



ISLANDS TRUST CONSERVANCY

Impact Report



Protecting Islands in the Salish Sea



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(C) Common Camas, C. Funk

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I respectfully acknowledge that the Islands Trust Area is located within the treaty lands and territories of the BOŖEĆEN, Cowichan Tribes, Da'naxda'xw, K'ómoks, Lummi, Lyackson, MÁLEXEŁ, Mamalilikulla, Qualicum, scə́wəθən, sə́lilwətaɬ, SEMYOME, shíshálh, Sk̓w̓xwú7mesh, Snaw-naw-as, Snuneymuxw, Songhees, Spune'luxutth', SṪÁUTW, Stz'uminus, ɬaʔəmen, Tlowitsis, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Wei Wai Kum, We Wai Kai, W̱JOŁEŁP, W̱SIḴEM, Xeláltxw, Xwémalhḵwu, Xwsepsum, and xʷməθkʷə́yəm First Nations. Islands Trust is committed to reconciliation and to working together to preserve and protect this ecologically, culturally, and spiritually significant region in the Salish Sea.

Updated May 2025

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Who We Are

Established in 1990, Islands Trust Conservancy is a land trust dedicated to preserving and protecting the fragile and unique ecosystems of the Islands Trust Area in the Salish Sea. This region covers approximately 79,000 hectares of land and over 482,000 hectares of water on the southern coast of British Columbia. It includes 450 islands between southern Vancouver Island, mainland British Columbia and Howe Sound.

Our mission is to protect these very special places by encouraging, undertaking, and assisting in voluntary conservation initiatives across the islands. We work with many allies including: private landholders and donors, local conservancies, environmental organizations, charitable foundations, academic institutions and businesses. We also work with First Nations and government agencies of all levels.



[Read our 2024-2025 Annual Report](#)



The Islands Trust Area including terrestrial and marine components.

Small Conservancy - Big Impact

Since 1990 we have succeeded in protecting

115

properties protected through
voluntary conservation actions



34

Nature Reserves

+

81

Conservation
Covenants



Which contain

~1,380 ha

ecological and cultural land



Across

20+

Islands



Nature Reserve



Conservation Covenant

[Explore these properties online](#)



In addition to protecting land we also:



Conduct monitoring and restoration
activities across 34 nature reserves and
81 conservation covenants



Engage private landowners in
stewardship education



Run a Species at Risk (SAR) Program to
increase collaboration in recovery
efforts for species and ecosystems at
risk across the islands



Support climate action by managing
land to better mitigate climate impacts

20%

We have worked with 30+ partners to achieve our
mission to date. Together we have protected



of the
Islands Trust Area. 4

How We Work

- Working with landholders to support voluntary land protection. We create nature reserves and place conservation covenants on land across the islands in the Salish Sea
- Sharing ways to give and protect smarter, using tax tools that support conservation
- Working with island communities and conservation partners to monitor and restore sensitive ecosystems and habitats for species-at-risk
- Providing strategic funds to conservation partners to support conservation opportunities across the islands. We value our partners and know we cannot achieve our mission alone
- Identifying priority areas to ensure we maximize our impact in addressing the biodiversity and climate crises. We use the best available data to inform conservation action
- Commitment to Reconciliation. We seek to build relationships with First Nations to identify areas of significance for protection and to incorporate traditional knowledge and stewardship into land management practices



Our People

Islands Trust Conservancy is directed by a Board made up of three members appointed by the Province of BC and two members elected from the Islands Trust Council and one member appointed by the Islands Trust Executive Committee.

Our small team of passionate, dedicated staff (pictured here) works hard to support land protection and stewardship in the islands. We value partnership and work closely with our partners and supporters in our work.



Working with Private Landholders

We work with private landholders to protect land by:

- Accepting donations of land or financial gifts for protection
- Establishing and managing nature reserves according to land management plans that are drafted with input from First Nations, local conservancies and communities
- Placing conservation covenants on private property to protect the land they love in perpetuity
- Providing stewardship support to landholders to manage important habitat on private property
- Facilitating tax benefits to private landholders who protect land and whose property qualifies for the NAPTEP and Federal Ecological Gift programs

Over 67% of land in the Islands Trust Area is privately owned by individuals or corporations – making the work that we do to support voluntary conservation initiatives all the more important.



[Read more about ways you can protect nature with us](#)



Skye Larmour placed a NAPTEP conservation covenant protecting 2.45 hectares of mature forest and wetlands on Salt Spring Island.

What is a Conservation Covenant and NAPTEP?

A conservation covenant is a voluntary legal agreement between you and a conservancy or land trust that allows you to permanently protect nature on your land while still owning and living on the land.

