



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Alberni Valley receives funding for community emergency preparedness**

PORT ALBERNI – The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) received \$120,000 from the Public Notification and Evacuation Route Planning grant, administered by the Union of BC Municipalities.

The ACRD applied in partnership with the City of Port Alberni, Tseshaht First Nation and Hupačasath First Nation, and together were successful in receiving this funding. The grant, provided by the Province of BC, is part of the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF), a comprehensive suite of funding programs aimed at supporting First Nations and local governments to better prepare for disasters and mitigate risks from natural hazards in a changing climate.

The grant funding will be used to develop a robust public notification plan that will provide guidance for disseminating crucial information to First Nations, local governments, and community members in the event of an emergency. The plan will provide a framework that will enhance emergency communication protocols and develop standardized messages and corresponding graphics to facilitate clear, effective communication during a crisis.

“When we are faced with an emergency situation, like a wildfire or tsunami, people’s lives depend on us working together and communicating clearly,” explains John Jack, chair of the ACRD Board of Directors. “This funding will help us develop methods and tools that will ensure we offer clear communications and instructions to the public when they need it the most.”

The creation of clear, standardized messages, internal and external notification procedures and alert templates will significantly enhance disaster risk reduction activities, response operations, and recovery measures.

“Communication is often recognized as a considerable challenge during disasters and emergencies,” explains Karen Freethy, protective services manager for the ACRD. “By implementing a well-designed emergency communication strategy, we can enhance our ability to effectively manage crises, minimize risks, and safeguard the well-being of the public.”

The ACRD extends its gratitude to the Province of BC and the UBCM for recognizing this need and for supporting this important collaboration between our communities.

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