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The original item was published from 10/13/2009 6:30:14 PM to 11/14/2009 12:00:05 AM.

Tourism

October 13, 2009

[ACTIVE] Federal funding confirmed for Kinsol Trestle

Duncan, BC – News that \$3.8 million in government funding has been confirmed for the Kinsol Trestle Rehabilitation Project is “a tremendous shot in the arm,” according to Jack Peake, Chair of the Cowichan Foundation, Kinsol Trestle Capital Campaign. “This is very good news for our campaign. Our federal, provincial and local governments have stepped up and confirmed their support for this project and that means we’re that much closer to reaching our goal,” he said Friday.

“We’ve said all along that there are many good solid reasons for saving this historic structure – preserving our history, completing a key part of the Trans Canada Trail and delivering a lot of economic growth to the local community – and now it’s up to the community to complete the funding to make it happen.”

On Thursday, the federal government, through the Building Canada fund, committed \$1.885 million towards the restoration project, with a matching amount by the Province. In addition, the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) has received a commitment of \$1 million from the Island Coastal Economic Trust.

The \$4.8 million in funding leaves the Kinsol Trestle Capital Campaign still looking to raise up to \$1.2 million from major sponsors, the public and potential other government sources to finish the rehabilitation of the historic local landmark. “We are very excited and grateful for this federal and provincial commitment to this great project,” said Gerry Giles, CVRD chair. “We know saving this historic landmark will benefit our whole region for many years to come. In the short term, this project will create jobs and economic opportunities and in the longer term it will spur growth in outdoor/adventure, education, culinary and cultural tourism throughout the Cowichan Valley.”

The rehabilitation work will replace unsound timbers, reinforce eight structural trestle bents and build a new 614-foot walkway along the top for hikers, tourists, cyclists and horseback riders. The work will ensure that the historic characteristics, including the span, height and timbered design qualities of the original structure, are preserved as the original timbers are replaced.

The rehabilitated Kinsol Trestle will be part of the Trans Canada Trail and complete a significant river crossing on the 120 km Cowichan Valley Trail route. Seven other rail trestles on the Cowichan Valley Trail route have previously been rebuilt or rehabilitated for trail use.

The fate of the 614-foot Kinsol Trestle, which soars 145 feet above the Koksilah River near Shawnigan Lake, has been debated since the last train crossed it in 1979. The province assumed ownership in 1984 from the CNR and numerous studies have been done since then to determine its future. In 2008, the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) accepted a final report, which recommended rehabilitating the structure. Peake is confident the community and major corporate and other sponsors will step up to contribute to the Capital Campaign. Individuals can donate on-line, by phone or by mail.

Complete details are available at www.kinsol.ca.

Detailed engineering and design work will be completed as soon as possible. This will allow timber and lumber assembly and construction tendering to take place this winter and construction to begin in early spring of 2010. The official Trestle opening is

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