

## ISLANDS TRUST

### **TRUST-WIDE ISSUES**

The items below reporting on December Trust Council proceedings and describing a forthcoming public forum on deer control are jointly submitted by the South and North Pender trustees.

#### **December Trust Council**

The Islands Trust Council, comprising the trustees for all 13 major islands in the Trust area, meets quarterly to address issues pertaining to the Trust area as a whole. The following four items provide a synopsis of some of the topics discussed by Trust Council at its December meeting in Victoria.

##### *Food Security*

Facilitating ready access to locally produced, high quality, affordable food helps support the local farming economy, lowers greenhouse gas emissions by reducing transportation requirements, and supports the types of interactions that are the essence of a strong and sustainable community. At its December meeting, Trust Council discussed and endorsed a comprehensive report on food security prepared by Islands Trust planner Kaitlin Kazmierowski. The report, which will be posted on the Trust website in January, recommends among other things that the Trust Fund Board explore the feasibility of establishing a farm land trust to help protect agricultural land with the potential to contribute to food security on the islands. Food security will continue to be a focus both at the Trust Council level and at the Local Trust Committee level, and undoubtedly will be a topic for consideration at the upcoming OCP review. Kudos to the Farmland Project and Transition Pender for their good work on this vital issue.

##### *2011-15 Regional Conservation Plan.*

At its December meeting in Victoria, Trust Council endorsed the regional conservation plan prepared by the Islands Trust Fund board and staff (the Islands Trust Fund is the conservation land trust arm of the Islands Trust). The plan identifies key threats to island ecosystems (such as conversion for human uses, the impact of alien and invasive species and of native species such as the blacktailed deer, and climate change) and sets out conservation priorities, including securing core conservation areas, protecting biodiversity, and conserving marine ecosystems. Since its inception in 1991, the Islands Trust Fund has protected over 1,000 hectares of ecologically significant lands through outright purchase and through mechanisms such as private land conservation covenants. The Trust Fund's Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP) has now been extended to almost every area covered by the Islands Trust, including both Penders. For more information on the Islands Trust Fund and conservation opportunities such as NAPTEP, go to [www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca](http://www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca)

##### *Policy Statement Review*

Trust Council has initiated work to revise the Islands Trust Policy Statement, which provides guidance and direction to LTCs by translating the Trust's "preserve and protect" mandate into specific policies. A task force comprising several trustees has identified a number of topics requiring consideration in the course of the Policy Statement review, which is expected to take place in 2012 with an opportunity for significant public participation. Trust Council will finalize priority topics for the Policy Statement Review at its June 2012 meeting.

##### *Trustee Remuneration Review*

Local government remuneration is intended to compensate locally elected officials for their time away from their business, employment and families while carrying out their duties. Local Trustee remuneration and the need to attract a greater diversity of trustee candidates has been a topic of discussion at Trust Council for a decade, with the last review conducted in 2004. Since then, the complexity of trustees' work and the amount of time that trustees are expected to spend on behalf of their constituents has increased significantly.

In 2010 Trust Council directed the Financial Planning Committee to work with an independent consultant

to report and make recommendations on the subject of trustee remuneration. While Trust Council recognizes that remuneration is intended to be an honorarium rather than a salary, it also recognizes the need for remuneration to keep up with the cost of living, be comparable to similar roles and work loads in other local and regional governments and to make it possible for all members of the community to serve as trustees.

In September 2010 Trust Council received an independent consultant's report and recommendations from the Financial Planning Committee and endorsed the principles for increasing remuneration. Trust Council endorsed the recommended changes at its December 2010 Trust Council quarterly meeting as part of the budget proposal for 2011-2012. Trust Council will be seeking public input starting in late January, for consideration prior to making a final decision in March 2011. The changes, if approved, do not apply to the current trustees. The changes would only apply to those who are elected in November 2011.

We welcome your comments on any aspect of the proposed Islands Trust Budget for 2011-2012, including the new Trustee Remuneration proposal. The complete budget package will be available for public review and input in late January, 2011. Watch for advertisements in local newspapers; check the Islands Trust Web Site at: <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/>.

### **Deer Control**

The Regional Conservation Plan identifies black-tailed deer as one of the most significant threats to biodiversity on the islands. Deer populations on South Pender (as on every other southern Gulf Island) are out of control. In addition to creating a significant traffic hazard, deer populations that thrive in the absence of natural predators threaten the survival of other native species that are ecologically important even if they lack the apparent virtue of being cute and cuddly. The Islands Trust is a partner in the UN International Year of Biodiversity (South Pender Trustee Greer submitted the partnership application on behalf of the Trust), and one of the most important steps in conserving biodiversity on our islands is to find a way to keep deer populations in check. A forum on options for deer control will be held at the Mayne Island Agricultural Hall on January 14 from 1 to 4 pm. For further information, please contact Dave Maude by email at [dmaude@hotmail.com](mailto:dmaude@hotmail.com).

### **SOUTH PENDER LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE**

#### **Official Community Plan Review**

The Official Community Plan (OCP) reflects an island community's priorities for land use planning and provides direction for the work of the Local Trust Committee (LTC). South Pender's OCP was last updated in 2002, and the next OCP review will get underway in 2011. We'll begin by devoting our first LTC meeting of the year to identifying priorities for consideration during the OCP review. All islanders are welcome to attend our LTC meeting on Tuesday January 11 (note change from previously scheduling for January 18) at 10 am in the Community Room at the South Pender firehall.

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#### *Dates to Note:*

Jan 11 – Local Trust Committee meeting, 10 am, South Pender fire hall community room.

Jan 24 – Planner Andrea Pickard at Driftwood Centre Islands Trust office, 11 am to 1 pm or by appointment: 250-405-5189