

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO**

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2017  
7:00 PM**

*(RDN Board Chambers)  
This meeting will be recorded*

**A D D E N D U M**

**Pages**

**5. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**

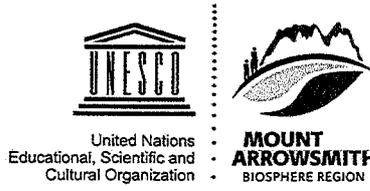
(All Directors – One Vote)

2-4

**David R. Witty, Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region,** re Proposed Contribution Agreement Funding Request.



Bill Veenhof, RDN Board Chair  
Regional District of Nanaimo  
6300 Hammond Bay Road  
Nanaimo, BC, V9T 6N2  
e: bill.veenhof@shaw.ca



January 19, 2017

Dear Mr. Veenhof, Board Members, and Management of the Regional District of Nanaimo:

It has come to our attention that the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) is reallocating funding from the Island Corridor Foundation to a regional initiative that demonstrates community benefits and meaningful outcomes. The Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region (MABR) currently accomplishes these two goals through much of its work as described below. Therefore, the MABR would like to propose a contribution agreement between the RDN and the MABR (via Vancouver Island University) that meets mutual objectives and speaks to our common values, and the funding initiative.

The following provides some background information about the MABR and an associated proposal that describes how the MABR would use some of the funds to create lasting positive regional impacts.

### **1. About the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region:**

The MABR was designated as a UNESCO biosphere reserve in the year 2000. In 2014, Vancouver Island University (VIU) and the City of Parksville took over management of the MABR and have since rebuilt a strong and unique governance model that involves First Nations, local and senior levels of government (including the RDN), private industry, conservation groups, community representatives, and VIU. The governance model is called the MABR Roundtable, of which several RDN Board Directors are members and can attest to its success. Communities within the MABR boundary include Nanoose, Parksville, French Creek, Qualicum Beach, Dashwood, Hilliers, Coombs, and Errington. The MABR is situated within the traditional territories of Snaw-Naw-As, Qualicum, Snuneymuxw, K'ómoks, Dididaht, Hupacasath, and Tseshaht First Nations.

The purpose of the MABR is to facilitate collaboration between diverse communities and organizations with the goal of sustaining the cultural, economic, environmental and social health of our region over the long term. Our team coordinates programs, events, community forums, and multi-media projects that connect people with nature, encourage Reconciliation and knowledge exchange between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, promote the conservation of biological diversity, foster sustainable economic development, and showcase our region to Canada and the world. Furthermore, we have an established research institute at VIU called MABRRI that has already partnered successfully with the RDN through its Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program. For more information about what we do and how the MABR and MABRRI are separate entities, please see our websites: [www.mabr.ca](http://www.mabr.ca) and [mabrri.viu.ca](http://mabrri.viu.ca) for the research institute. We are also pleased to discuss this distinction in person.

Over the past two and half years, the MABR has demonstrated tremendous community benefits and created meaningful outcomes for many residents and stakeholders. Examples of our successes include the Roundtable, the Amazing Places program (please see: [mabr.ca/amazingplaces](http://mabr.ca/amazingplaces)), our annual citizen science BioBlitz, frequent community lectures, and opportunities for the community to participate in research with VIU faculty, students, and community knowledge holders. Our accomplishments are documented in our Annual Reports, available at [mabr.ca/resources](http://mabr.ca/resources) and we have received frequent mention for our exemplary work by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at national and international levels. In particular, at the UNESCO 4<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Biospheres, Mount Arrowsmith was recognized at the final plenary session before 1,000 delegates. Finally, a rigorous periodic review process, which takes place every 10 years (next one in 2020) ensures that our work meets the quality and mandate of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme.

## **2. The Proposal:**

The MABR proposes a contribution agreement between the RDN and the MABR (via VIU) of \$75,000, which will be managed over 5 years (\$15,000/year). Funds would be allocated to the continued development of two key programs that provide direct benefits to the RDN and its constituents while allowing the MABR to meet its UNESCO biosphere reserve mandate:

### **2.1 Coordination of Reconciliation-focused programming (\$50,000 or \$10,000/year for 5 years)**

- Supporting local First Nations with the development of regional events and programs to increase awareness of Indigenous culture and language, values and principles (e.g. raising awareness of the original names of places in the region through community mapping projects, helping to coordinate national Aboriginal Day, and working with Elders to identify other opportunities)
- Supporting the RDN in addressing some aspects of the 2015 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
- Working with First Nations to develop an Indigenous speaker series that tours the municipalities and communities in the RDN

### **2.2 Coordination of the Amazing Places program (\$25,000 or \$5,000/year for 5 years)**

- Working with local businesses in the RDN to leverage the Amazing Places program and creating value-added components to the project (e.g. guided bird tours of the 10 Amazing Places, promotional materials for hotels to share with visitors to encourage overnight stays, promoting Amazing Places tours and supports for private tour operators)
- Designing activities and educational materials that connect people with the 10 Amazing Places and that target different interest groups: such as youth, families, seniors, hikers. Such materials could be used and distributed by the RDN's Parks department.
- Developing educational materials with local First Nations that share a more in-depth look at the cultural significance of each of the 10 Amazing Places.

Our intention is to build on the successful relationship that the MABR has already established with the RDN and other regional agencies, organizations, First Nations, and communities.

By supporting this proposal and its associated two programs, the RDN will strengthen an already successful relationship with the MABR, create multiple benefits for each of the communities and interest groups within the region, demonstrate tangible outcomes that celebrate this region's cultural and biological diversity, and support the growth of a resilient local economy.

I look forward to your response to this request for support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Witty". The signature is stylized and cursive.

David R. Witty, PhD, MRAIC, FCIP, RPP  
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Provost and Vice-President Academic at Vancouver Island University  
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