultural and sports events, does not have an adequate number of standard and quality concession stands to meet the needs of businesses and vendors. This project entails the construction of 11 new concession stands which will allow retailers to conduct business during special events in enclosed settings under all weather conditions. The vendors will now have access to electricity and hot water to carry on their operations.

The Haida Gwaii Junior Stewardship Ranger Program (HGJSR) will receive a \$26,700 grant. The HGJSR program introduces high school students to natural resource managers and the issues they encounter. The participants view first-hand how crucial sustainable resource management is to the island's forestry, fishing and tourism industries. There will be two teams. Each team will consist of a team leader (students in a post-secondary natural resource based program) and four high school students. One team will be based in the Village of Queen Charlotte and the other in Masset. Projects will range from Eden Lake Logging Camp in the north to Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve in the south. Students will build trails, maintain recreation sites, develop self-guided nature walks and help manage the natural features that make Haida Gwaii a unique location.

Finally, the Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society (HGHEs) will receive \$44,500. The HGHEs was created to offer students across Canada a unique opportunity to experience the richness of the natural environment and the communities of Haida Gwaii, within a structured program of study. Phase 1 of this project was launched in the Spring of 2009 with financial assistance from the CST. This was a 3 week pilot project entitled *Introduction to Forestry* offered by Simon Fraser University's School of Resource and Environmental Management. It received strong support from the students, professors, communities and other course participants. The current funding will help with the design, coordination and implementation of a 4 month semester program commencing in January 2010.

"These are the most recent of what we hope will be many worthwhile projects that the CST will be able to support. To date, over \$3.4 million has been committed to 40 projects on the Islands," said Trustee Eric van Soeren.

"Regional Steering Committee members Duane Gould, Carol Kulesha, Ron Williams and Trevor Russ work hard to sift through worthwhile projects," said van Soeren. "Their task is to decide which of the initiatives seem most likely to provide long-term sustainable economic development in the communities of the Islands."

Communities, First Nations and community-based non-profit organizations are invited to submit funding proposals. Application guidelines and general information is available on the CST website at [www.coastsustainabilitytrust.com](http://www.coastsustainabilitytrust.com). Interested parties can follow the links to the Community Matching Fund Guidelines and Stage One Application.