University of Victoria

Media Release

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DUNSMUIR LODGE TO CLOSE

After much consideration, the University of Victoria is closing Dunsmuir Lodge executive training and conference centre on March 31, 2009. Despite the excellent work of its committed staff, the Lodge is not sustainable in its current form.

"This is a difficult decision to make because Dunsmuir is a favourite destination for many people, both for its executive training facilities and its dining room," says UVic Vice President Finance and Operations Gayle Gorrill. "Although Dunsmuir does cover its day to day costs, it does not generate enough revenue for much-needed upgrades to take the facility into the future."

The university estimates that an investment of more than $2 million would be required to bring Dunsmuir up to market standards.

Dunsmuir was donated to UVic in 1985 by the late George Poole to support the teaching and educational missions of the university. For many years, Dunsmuir Lodge has served the needs of UVic and its wider community. However, the donor recognized, at the time of the gift, that operating the Lodge as an educational training centre might not be in the university's best financial interests in the long term and agreed that the facility could be sold if this became the case.

For several years, UVic has considered different future uses for Dunsmuir, including trying to secure private sector partners to jointly operate the facility with the university. Over the years a number of parties have expressed interest in the property and UVic looks forward to engaging in dialogue about Dunsmuir's future use.

"We value and appreciate the contributions the staff have made to Dunsmuir over the years," says Gorrill. "They will be given several months notice and, where appropriate, severance when we close the lodge." Dunsmuir will remain operational until its closure, she says.

Courses offered through UVic's Division of Continuing Studies "UVic on the Peninsula" program at Dunsmuir will continue as usual until the facility's closure. Continuing Studies hopes to maintain a presence on the peninsula in fall 2009 in a new location.

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BACKGROUNDER ATTACHED

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