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Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management

AGREEMENT DELIVERS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CONSERVATION

ALERT BAY – A management agreement between Hanson Island First Nations and the provincial government will ensure First Nations are involved in future opportunities for Hanson Island, announced Sustainable Resource Management Minister Stan Hagen and Dallas Smith, co-chairman for the Joint Executive Kwakiutl District Council, Musgamagw Tsawataineuk Tribal Council and Tlowitsis First Nation.

“By creating a clear, predictable framework for accommodating and advancing First Nations’ interests, this agreement will provide new certainty for residents, small business and job creators,” Hagen said. “The result will be new opportunities for everyone, aboriginal and non-aboriginal alike. This agreement will also help preserve First Nations history and culture.”

“This is a very significant first step that will lead toward the certainty needed for economic development and conservation on the Coast,” said Dallas Smith of the Tlowitsis First Nation.

“This agreement is the first of its kind along the Central Coast,” said Rod Visser, North Island MLA. “It provides certainty for this area along with conservation and economic opportunities. This is a great achievement for everyone involved.”

Government-to-government discussions that led to the new management structure included the Mamalilikulla First Nation, the ’Namgis First Nation, and the Tlowitsis First Nation. The agreement proposes that the three First Nations manage Land Act tenures for Hanson Island through a head lease on behalf of the provincial government.

A management board consisting of one representative from each of the Hanson Island First Nations will be responsible for overall management of the head lease. The lease will enable tenures for recreation and tourism. First Nations will share the revenue as an economic development initiative. The province and First Nations will jointly develop the first management plan for the island.

First Nations proposed the island as a candidate protection area as part of the Central Coast Land and Resource Management Plan. The land-use planning process and subsequent government-to-government discussions will determine the long-term status of the island.

Hanson Island is located near Port McNeill at the west entrance to Johnstone Strait. It is approximately eight kilometres long and four kilometres wide and relatively undeveloped. As a result of decisions made to date through the Central Coast land and resource management planning process, forest harvesting, mineral and energy development will not be allowed on the island.

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