

September 21, 2011

First phase of urban forest management plan underway in Campbell River

Thanks to funding from the Real Estate Foundation of BC, and equal support from Federal Gas Tax Funding, a \$40,000 project to develop an urban forest management plan is underway in Campbell River.

The project is a partnership between the City of Campbell River and Discovery Coast Greenways Land Trust. The first phase will create an inventory of the urban forest by gathering tree data from more than 200 sample plots in the City. Information will include: percentage of tree cover, tree species, diameter of trees, total height of trees and tree health.

“Street trees, park trees and forested lands in our community are all part of the urban forest that filters our air and storm water and captures carbon, which reduces the climate-changing effects of greenhouse gas emissions,” explains Stacey Larsen, operations manager and registered professional forester at Greenways Land Trust. *“This inventory will be analyzed to help us measure and better understand the benefits that trees, shrubs, and other vegetation provide in our urban environment – and this will support an urban forest management plan to maintain and enhance the value of the urban forest.”*

This first phase of the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) will:

- Identify urban forest health and tree type
- Quantify extent of air and water-cleaning services provided by urban trees
- Examine strengths and vulnerabilities of the current urban forest
- Determine desired urban forest characteristics (tree types and amount of coverage) for residential, commercial and park lands and;
- Begin to identify and prioritize ways to maintain and enhance the urban forest.

“With the United Nations General Assembly’s declaration marking 2011 as the International Year of Forests, it is fitting that the City of Campbell River and Discovery Coast Greenways Land Trust, are conducting an inventory of our City’s forests,” says Mayor Charlie Cornfield. *“In addition to the air and water-cleaning services provided by trees, the forests are our collective heritage.”*

“Our fish and wildlife habitat as well as our recreational opportunities and the local economy are rooted in the temperate rainforest. This project will demonstrate the connections between a healthy forest and thriving people, which will be useful information for Council and the community as we chart our course for the future,” Mayor Cornfield adds.

Federal Gas Tax Funding supports municipal infrastructure and integrated community sustainability planning that enhances the environment and quality of life for local residents.

The Real Estate Foundation is a non-profit corporation that supports the development and dissemination of knowledge related to new, innovative and best ways of stewarding the land and community.

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Photo 1: Real Estate Foundation of BC representatives toured Campbell River to learn about the urban forest management plan. Tour participants Jack Wong, CEO, Hedy Rubin (left), Grants Manager, Leta Smith, assistant.

Photo 2: Back (left to right): Jack Wong, Hedy Rubin, Leta Smith, Irv Penner (Greenways contractor and lead forester for the UFMP)
Front row (left to right): Stacey Larsen (Greenways Operations Manager), Terri Martin (City of Campbell River environmental coordinator)