

ACRD Board of Directors
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
3008 Fifth Avenue, Port Alberni, BC

May 21st, 2021

Attn.: Board Chair

Re Engineering study

Dear Mr. Chairperson,

I am writing to advocate and convey our utmost support for the ACRD to consider funding an engineering study for a design of a new footbridge to link stage two and three of the renowned Alberni Inlet Trail.

We are long-standing residents of the Alberni-Clayoquot region, avid hikers and for the past thirteen years, active geocacher's). It is the latter activity that we would like to represent (There are over three million geocacher's worldwide); using gps coordinates to find hidden containers from urban settings to the top of mountains, trails such as the Alberni Inlet Trail has brought people from all over; locally, provincially and world-wide to our area. The draw for many of this sport is where it takes you. We have been all over western Canada and we have found and learned so much about the community and areas we visit. Hence, this is exactly what the Inlet Trail poses to local hikers and even more-so to geocaching enthusiasts. Recently, we have had to remove a grouping of geocaches on this popular trail due to the removal of the bridge and link of the Inlet Trail stages. The end result is that many geocachers/users will never access stage 3. There are approximately sixty-five geocaches placed along the Inlet Trail in various locations in an effort to draw people to this area. This trail is so phenomenally beautiful and it purely showcases Port Alberni and the West Coast that it would be a shame to have a broken link on a trail that has potential to be known around the world; coupling with the fact that the Vancouver Island Spine Trail links directly to this going from Juan de Fuca to Cape Scott.

On a corresponding note, we have put out a similar series of geocaches on what was once considered the Valley Link Highway (Lake Cowichan to Port Alberni). We have successfully been able to bring several hundred geocacher's to our town via this recreational hobby. Many have replied on the beauty of our area and very thankful for having us bring them here.

An example of description on cache page (<https://coord.info/GC273CX>):

In conclusion, we believe that an investment to "Bridge" the two sections of the Inlet trail would be invaluable as a method of showcasing the Alberni Valley and bringing not only locals but people from all over the world to our beautiful valley. One of the main advantages of the Inlet Trail is the fact that it is built in stages and therefore allows recreational users of all ages and abilities to enjoy it. (Cachers come in all shapes, sizes and ages.) A bridge will directly result in more visitation as it opens up access to every type of user and would be a worthwhile and positive endeavor of the ACRD that they can be proud of.

Thank you for your consideration!

Craig and Shelley Summers; AKA Team Pawz

Team Pawz profile <https://www.geocaching.com/p/>