

# **THE MALAHAT COALITION**

## **Media Release**

For Immediate Release  
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### **Railway Funding a Good Start**

**Victoria, B.C.** The Malahat Coalition (TMC) welcomes Premier Christy Clark's recent announcement of \$7.5 million in essential funding to ensure safe passenger travel over the E&N,

While this investment is welcome, TMC notes that the funding is dependent upon a \$500,000 bridge and trestle review and the Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) securing an additional \$7.5 million in track repair funding from the federal government. Transportation investment on Vancouver Island, with its 750,000 population, pales in comparison to the billions of dollars in transportation infrastructure spent in the Lower Mainland.

It is estimated that complete modernization of the E&N Railway (neglected for 30 years by CP Rail) would require some \$200 million. This investment, staggered over ten years, is much cheaper than building a new highway over the Malahat alone and a fraction of what has been lavished on the Lower Mainland.

Modernization of the 125-year old Island Rail Corridor would provide much-needed jobs and revitalization of communities along the entire line. The resultant substantial reduction of greenhouse gas emissions comes at a time when the vast majority of British Columbians are concerned about climate change and supportive of a carbon tax.

Regardless of accidents that regularly paralyze the highway, the rejuvenated rail would allow for intelligent land use design, reduction of suburban sprawl, and protection of agricultural lands. With dependable night-time movement of freight, plus day-time service for commuters and tourists, the rail corridor would once again become the dynamic spine for sustainable growth on Vancouver Island.

TMC calls upon all Vancouver Island MPs, MLAs, mayors and supporters of mass transit and rational land use planning to inform the BC government of the essential role that a modernized E&N Railway will fulfill for the sustainable future of Vancouver Island. We ask all levels of government to make a firm financial commitment to this vital Island asset.

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*The Malahat Coalition is a group of South Island residents and organizations promoting sustainable solutions for the South Island. We believe that the public wants 1) safer, flexible, less costly and less polluting transportation options and 2) land use that limits the need for transportation and protects the natural environment.*

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