



MEDIA RELEASE - For immediate release - January 15, 2018

Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea proudly receives BC/Canada 150, Town of Sidney, and donor funding for new Coast Salish Legacy Project

Sidney, BC, on WSÁNEĆ Nations Traditional Territory of the Coast Salish Indigenous peoples – The Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea is proud to announce it has received new project funding to further expand our learning of the Coast Salish Indigenous peoples (WSÁNEĆ Nations locally on the Saanich Peninsula) – specifically their historical and cultural connections to the Salish Sea - our local Bioregion and now home to nine million people. These funds also help to mark the Centre’s location as an important place to learn about, explore, and conserve the Salish Sea – one of the most unique and diverse bioregions in the world. The *Coast Salish Legacy Project* will include two major public art pieces/markers as well as learning/interpretive upgrades.

Key project funding of \$35,000 came from the Province of British Columbia through the *British Columbia/Canada 150: Celebrating B.C. Communities and their Contributions to Canada* grant program, under the theme of *Building Lasting Legacies*. The Centre also received funding for the project through the Town of Sidney, the Reesor Family, Shaw Communications, and the Salish Weave Fund through the Victoria Foundation. Additionally, in-kind support was generously received from Knappett Projects and RJC Engineers (public art installation), and Kilshaw’s Auctioneers.

This legacy project will include the permanent installation of two significant outdoor contemporary public art sculptures – a traditional cedar Coast Salish welcome pole, and a Coast Salish designed metal work. Both artworks will reside in Beacon Park (Town of Sidney) close to the back windows of the Centre where they will be visible to the visitors in the Centre, and to the public outside. Additionally, learning upgrades in the Centre will include a new *Salish Sea Story* depicting the important connections of the Centre’s key species like herring, salmon, and the Southern Resident Killer Whale, with the culture and history of the local WSÁNEĆ Nations, through new displays.

The ‘welcome pole’ (approximately 10 feet tall) will be an original design completed by TEMŌSEN Charles W. Elliott - Coast Salish (Tsartlip) artist, master carver and



elder, and Order of BC Recipient. TEMOSEN is well-known locally as he has completed similar major works at Butchart Gardens and Victoria International Airport, and he has a long history working with the Centre as the organization's logo features his cod-fish design. The juxtaposed contemporary oxidized metal sculpture (also 10 feet tall) is the original work of Chris Paul (Tsartlip) which displays cut-out Salish Sea animals in the Coast Salish style. Paul's piece features the ability to view the Salish Sea (Haro Strait) and Mount Baker, or Xwsa7k (Coast Salish/Squamish name), through it – holding special meaning to the Coast Salish. Paul's work is internationally collected and features prominently in the Sidney Pier Hotel and Spa, where the Centre is located.

The Paul work will be installed in January 2018 and TEMOSEN's piece in the spring. The *Salish Sea Story* project should also be in place in the spring, ahead of the Centre's busy summer tourist season. There will be special openings and blessing ceremonies for each artwork and official plaque, with more details to follow.

Both public art pieces will be gifted by the Centre to the Town of Sidney's public art collection and will be included in the Sidney Sculpture & Art Walking Tour in conjunction with the Town of Sidney's own Canada 150 project. Recently unveiled (summer) traditional Coast Salish welcome pole (by Perry LaFortune). This will bring a total of three Coast Salish art/cultural markers to Sidney's Beacon Park waterfront.

For more information on the Coast Salish Legacy Project or for media inquiries please contact the Centre as below.

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Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea – Vancouver Island's largest not-for-profit aquarium and learning organization – the Centre connects the public with the Salish Sea Bioregion and its ecosystems through engagement, knowledge and environmental awareness. Located on the breathtaking Sidney, BC waterfront - on the traditional lands of the **WSÁNEĆ** Nations of the Coast Salish Indigenous peoples – the Centre welcomes over 70,000 visitors a year as a key Greater Victoria tourist attraction, as well as being an important regional learning facility for all, including 10,000 local students. The Centre offers a fun, interactive and hands-on science and cultural learning experience through live aquarium habitats and marine mammal artifact displays; a permanent Coast Salish art collection; learning programs; and a locally-focused Salish Sea Store. The Centre relies on the support of daily visitors, 150 community volunteers, 8,000 members, donors and partners, and the Town of Sidney to reach its vision for a healthy and sustainable Salish Sea.