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## For Immediate Release

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### **LOWER FRASER COMMUNITIES TO BENEFIT FROM UP TO \$10 MILLION IN COLLABORATIVE FUNDING COMMITMENT TO DREDGE LOCAL RIVER CHANNELS**

**RICHMOND, BRITISH COLUMBIA** - Vital channels in the Fraser River in Steveston and Ladner will be kept navigable and continue to facilitate economic activity as a result of unprecedented collaborative work bringing together a \$10 million joint commitment announced today by Port Metro Vancouver, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, the Corporation of Delta, and the City of Richmond.

"Providing clear, safe, local navigation channels is enormously important to our communities," said Kerry-Lynne Findlay, Q.C., Member of Parliament for Delta-Richmond East. "I am very proud to be a part of this collaborative team and to be part of this important initiative, which builds on the ongoing support of the Harper Government, to ensure safe access to small craft harbours across the country. The commitment announced today creates new opportunities for our government to incorporate additional, complementary dredging work within the Steveston and Ladner small craft harbours into its planning for 2013-14, which will help keep our local Steveston and Ladner small craft harbours navigable."

The project will meet Transport Canada safe navigation requirements for the largest commercial fishing and recreational vessels that access these channels. It also includes funds for maintenance dredging for up to the next ten years to promote sustainable economic and environmental revitalization of the harbours and waterfront.

Port Metro Vancouver is the first port authority in Canada to provide funding for local communities with waterways falling outside of the main domestic and international shipping channels. Launched in November 2009, the program is part of Port Metro Vancouver's long-term dredging strategy for the Fraser River.

"Through Port Metro Vancouver's Local Channel Dredging Contribution Program, I am pleased to commit \$2.75M toward this important collaborative project," said Robin Silvester, President and CEO of Port Metro Vancouver. "Together, Port Metro Vancouver along with municipal, provincial and federal funding partners, is making an investment that supports port communities and tenants, helps

to protect existing business activity, and creates an opportunity for new investment in Steveston and Ladner.”

“Local residents and business owners have told us that silt buildup on the Fraser is a problem for them,” said Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Mary Polak. “We have listened and responded by developing a collaborative dredging plan, including \$3M in funding from B.C., with the Federal Government, Port Metro Vancouver, Delta and Richmond. Starting in 2013, new dredging will eliminate the growing navigation hazard, helping residents and business owners, without damaging the local environment.”

Delta Mayor Lois E. Jackson said the channels contribute significantly to the regional economy and local quality of life in Delta. “Dredging these local channels, and the provision of funding for ongoing maintenance dredging, ensures that we can continue to generate economic benefits for our community. Having advocated for this project for many years, I am pleased to confirm the Corporation of Delta’s contribution of \$2 million towards the project and look forward to resolving this long-standing issue in partnership with Port Metro Vancouver and our senior government partners.”

Richmond Mayor, Malcolm Brodie, emphasized the significance of dredging to Richmond and particularly to the community of Steveston, home to Canada’s largest commercial fishing harbour. “Our history is inextricably linked to Steveston Harbour,” said Brodie. “I am pleased that the first phase of this initiative for Richmond will fund dredging to ensure Cannery Channel and Steveston Harbour continue to serve the more than 1,200 vessels that use it every year. “ In addition, the City of Richmond has committed up to \$2 million in funding to support this initial work and subsequent phases of this initiative in Steveston, which are to be determined.

The funding partners would like to acknowledge the important contribution of the Ladner Sediment Group, Steveston Harbour Authority, Steveston Village and float home and marina owners on the Fraser River. The dredging work is expected to begin in July 2013 following the execution of finalized funding agreements between the partners and be completed prior to the March closure of the available dredging period.

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