



# News Release

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## NEW OPINION POLL CONFIRMS SUPPORT FOR ISLANDS TRUST MANDATE

VICTORIA — The results of a recent public opinion survey indicate strong province-wide and Trust Area support for preserving and protecting British Columbia's Gulf Islands.

"We are delighted to see such strong support for our mandate, especially amongst Gulf Islanders themselves," said Sheila Malcolmson, Chair of the Islands Trust Council. "The Islands Trust was originally created in response to concerns about overdevelopment of these special islands, with their unique ecosystems and communities. The Trust has now been responsible for land use planning in the trust area for almost 37 years. The poll confirms that islanders still agree with the reasons the province created the Islands Trust. And it's reassuring to know that British Columbians from outside our area recognize the special nature of the islands."

Key findings are:

- 86% of respondents across BC agree that BC's Gulf Islands are a special part of British Columbia; 97% of respondents within the Islands Trust Area agree.
- Across BC, at least 83% of respondents agree the Gulf Islands should be protected from overdevelopment, and that the BC government should take action to make sure the Gulf Islands are preserved and protected; within the Islands Trust Area, agreement rises to 90%.
- Strong agreement, both provincially and locally, that tourism should be managed to protect the islands' unique environment, and that mining, clear-cut logging, large tourist developments and fish farms should not be allowed.

The poll, commissioned by the Islands Trust, was conducted March 1-3, 2011 by Ipsos Reid, a British Columbia based market research and public opinion company. The province-wide poll has a margin of error of +/-3.5 %, 19 times out of 20 on the total sample of 817 British Columbians. An additional sub-sample of 100 residents living in the Islands Trust Area was also surveyed, with a margin of error of +/-9.8%, 19 times out of 20. Both polls were conducted to ensure appropriate representation by age, gender and region. While the same questions were also asked in a 2004 poll, Ipsos Reid has indicated that a change in their methodology means the results cannot be directly compared.

The Islands Trust is a federation of independent local government bodies that represent some 25,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique environment of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation with other agencies, and land conservation. The area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres.

A summary of the survey results is available on the Islands Trust website at <http://islandstrust.bc.ca/tc/pdf/opinionpollresults2011.pdf>

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Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment

Bowen, Denman, Hornby, Gabriola, Galiano, Gambier, Lasqueti, Mayne, N. Pender, Salt Spring, Saturna, S. Pender, Thetis