

# NEWSLETTER



## Island Corridor Foundation – Fall 2024

*It's been a busy summer for us at the Island Corridor Foundation! But what a rewarding job we have traveling up and down Vancouver Island, meeting with our members and fellow Islanders. It is a real privilege and honor to serve the many connected communities by doing this work and we thank you so much for your support and interest. Below are updates on a selection of the many ongoing initiatives that we're currently involved with. If you have any questions or ideas, please don't hesitate to reach out.*

### All Nations Dialogue

In mid-September, First Nations along the Corridor met for the All Nations Dialogue – a private meeting to discuss the relationship between First Nations and the Corridor. The meeting took place under the leadership of K'ómoks First Nation and was facilitated by Marina and Cynthia Reyner of First Nations Management Consulting. Given the damaging history of the Corridor and the E&N land grant for our First Nation members, we deeply support and respect the need of First Nations to discuss their issues in confidence and are delighted the meeting took place. We express our best wishes for more good meetings to come, and will continue to support this work if requested.



### Shared Vision Project

The ICF continues to meet with our members to coordinate and share information on the provincially-funded Shared Vision Project for the Corridor's future. At this point, our members have hired several consultant teams who are working on a range of studies, including adjacent land use analysis, property appraisal, remediation, and potential uses ranging from transportation, active travel, natural and wildlife assets, and emergency preparedness.

Given the unjust and colonial history of the Corridor and the land grant that created it, it's clear that any future use of the Corridor needs to start with benefits to First Nations, as defined by FNs. In the coming months

we hope to work with First Nations members to jointly develop and discuss options for First Nations benefit during different use scenarios of the Corridor.

We look forward to the consultants' final reports, expected in early 2025, and will be working with our members and other levels of government to finalize a shared vision for the Corridor. In doing so, we acknowledge that many discussions about use must wait for First Nations direction and leadership. We also acknowledge that the public is very engaged with the Corridor and is passionate about its future. We hope the Shared Vision Project can result in a future together that is better than our past.



## Public Engagement

ICF toured the Island in September to join several public engagement events with our members.

In Port Alberni, next to family fun on the midway rides at the Fall Fair, we joined the HDR consultant team along with the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, Tseshaht First Nation and Hupacaseth First Nation. We heard many great ideas about the future they envision for the Island Corridor in this region.

We were back again to Port Alberni for the Ports Canada Conference

September 18-19 where we participated with our colleagues from the Alberni Pacific Heritage Railway and the Port of Alberni to host a "rolling booth" for conference attendees to tour the local port and mill facilities. It took place on their newly expanded excursion train along the Port Alberni waterfront. This was the first time in 25 years that a train had run down this part of the line.

In Duncan, we gathered under a big white tent by the train station, joining colleagues from the Cowichan

Valley Regional District and the Stantec Consultant Team for a lively public consultation with lots of ideas about the Corridor's future. A fantastic video was made to showcase some of the areas and beautiful vistas that the corridor runs through.

All the events were very well-attended, and we look forward to the results. Public surveys for both Regional Districts have now closed.



## Corridor Maintenance

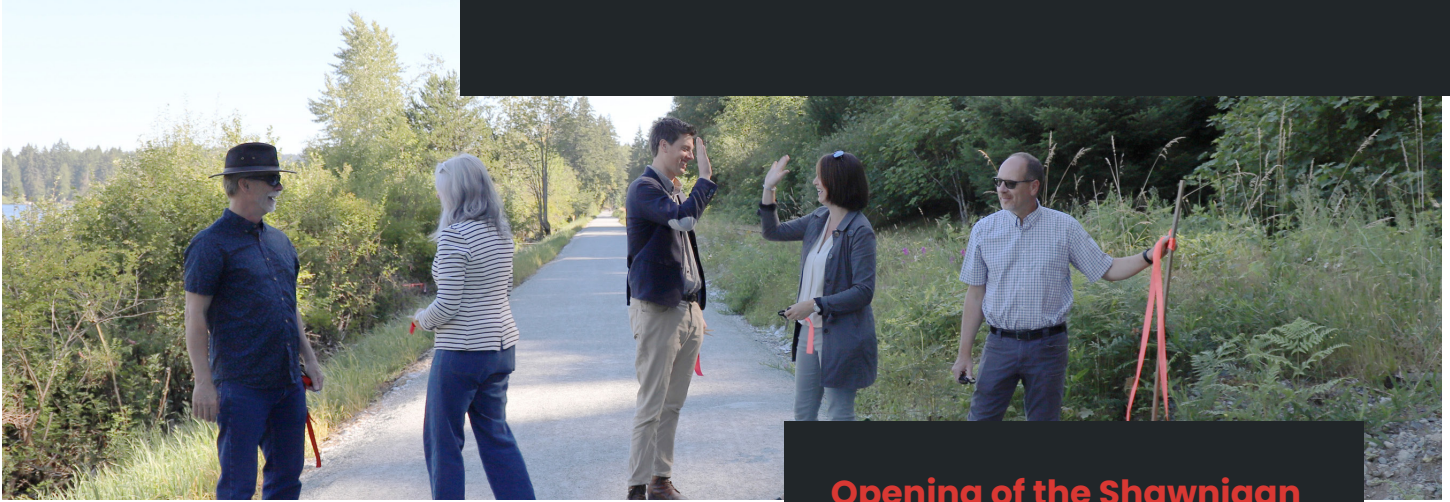
ICF has been collaborating with the crew from Southern Rail of Vancouver Island to clear brush and cut back vegetation on the Corridor from Victoria to Nanaimo. In many areas the line had not be cleared in over 5 years and there was significant growth of invasive species like scotch broom and blackberry bushes.

