



Harrison Hot Springs Raises the Bar for Beaches in B.C. *Village Becomes First Blue Flag Candidate Community in the Province*

Yesterday, the Village Council of Harrison Hot Springs took its final steps to joining Canada's Blue Flag program. By making this move, Harrison has made a commitment to manage its beaches to the strict human health and environmental criteria outlined by the internationally acclaimed and United Nations endorsed eco-label.

Harrison is now British Columbia's first community to take on the challenge of meeting the Blue Flag's 32 beach criteria which cover everything from water quality, environmental education and sustainable management to the safety provisions and services beach users can expect to find when they visit.

"As a resort municipality, Harrison Hot Springs is working to create a sustainable future. Managing our natural resources in a way that would not hinder future generations from enjoying what we currently have is important to our community," said Mayor Ken Becotte. "We are proud to be the first B.C. community to join Canada's Blue Flag program and look forward to working with Environmental Defence to win the award, and gain the recognition of Harrison Beach as having exceptional water quality, environmental education and management, and safety standards."

A key aspect of the program is collaboration between the municipal government and various stakeholders like community groups, public health officials, businesses and beach users.

"We've already heard from a number of Harrison residents and environmental not-for-profit groups about how they want the Blue Flag program to enhance the way the Village manages its shoreline," said Aidan Grove-White, Water Programs Manager at Environmental Defence, the Canadian operator of the Blue Flag Program. "This level of engagement is really encouraging, and bodes well for Harrison's success in meeting the remaining criteria to win the Blue Flag award."

Blue Flags currently fly at 3,650 sites in 44 countries around the world, including 16 beaches and three marinas in Canada. More details about Blue Flag and the certified marinas and beaches can be found on the web site at www.blueflag.ca.

About Environmental Defence (www.environmentaldefence.ca): Environmental Defence is the Canadian Operator of the Blue Flag Program. Environmental Defence is Canada's most

effective environmental action organization. We challenge, and inspire change in government, business and people to ensure a greener, healthier and prosperous life for all.

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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