



News Release

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ISLANDS TRUST APPLAUDS MARINE CONSERVATION DECISION

VICTORIA — The Islands Trust today welcomed the news that BC and Canada are exploring a large area for marine conservation in the Southern Strait of Georgia and look forward to participating in further consultation on the proposal.

“We are delighted that last week’s announcement recognizes the ecological importance of this region and takes us another step closer to protecting this remarkable area,” said Peter Luckham, one of the Vice-Chairs of the Islands Trust Council. “It is the most intensively used marine area in BC – with hundreds of species at risk from industrial pressures. We are gratified that the proposal closely matches the boundaries suggested in an Islands Trust resolution endorsed by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities in 2010.”

“I also want to commend the province for its decision to transfer administration of the seabed to the federal government, thereby bringing the National Marine Conservation Area much closer to reality,” Luckham added. “We will do everything we can to support the process to ensure the sustainability of island communities and the marine ecosystems they depend on.”

Luckham said “the Islands Trust is ready and willing to work with islanders, first nations, partner agencies and all levels of government during the upcoming consultation process to develop a national marine conservation area reserve that all Canadians and British Columbians can be proud of.”

The trustees and staff of the Islands Trust have been involved in consultations on the proposed national marine conservation area reserve for over a decade and have continuously promoted the need for better marine protection to all levels of government.

Under the *Islands Trust Act*, the Islands Trust is charged with preserving and protecting the unique amenities and environment of the Islands Trust Area for: 25,000 residents, 13,000 non-resident property owners, hundreds of thousands of visitors and all British Columbians. The area covers the islands and waters between the BC mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres.

Links to federal news release, backgrounder and map of proposed area:

http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/cp-nr/release_e.asp?id=1783&andor1=nr

http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/cp-nr/release_e.asp?bgid=1554&andor1=bg

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/progs/amnc-nmca/cnamnc-cnmca/dgs-ssg/images/NMCAProposalMap.pdf>

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Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment

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