The team also removed 8,000lbs of garbage from a site beside the Cowichan River and which had been set on

fire. Unfortunately, we regularly need to work to respectfully move encampments along the Corridor. We implore the Province to take material actions to address the dire need for supportive housing on Vancouver Island.

Now with fire season over, our Gradall will be making its way up to Courtenay. Please respect all signage and personal when work is happening and do not enter near working areas.





## Opening of the Shawnigan Lake Trail beside Rail

We joined our colleagues from the Cowichan Valley Regional District to launch a new rail plus trail linking Masons Beach Park, Dougan Park, Shawnigan Community Centre and Elsie Miles Park, Shawnigan Village, Shawnigan Wharf Park and Old Mill Park with a multi-use, accessible pathway.

There are now currently over 65km of fully separated rail plus trail multi-use infrastructure within the Corridor and we congratulate the community for this latest addition.

## Tour de Rock

ICF co-hosted the Fourth Annual Tour de Rock Golf Classic on October 3rd. We are thrilled to announce this event raised more than \$43,000 for pediatric cancer research and Camp Goodtimes. ICF would like to thank our incredible network of local businesses, community members, and volunteers who made this event possible. Please visit our website for a list of our amazing sponsors and the many generous businesses that donated to this important cause.

## VIEA Conference

In October, ICF staff will be attending the Vancouver Island Economic Alliance conference in Nanaimo. Thomas Bevan, our CEO, will be speaking on a panel about the future of transportation logistics and the need for emergency preparedness on the island.





# Leadership **Changes at ICF**

After 3 years of dedicated service, our Co-Chair Daniel Arbour is stepping down from the ICF to take on new commitments. As a respectful and thoughtful leader at the Board, Daniel has guided us through many significant events, and we thank him deeply for his time.

At our AGM last June, ICF was delighted to welcome two new Directors to our Board. Ian Morrison has been a Director for Cowichan Valley Regional District for the past 16 years, and has a background in local government and financial services. Mike Keohane was nominated by Snaw-Naw-As First Nation, and is on the Board of the Comox Valley Cycling Coalition. He is a retired professional engineer.

We're excited to welcome Will Cole-Hamilton to our Board of Directors, as our new Board representative from the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD). Will Cole-Hamilton is a graduate of Dalhousie Law School, a Courtenay Councillor and Chair of the CVRD. He is also Chair of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' BC Caucus, responsible for advocacy to Ottawa on behalf of BC local governments. There are rumours he is also a stand-up comedian. That could seriously change Board meetings!

Welcome, Ian, Mike and Will. A new co-chair will be elected at the next Board meeting of the ICF.

Again, thank you so much for your interest and support. We are so grateful for all the help we receive and to the many people who are contributing to make the future of Corridor positive and productive. Enjoy the fall.

Our sincerest regards,  
The ICF team

*ICF serves the communities of Vancouver Island and gratefully acknowledges that we work on the traditional and unceded territories of many diverse First Nations, including the Esquimalt, Songhees, Malahat, Cowichan Tribes, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Halalt, Stz'uminus, Penelakut Tribe, Snuneymuxw, Snaw-Naw-As, Qualicum, K'ómoks, Hupacasath, and Tseshaht. We acknowledge that Indigenous peoples have stewarded these lands since time immemorial and are committed to strong Indigenous partnerships and relationships based on principles of Reconciliation*