Islands Trust Conservancy manages the Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP), which provides island landholders with an annual 65% property tax reduction on the portion of their land protected by a conservation covenant. This incentive is unique to the Islands Trust Area. The Federal Ecological Gifts Program provides increased income tax benefits for donations of land or an interest in land.



[Read more about placing conservation covenants with us](#)



Yarrow Koontz placed a NAPTEP conservation covenant protecting 2.25 hectares of important tree species and forested swamp on Gabriola Island.

“

“The process of placing a covenant was not hard or difficult. There’s so much support if you’re willing to start the process.”

— Yarrow Koontz

”

Conservation Highlights of 2024

Finalizing new NAPTEP covenants is a first step. Islands Trust Conservancy monitors and manages protected places in our care according to management plans that identify long-term conservation and restoration goals.



Monitored, reported on, and removed thousands of invasive species on Salt Spring Island with the help of contractors, community members, and local groups.



With Gambier Conservancy Association, we removed over 2500 holly plants with community members and two contractors from ITC Nature Reserves.



With Denman Conservancy Association, we removed hundreds of holly, broom, daphne, and ivy plants in ITC Nature Reserves.



With Galiano Conservancy Association we girdled English holly and cut 80.5 m3 in Vanilla Leaf Nature Reserve on Galiano Island.



In Elder Cedar (S'ul-hween X'pey) Nature Reserve we created 22m of new boardwalk to protect from foot traffic.



We monitored 78 conservation covenants across 14 islands, reconnecting with landholders and co-covenant holders.



We collaborated with the Habitat Acquisition Trust restoration crew to remove 5960 m2 of invasive plants across the islands.



We continued ongoing Coastal Western Screech-Owl monitoring in an ITC Nature Reserve.

This project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et
Changement climatique Canada



[Watch our 2024 Highlights video online](#)



Opportunity Fund

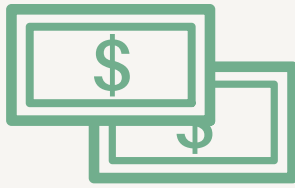
Small donations can make all the difference in protecting the places you love.

The Opportunity Fund enables us to act quickly to provide small sums of supportive funding to groups working on land protection projects when new conservation opportunities arise. While the average grant from the Opportunity Fund is only \$3,825, the impact the money has is substantial.

Since 2005:



