

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 1, 2011



BC HYDRO AQUAVAN DELIVERS AQUATIC PROGRAMS TO SCHOOLS ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

Vancouver Island, B.C. – BC Hydro AquaVan, the Vancouver Aquarium’s “classroom on wheels,” will be touring schools on Vancouver Island from March 1 to March 25, 2011. Within the next month, approximately 500 children in Victoria, Port Hardy, Courtenay, and Port Alberni will have the opportunity to touch a sea star, understand how a barnacle feeds, observe a hermit crab up close and discover the connections among animals, environments and themselves.

“With the BC Hydro Aquavan, it is our way to bring the ocean to the kids”, says Jonathan Hultquist, manager, Curriculum Programs at the Vancouver Aquarium. The programs introduce students from K-12 to the underwater world of the B.C. coast. It delivers aquatic programs featuring live animals, props and activities.

Aligned with the B.C. school curriculum, BC Hydro AquaVan’s programs are naturally diverse, from introducing little children to live ocean creatures, to teaching high school students about classification of marine invertebrates. The van carries a variety of animals – including sea cucumbers, a green sea anemone, sea urchin, sea snails, and sea stars.

The Aquarium educators teach small groups of students, leading to a personal and interactive learning experience that students remember for years to come. “These unique programs foster an awareness in children of the need to protect and conserve our oceans, and thus represent an important part of the Aquarium’s mission to educate and inspire young people to become responsible stewards of the earth.” Hultquist adds.

Public Year of Science Events

In addition to the curriculum-based programs, BC Hydro AquaVan will be conducting nine community events throughout B.C. in collaboration with the Province of British Columbia’s Year of Science. These Year of Science events are open to both students and the general public.

The Year of Science events will take place at the following locations on Vancouver Island:

- Port Hardy:
 - March 12, 2011: Quatse Salmon Stewardship Centre, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Parksville:
 - March 19, 2011: Wembley Mall, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Nanaimo:
 - March 20, 2011: Georgia Avenue Community School, 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- Ucluelet:
 - March 24, 2011: WhaleFest, Ucluelet Community Centre, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- Tofino:
 - March 25, 2011: WhaleFest, Tofino Community Hall, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

About BC Hydro AquaVan

Vancouver Aquarium's mobile classroom, BC Hydro AquaVan, delivers award-winning aquatic programs to schools and communities throughout British Columbia and Alberta. Since 1994, over 400,000 students and community members have shared an up-close and personal experience with live aquatic animals and discovered the connections we have with our natural environment. Learn more at www.vanaqua.org/education/aquavan.

About Vancouver Aquarium

The Vancouver Aquarium is a global leader in connecting people to our natural world, and a self-supporting, non-profit association dedicated to effecting the conservation of aquatic life through display, education, research, and direct action. Learn more at www.vanaqua.org.

-30-

Note to editors:

Photo opportunities for media are available at these events. To arrange an interview, please contact our communications advisor.

Media Contacts

Roxanne St-Pierre

Communications Advisor

604 659 3752

publicrelations@vanaqua.org