



February 1, 2021

Clayoquot Biosphere Trust
PO Box 67
Tofino, BC
V0R 2Z0

I am pleased to provide this letter to support the Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Trust (CBT) to maintain the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve designation.

Vancouver Foundation works throughout British Columbia to harness the gifts of ideas, money, time and energy to build a lasting legacy of healthy, vibrant and livable communities. We support charities and other organizations across BC through a range of grants. We address priority issues through our initiatives such as justice and equity, gender equality, reconciliation, social connections and community engagement - all of which serve to strengthen the fabric of our communities.

Since its inception, CBT has worked tirelessly and with demonstrable results to strengthen sustainable ecosystems that support residents and communities throughout the region. As one of 18 Canadian sites, CBT has been a leader within the Canadian Community Foundation movement supporting ecological research, stewardship initiatives and building the capacity of residents to contribute to the well being of their communities.

When COVID-19 swept into our communities, CBT jumped in to adapt the Neighbourhood Small Grants Program to support projects to strengthen local communities. This initiative helps residents of any age, experience, or background take part in building community. Not only does CBT provide leadership for this project across the region, they have also stepped into a key role to create Vancouver Islands first Network intended to address building the capacity of residents with a focus on the socio-economic inequities that impact equity-seeking communities.

Vancouver Foundation supports BC Community Foundations through capacity building grants with the intention of contributing to a stronger network across British Columbia. The CBT has successfully received grants each year and has enthusiastically shared their experience and learnings. Through this work CBT has demonstrated a capacity, passion and expertise to address the most critical needs of the region with collaborative solutions. In addition, the CBT has demonstrated dedicated focus to address Reconciliation in communities of the west coast region.

For example, in 2017, Vancouver Foundation provided a grant to CBT to lead a regional workshop to build the capacity of more than 45 individuals representing a myriad of organizations. By intentionally inviting participants from different communities, backgrounds and sectors the CBT contributed to increased participation in decision making. By learning together, participants learned a shared language and skill set. I was so impressed with the dedication and deep care that went into the planning of this workshop that Vancouver Foundation brought our entire department to learn how we too can better learn about working



with intentionality and through a reconciliation lens. It also reinforced the value of co-learning which is one of the principles espoused by CBT.

CBT has a solid track record for co-creating and supporting innovative solutions towards a better future for ecosystems and the many communities in the region. I believe that the CBT is worthy of the continued designation of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Through ongoing partnerships, projects and grants, CBT has demonstrated excellence, leadership and ample examples of meeting the key criteria for Canadian BR's.

As Canada's largest Community Foundation, Vancouver Foundation has appreciated and supported CBT's work to foster the harmonious integration of people and nature for sustainable development, biodiversity and reconciliation. This work is important, now, more than ever.

I am happy to speak to specifics of this letter of support, provide further examples of partnerships, grants and collaborations as required. Please don't hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lidia Kemeny".

Lidia Kemeny | Director, Partnerships, Granting and Community Initiatives