200+ donors



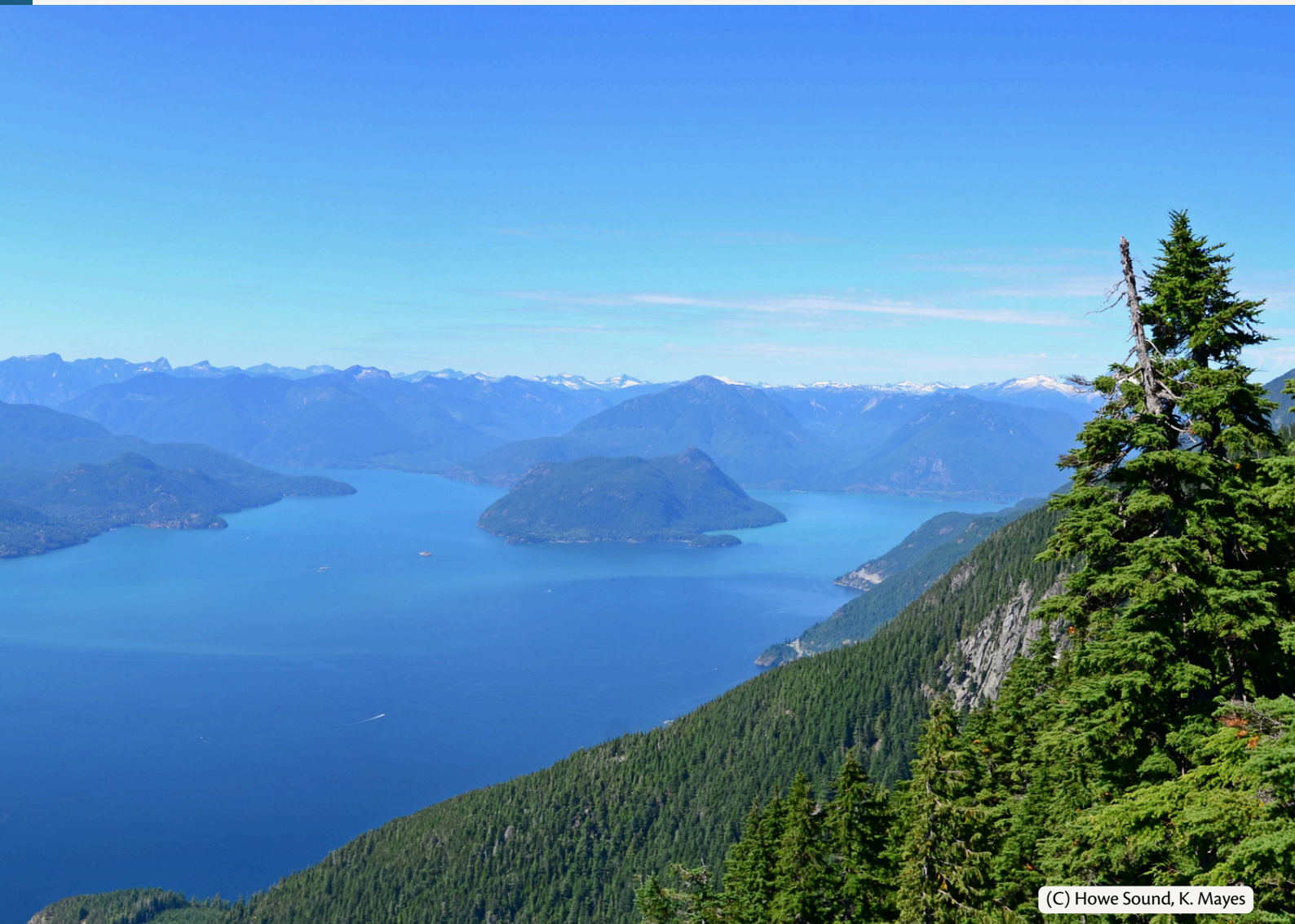
gave over
\$212,000



so we could provide 35
grants to conservation
partners



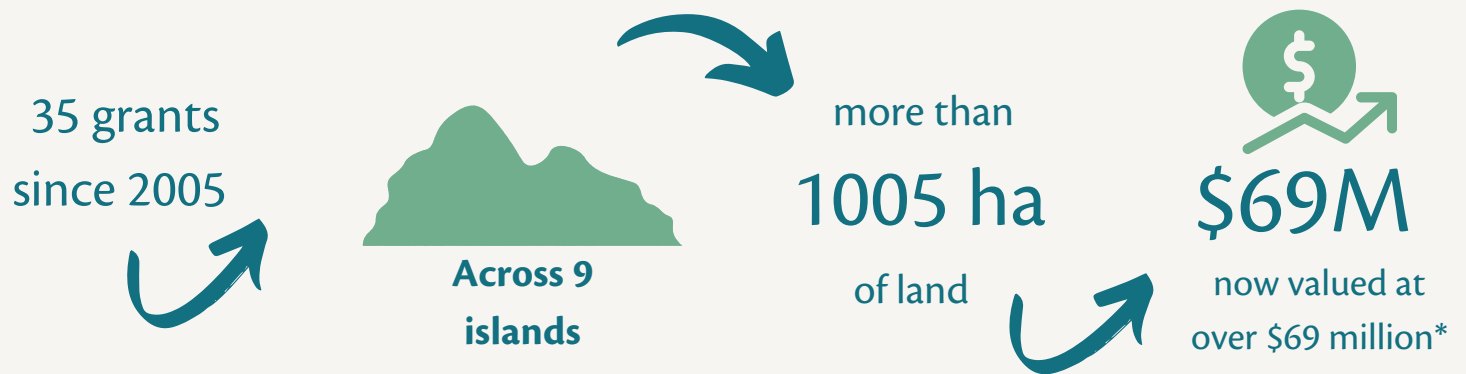
which in turn has helped
protect over 1005
hectares



In 2024, an Opportunity Fund grant supported

The Bowen Island Conservancy in aid of a purchase protecting almost 65 hectares of land at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island.

totaling



*property values are rapidly changing in a volatile real estate market.

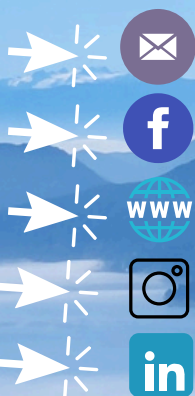
New conservation land at Cape Roger Curtis on Bowen Island is now protected by the Bowen Island Conservancy.

Conservation on the Islands Relies on You

A huge thank you to all the donors, supporters, partners, and allies who make this work possible.

Together, we are creating a conservation legacy that will protect and preserve islands in the Salish Sea for people and nature to thrive for generations to come.

Please consider leaving a gift to Islands Trust Conservancy in your Will



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The generosity of donors has helped kick-start conservation on islands in the Salish Sea.

100% of donations goes to our partners in support of important conservation projects.

To donate, or leave a gift in your Will, call 250-405-5186
or visit islandstrust.bc.ca/conservancy/how-you-can-help/planning-your-legacy/

or mail a cheque to:

Islands Trust Conservancy,
200-1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8R 1H8



[Make a donation online](https://islandstrust.bc.ca/conservancy/how-you-can-help/planning-your-legacy/)



[Leave a gift in your will](#)