



TOGETHER, LET'S DO GREAT THINGS

## **Coastal Community grant expands micro-plastic monitoring on Clayoquot Sound beaches**

**Monday, July 30, 2018 — Vancouver Island & the Gulf Islands:** Coastal Community recently awarded an \$1,100 Building Healthier Communities Fund (BHCF) grant to Cedar Coast Field Station Society (CCFSS) to help assess the amount of damaging micro-plastics on three remote Vargas Island beaches.

The project will be run collaboratively with Ucluelet Aquarium, expanding the reach of the Aquarium's current program surveying marine debris and micro-plastics every month on beaches around Ucluelet and Tofino.

The funds will allow CCFSS to buy the sampling equipment needed to measure the presence of the long-lasting debris. Micro-plastic pollution is an area of increasing concern, as marine animals ingest the particles, increasing their toxic pollutant load and risking internal damage from abrasion. Beaches, with their abundant sunlight and high temperatures, degrade plastic trash into micro-plastics very quickly.

"Studies and recent reports have documented how damaging plastics can be to marine life, from corals to pilot whales. There is little information on how prevalent microplastics are in the marine environment in BC," said Mackenzie Bartlett, Research Coordinator for CCFSS. "This project gives us the opportunity to better understand where microplastics are accumulating and how quickly they deposit on the beaches in Clayoquot Sound."

Since 2014, Coastal Community's BHCF has given hundreds of thousands of dollars in seed money to help dozens of local organizations fund long-term initiatives that contribute to building healthier Island communities. BHCF looks for projects that support a broad range of people, are sustainable and make a difference to a local community.

"As a socially responsible organization, we continually strive to reduce our environmental impact on our island home while helping to build healthier communities," said Allyson Prescesky, Senior Manager, Community and Communications, with Coastal Community. "Cedar Coast Field Station Society's project to help understand and protect our islands' ecosystems for generations to come is a great fit with our values."

Staff time and volunteer expenses for the project will be provided by CCFSS, with Ucluelet Aquarium covering training and the cost of analyzing the samples. The project launched this summer on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

For more information on our Building Healthier Communities fund, please visit [www.cccu.ca](http://www.cccu.ca).

###

### CONTACT:

Gerry Weaver, Communications Specialist  
gerry.weaver@cccu.ca | toll-free: 1.888.741.1010



TOGETHER, LET'S DO GREAT THINGS

About

COASTAL COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION

***Improving financial health, enriching lives, and building healthier communities...*** These are at the core of who we are and what we do at Coastal Community Credit Union (CCCU). With these as our focus areas, we continue to grow our position as the largest financial services organization based on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, while remaining among the largest credit unions in Canada.

In order to help our members and clients improve their financial health, CCCU's family of companies offers a wide range of products, services and expertise in personal, business and commercial banking, general and commercial insurance\* and wealth management\*\*. Across the Islands, we operate 24 branches, 16 insurance offices, four regional business centres, one centralized contact centre (1.888.741.1010) with extended service hours, plus a team of mobile experts and a full range of online and mobile services. CCCU was the first to bring cutting-edge Interactive Teller Machine technology to the Island and continues to add new innovations to simplify finances—and life. By really listening and understanding, and then providing meaningful solutions, Coastal Community's 600-person-strong team is able to help our members and clients achieve their financial and life goals.

As a 100% Island-based business, we're committed to making meaningful differences in the places we call home. CCCU continues to help build healthier communities in part through donations, sponsorships, scholarship and fundraising efforts totaling over half-a-million dollars each year.

Want to learn more? Visit [cccu.ca](http://cccu.ca) or join us on our Facebook and Twitter pages.

\*References to "insurance" in this article refer to the insurance services provided through Coastal Community Insurance Services (2007) Ltd., which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Coastal Community Credit Union

\*\*References to "wealth management" in this article refer to the financial planning and investment services provided through Coastal Community Private Wealth Group, a division of Coastal Community Financial Management, Inc. which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Coastal Community Credit Union