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Bamfield Huu-ay-aht Community Forest Pilot Agreement Proposal

Executive Summary

This proposal represents a unique administrative partnership between the community of Bamfield and the Huu-ay-aht First Nation village of Ana'cla. The proposal also includes partnerships between educational institutions, the tourism and recreation industry, forestry related business and value added manufacturers. This pilot will stand as a model for partnerships throughout the Province. This proposal has been created by volunteers.

Two surveys, numerous conversations, community presentations and public meetings have been used to assess community values, level of support for the concept of a locally managed community forest and to promote discussion. There is an overwhelming level of support throughout the communities.

The Community Forest land is located on the west side of Bamfield Inlet extending north along Grappler Inlet to Sugsaw Creek. The Community Forest is 418 hectares in size and is entirely located within a Coastal Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone.

The Huu-ay-aht First Nation have indicated the Community Forest contains several culturally sensitive sites. This proposal has been submitted with the full support of the Huu-ay-aht First Nations and without prejudice to current Huu-ay-aht treaty negotiations (see Attachment A: Huu-ay-aht First Nation Letter of Support).

The Community Forest Pilot Project comes at an opportune time, presenting one logical and community supported route for economic diversification in these communities. Our management vision does not limit itself to fibre extraction. This is not only a reflection of our diverse communities and vision, but also an acceptance of the reality of a small land base and low AAC. Thus, we see a Community Forest which must integrate many other activities, including the sustainable harvest of Non-timber forest products, community based value-added wood manufacturing, ecologically-based silviculture, education, research, training, restoration, ecotourism/interpretation (cultural and natural), recreation and small business facilitation. Given the diversity of skills in the area, we feel all of this is very possible and very necessary.

The guiding principles for this Community Forest are based on the *Bamfield Vision Statement* (1997) and the *Huu-ay-aht Guiding Principles of sustainability* (1997). These are based on the values of sound ecologically and culturally based, sustainable resource use.

The Bamfield Huu-ay-aht Community Forest Society has been established with a Board representative of both communities assisted by an ex-officio advisory committee of local resource management experts. Input by community residents will be encouraged through public meetings, open houses and publications. A Community Forest Manager, reporting directly to the board, will be hired to conduct the day to day business operations of the enterprise. A priority of the Society is to operate a financially self sufficient Forest.

The details of this pilot project proposal are structured as follows: Section 2 describes the land base and forest attributes, the derivation of the AAC, adjacent uses, access and significant cultural/ecological and recreational features. Section 3 outlines the Community Forest stewardship and management objectives, including our guiding principles and vision. A description of the communities and the methods used to assess their extensive support is given in section 4. Section 4 also includes a description of the educational institutes in the area. The administrative authority is developed and a detailed business plan is provided in section 5. The final section includes all supporting documents in Attachments A, B, C, D and E.