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December 2, 2019

File No. 4700-20

via e-mail: [howesoundbri@gmail.com](mailto:howesoundbri@gmail.com)

Ruth Simons  
Chair, Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative  
PO Box 465  
Lions Bay, BC V0N 2E0

Dear Ms. Simons:

**Re: Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society**

I am writing on behalf of the Gambier Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) to heartily endorse the nomination by the Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society (HSBRIS) to designate Alt'ka7tsem/Howe Sound as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

The Gambier LTC is part of the Islands Trust, which is a unique federation of local governments with a legislated mandate to "preserve and protect the trust area and its unique amenities and environment".

While the Trust Area encompasses much of the marine and island areas in the Canadian portion of the Salish Sea, the Gambier Island Local Trust Area encompasses much of the proposed Biosphere Region, including most of the marine area and all of the islands with the exception of Bowen Island Municipality (which is also a member of Islands Trust).

As Chair of the Gambier LTC, I have already signed an endorsement of the application document and we wish to provide an additional letter of support. Our mandate at the Islands Trust and the purpose and objective of the Biosphere Region mesh in many ways, including:

- a. The Reconciliation Declaration adopted by the Islands Trust commits our organization to engaging with and working in cooperation with Indigenous Peoples. In addition, we have committed to the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.
- b. The islands in Howe Sound are within the boundary of the Coastal Douglas-fir and Associated Ecosystems Conservation Partnership, important to protecting these rare and threatened ecosystems. Our work on maintaining these ecosystems is reflected in the application.

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- c. Over 1600 ha are protected within the Gambier LTC, including provincial parks, Islands Trust Conservancy lands, marine protected areas and regional parks, all of which would serve well as core preservation areas within the proposed Biosphere Reserve. The Islands Trust continues to work diligently to protect and enlarge these areas and hope to work with the Squamish Nation in the future to create new conservation areas
- d. The Gambier LTC has hosted three Alt'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Community Forum gatherings over the past six years and is committed to the work of that forum going forward.

We agree completely with this view contained in the application:

*"Howe Sound has the potential to be an outstanding model of sustainability and ecological health, providing a place for people to live, work, and play, now and in the future."*

We look forward to working along with the anticipated Biosphere Reserve towards this vision of this wonderful region.

Yours sincerely,



Sue Ellen Fast  
Chair, Gambier Island Local Trust Committee  
[sfast@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:sfast@islandstrust.bc.ca)

Cc: Islands Trust Area MPs  
Islands Trust Area MLAs  
BOKÉCEN (Pauquachin) First Nation  
Cowichan Tribes  
Halalt First Nation  
Homalco First Nation  
Klahoose First Nation  
K'ómoks First Nation  
Lake Cowichan First Nation  
Lekwungen (Songhees) Nation  
Lyackson First Nation  
MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat) Nation  
Penelakut Tribe  
Qualicum First Nation  
Scia'new (Beecher Bay) First Nation  
SEMYOME (Semiahmoo) First Nation  
shíshálh First Nation  
Snuneymuxw First Nation  
Skw̓wú7mesh (Squamish) Nation  
Snaw-naw-as (Nanoose) First Nation  
SʔÁUTW (Tsawout) First Nation  
Stz'uminus First Nation  
SXIMEŁEŁ (Esquimalt) Nation  
Tla'amin (Sliammon) Nation  
Tsawwassen First Nation  
Tsleil-Waututh Nation  
T'Sou-ke Nation  
Wei Wai Kum (Campbell River) First Nation  
We Wai Kai (Cape Mudge) First Nation  
WJOLEŁP (Tsartlip) First Nation  
WŚIKEM (Tseycum) First Nation  
xʷməθkʷəy̓əm Musqueam  
Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group  
Laich-kwil-tach Treaty Society  
Nanwakolas Council  
Te'mexw Treaty Association  
WŚÁNEĆ Leadership Council  
Naut'sa mawt Tribal  
First Nations Leadership Council  
Gambier Island Local Trust Committee  
Bowen Island Municipal Council  
Islands Trust Council  
Islands Trust website